



STUDY WITH UNORGANIZED WOMEN WORKER IN GURGAON ON MATERNITY ENTITLEMENTS AND CHILDCARE PROVISIONS

ALLIANCE FOR RIGHT TO EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

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Study with Garment and Domestic workers in Gurgaon on maternity benefits and childcare provisions

Executive Summary

In India maternity entitlements and childcare provisions have been neglected in the social policies of the country, until very recently. The severest impact of the lack of intervention has been on women in poverty who have young children under six years of age. More and more women are participating in the labour market to keep up with the financial burden on the families. Increased labour participation with no support on the unpaid care work, which is generally considered the responsibility of the woman or girl in the family not only restrict their rights to education, decent work, leisure but it also has adverse effects on their health and well-being. The notion of the responsibility is so ingrained that they end up taking the triple burden of paid work, unpaid household work and childcare all by themselves. The time poverty created mainly creates a tradeoff among these responsibilities.

The rights of the women and children are so interdependent, especially from the period of pregnancy and till the child reaches six years of age, that the lack of support in terms of childcare and maternity entitlements in this critical period affect the mother as well as the development of the child.

To assess the awareness and need of informal women workers of the maternity entitlements and childcare provisions and access to the existing provisions, the Alliance for Right to Early Childhood Development, which is a loose network of academicians, legal experts, networks and civil society organizations, in collaboration with Nari Shakti Manch – the women wing of the Society for Labour Development conducted a micro study on Maternity entitlements and childcare provisions with women working as domestic workers and women working in garment industry of Gurgaon, Haryana.

The study was conducted through focus group discussions with women from these two sectors to understand the existing scenario and stimulate the discussion on maternity entitlements and childcare provisions. The findings of the study were not very surprising as the women had no or limited knowledge about such provisions. The women in the garment sector were not aware of the provision under the Factories Act w.r.t to maternity entitlements and childcare provisions. Women in both the sectors rely mainly on the makeshift arrangements for childcare and stated that the children suffer because of neglect.

In case of informal women workers the non-implementation of the existing schemes, programmes and laws for childcare has made the situation of women and children vulnerable, in one of the discussions a woman informed us that she lost her young child because there were no proper childcare arrangements either at the worksite or in the neighbourhood.

Introduction

In India, of the total women workforce, 14.38 crore women are engaged in the unorganized sector which accounts for 95.97% of the total working women population (Jain, 2016). These women working as informal workers are the most vulnerable section mainly because of (i) irregularity of their employment, (ii) little or no bargaining power, (iii) lack of control over earnings and (iv) need to balance paid work (which is generally low paid) with unpaid household work especially childcare. The informal women workers mainly work as rag pickers, garment factory workers, domestic workers, vendors, construction workers, etc.

Agrarian distress is one of the main reasons for an ever increasing supply of unskilled and semi-skilled workers in the urban areas who work as informal workers. The working and living conditions of the informal sector workers in the cities have been exploitative - poor housing and sanitation, lack of adequate and clean water supply; unhygienic surroundings adversely affecting their health. In addition to this, the informal sector workers are generally bereft of any social security provisions.

Traditionally, social reproduction work or unpaid care work has been the responsibility of women in India as in the case with the rest of the world. Furthermore neo liberal economic policies have increased the time poverty of women especially women from economically marginalized groups, as with increasing financial pressure more women are getting into paid economic activities. Women are left with little choice but to try and balance their responsibility within the family and the demands of paid work. Within the domain of unpaid care work, childcare is one of the major burden/ borne by women.

The pilot time use survey conducted in 1998-99 by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, in the six states namely Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya highlight that males spent only about 3.6 hours as compared to 34.6 hours by females on the extended SNA activities (Hirway and Jeyalakshmi, 2007)¹. This time poverty not only affect the women in terms of health, agency, and fulfillment of their socio- economic right but also deprive their young children from the proper care time needed for their holistic development. Migration and urbanization has eroded the traditional family support for childcare for most of the families which further make both women and their children more vulnerable.

¹ Extended SNA activities are the activities which are not included in national accounts but are covered under the General Production Boundary of the UN System of National Accounts. They include all delegable production of services not covered under the national income accounts.

As far as the law-policy-programme environment is concerned, the unpaid care work is generally located within the private domain of the family and has received little policy attention from the nation states. Most of the working women in the country, have no or abysmal maternity support during pregnancy and in the early years of the child's life and no social protection. Since the mother's and the child's needs and rights are intertwined especially during pregnancy and the first six months of the baby's life, the mother has to be enabled through wage protection, so that she can withdraw herself from all other forms of "labour" and engage herself in "reproductive labour". Along with the maternity entitlements adequate and appropriate childcare provisions are required both for the protection of the rights of the young child as well as to reduce the burden of unpaid work of women. The neglect of maternity provisions not only affects the women in terms of increased drudgery and poor health but also directly impact the development of children, which are the future resource for the country. Some of the laws such as Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 do provide entitlements to women but it covers women working in the organized sector which is estimated to be only 4% of the working women² (Agarwal and Dand, 2016). There are eight labour laws in the country which have provision for maternity entitlements and crèche facility but the implementation of the same has been very poor (details about the existing laws and programmes are mentioned in the annexure).

The trade unions have been aggressively raising the concerns of the workers w.r.t to wages, conditions of work but they too have overlooked the need and importance of support for women's unpaid care work in terms of maternity entitlements and childcare provisions which is very critical not only for the women worker but also for their children and family. Also, the lack of evidence in terms of data about the awareness about such benefits and also how enabling the existing provisions has been to meet the needs stimulated the conception of the study with the women working as informal workers in Gurgaon which is known for its big industries and rapid urbanization.

Accordingly, the Alliance for Right to ECD in collaboration with Nari Shakti Manch, women wing of Society for Labour Development, with financial support from Child Rights and You conducted a study with the intention to understand the ground condition of women working in the informal sector (domestic

² Sec. 2 of the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961: Application of Act. -- (1) It applies in the first instance, to every establishment being a factory, mine or plantation [including any such establishment belonging to Government and to every establishment wherein persons are employed for the exhibition of equestrian, acrobatic and other performances]:

(2) [Save as otherwise provided in [sections 5A and 5B] nothing contained in this Act] shall apply to any factory or other establishment to which the provisions of the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 (84 of 1948), apply for the time being.

workers) as well as working in the formal sector but are unorganized (women workers in the garment industry) in terms of the need and access to childcare provisions & maternity benefits and the benefit received from the existing provisions.

Women workers in Garment industry and as Domestic workers in India

The textile sector contributes around 14 per cent to industrial production in India and 5 percent to GDP and is second only to agriculture in terms of number of people employed in the sector (IBEF, 2016). The Readymade Garment sector is one the key urban employers. As per the ILO report the largest manufacturing sectors in India, including the National Capital Region have a combined workforce of over a million men and women. According to the newspaper report the Garment sector is the second largest employer of women in the country – nearly 1.2 crore women workers which constitute 80% of the total workforce employed in the sector (Kably, 2015). However the working conditions in the industry are very exploitative and majority of the work is done through informal production regimes as it a highly labour intensive production. There is a favoritism towards hiring young workers so as to extract more work from them as compared to older women, as the jobs require these women to work for long hours, sometimes as long as 12 hours or more at a stretch.

On the other hand, with increasing urbanization in the country, women domestic workers is a growing section of workers in the informal sector. Although there is no exact number of workers in this sector is available but as per NSSO 61st Round (2004-05) approximately there are 4.2 million domestic workers in the country (WIEGO, n.d.). The women working as domestic workers are mainly from the marginalized communities. Absence of any legal protection and regulation of the condition of work for domestic workers have led to exploitation of workers and lack of any social security cover make these women more vulnerable.

The Study on ME and Childcare provisions in Gurgaon

With the increasing financial burden on families more and more women are joining the labour force but being unskilled or semi-skilled many of them are working in the low paid jobs in the unorganized sector. Along with the paid work they need to balance the triple burden of household work and childcare and

lack of support in terms of maternity entitlements and childcare provisions not only add to the drudgery of women but also have adverse impact on young children, especially under sixes.

Objectives of the Study

As mentioned in the earlier section, although some provisions for maternity entitlements and childcare exists in our country but these have generally eluded a large section of women working in the unorganized sector. So, this study was undertaken to gauge the awareness on law, policy and programme for Maternity entitlements and Childcare provisions and its utilization by women workers in the unorganized sector.

The main objectives of the study are:

- To understand the awareness of women workers about the entitlements on Maternity Entitlements and childcare provisions
- To understand the need for maternity entitlements and childcare provisions as articulated by women in unorganized sector
- To assess the extent of access to existing entitlements through labour laws or state provisions

The study was guided by four main research questions

1. Are women aware of the entitlements on maternity benefits and childcare?
2. What are the childcare arrangements for women working in the unorganized sector?
3. Do they access ME and childcare entitlements provided by laws or state provisions like Anganwadi centres?
4. Does the employer extend any support (financial or otherwise) for childcare provision or maternity benefit?

Methodology

The study was conducted in Gurgaon district in the state of Haryana and the adjoining areas in Delhi with women working in the garment factories and as domestic workers. Gurgaon district in the state of Haryana has rapidly grown and transformed to become one the world's largest urbanized industrial hubs with large informal sector existence. The export market garment sector in Gurgaon and its nearby areas which has witnessed unprecedented boom in the last decade or so employs a large workforce, a significant portion of which is women, most of whom are aged between 18 to 35 years. The study was conducted with women who are working (or have worked) in garment factories in Udhyog Vihar but their residence is in Kapashera in Delhi and in Sarhol and Dhundahera in Gurgaon and with the domestic workers were conducted who were working as well living in Gurgaon in areas such as Sikanderpur, Pahadi basti.

With the increasing high rises and residential space, the city has also witnessed the increase in the number of slums where the workers, mainly women, serve as domestic workers. These workers engaged in domestic work or in garment factories have migrated from various states to Gurgaon city.

Interviews with state official from the Women and Child Development Department and Labour Welfare Department were also conducted to finalize the tools. However, because of the non-availability or rather lack of time of the women working in the garment factory, only focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted. Total of 8 FGDs were conducted; four each with women working in garment factory and as domestic worker and on an average each discussion had 7-8 participants in the group. The FGDs were conducted in Hindi.

Challenges and Limitations of the Study

The study was earlier conceptualized using qualitative and quantitative research tools. A survey was to be done along with focus group discussions with the sample from domestic and garment factory women workers, who have children under six. While conducting the survey meeting women who are working in the garment factory and have children under six came up as a challenge. The workers in the garment industry have six days working and on Sundays as well the women either go to work to earn some extra money or are so busy with their family chores, so the finding the right sample size for the study was difficult. Consequently, the methodology of the study was altered and rather than conducting surveys eight focus group discussions were conducted with women working or have worked in the garment industry or as a domestic worker.

Even conducting the focus group discussions with them was equally challenging because they had to take time off from their household chores and thus in many a FGDs not only women who are working and have young children were part of the discussion but elder women in the family or the working women who have children above six years of age also participated in the discussions.

Findings from the Study

The number of women who participated in the group discussions ranged from 6 to 12. The domestic workers were mainly from the state of West Bengal, however from various districts such as Malda, Nadia and Kolkata. Only in one discussion out of the four there were women who were from other states such as Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh and working as domestic workers. On the other hand women working in the garment factories were mainly from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar states and have been living in the city for a long time, some even for 14-15 years.

Awareness about Maternity Entitlements and Childcare provisions and Access to existing entitlements

Almost all the women were aware about the existence of Anganwadi centre and have used the AWC but mainly in their villages. As for the facility they get in the Anganwadi centre, generally the women mentioned that they get meal (*dalia, khichdi*) for the young children and get health services such as immunization and check up for children. Interestingly, most of the women said that they didn't know about where the centre is in their locality and also that they know the location but don't go to the centre anymore because in some cases the children of the migrant workers have been denied the services by the Anganwadi workers and in some other they said because of the rampant corruption the benefits such as food from the AWC never reach them and most of it is consumed by the workers only.

With reference to the maternity entitlements most of the women working in both domestic and garment industry sector leave their job when they are pregnant and leave for their village where someone (family) can take care of them. Others have only migrated to the city to work after the child birth.

When during the discussions the place of delivery was discussed many of the women who have children under the age of six years mentioned that they have received money for their delivery in the hospital. They were not aware of the scheme under which they got this benefit but they mentioned that there is support available from the state for the pregnant women for delivery. In one of the discussion some women were saying that in some hospital no money is given because of corruption but a senior woman countered their statement by saying that "if you get your checkups (3 months) properly and have your documents in place then you will definitely get the money from the hospital...my daughter and daughter in law both got the money".

Women workers in the Garment Industry

The women working in the garment industry didn't know about the law which mandates the provision of crèche in terms of a room in the factory premises for children under six years of age, if the number of women working in the factory is at least 30 in number. It was during the discussions that they got to know about the Factory Act w.r.t to childcare provisions. Many of the women workers said that they have seen a decorated room with toys and bedding, which the management sets up during the buyer visit. However no one knew the purpose of setting up this room, it was only through the meetings with Nari Shakti Manch team that they understood the use of such a room.

Even though they have seen such a room in the factory, but never have demanded this to be made available to them for their children as they were scared to lose their job if they demand such a benefit. One of the women mentioned "Kids are not allowed in the factory and once I had to collect my money from the factory and my child accompanied me, the first thing I was told to keep the child out of the premises – *isko bahar le ke jao*".

Some of the women who have been working for long said that long time back few of the units (factories) in this area used to have such a room for children in their premises but all those have also shut such facility.

In the garment industry, some of the women who have been working for long in the sector knew that when a woman is pregnant she gets three months paid leave after delivery, but she has to be on the pay rolls of the company. As generally the women who work on contract basis have no support from the employer in terms of financial help or reduction in work when they are pregnant. Most of the women who participated in the discussion mentioned that they left their job because of health reasons or were indirectly forced to leave their jobs when they were pregnant.

In one of the discussion the women mentioned that they were not working when they were pregnant because their employer never considered or offered reduction of work and it was difficult for them to work and they wanted to take care of their health than work in that condition. In another discussion one of the women said she was removed from her job some 11 years back when she was pregnant not citing her pregnancy rather telling her to take care of health. Some women even mentioned that women who are permanent in the company also get benefits from the ESI.

Women working as Domestic workers

The women didn't know about any scheme or entitlement related to childcare or maternity benefit but when they were asked about Anganwadi centre, almost all of them were aware about it but as mentioned earlier had accessed it in their villages more than here in the city. In one of the discussion, the distance of AWC from their *bastis* was quoted as one of the major reasons for not availing any facility from the AWC. In another discussion, a woman mentioned that "we don't trust the Anganwadi workers and don't send their younger kids to the centre, but the children in the age group of 5 -6 years go to collect their food from the centre".

For maternity benefit as well they were not aware of any scheme that they should avail but some of them mentioned that they got money after the birth of their child in the government hospital.

Existing Childcare Arrangements

As the working women cannot take their young children to the worksite be it a factory or a household for domestic worker, they rely on their make shift arrangements for childcare. Women workers both domestic as well as garment industry workers were living in a nuclear setup where the women and her husband work and thus they lacked any support in the family for childcare. Many of the women start working after their child is old enough to leave but for some women who start working because of the financial constraints they would leave the child alone in the house or inform the neighbor to keep an eye on the children. One of the garment industry worker said that "I leave my children aged 3 and 5 years alone at home and times when they do not listen to me and I am running late for work, I tie them with the rope and leave for work but then I inform my neighbours to keep an eye on them".

Older siblings were also taking care of the younger ones, at the expense of their education or their play time and some of them said themselves that the older sibling is too young to take care of the younger child but they have no other option than leaving the younger ones with their siblings. One of the domestic workers said that she leaves her 2.5 years daughter with her sister's children and the eldest one is of 4.5 years. When it was asked that is the 4.5 years old girl is able to take of the younger children she replied "she can't but there is no other option. I have come here to earn money; I can't sit at home to take care of the children". One of the domestic worker mentioned that her 12-13 years old daughter take care of the younger sibling and the household work when she goes out to work, she knows that her elder daughter suffers the brunt but there is no other option - "*dhaka de gaadi chal hi rahi hai*", she said.

Some also call some family member from the village, generally a woman either a younger sister or the mother/mother in law, to take care of the young child. However this sort of arrangements are not very common with the workers because it adds to the living cost in the city and family members are in the village to take care of their land or farms. Few of the workers informed us that they left their young children back in villages with their family members so that their lives do not get disturbed with migrating to another unknown city. In one of the discussion with the domestic workers women mentioned that they have not brought the children to the city because in the village they will get to learn Bangla (their mother tongue) which is not possible in the city.

Women working in the Garment Factories

One interesting arrangement for childcare was shared by the garment workers in Kapashera was the '*Shishu Palan kendra*' (day care centre) in their locality or the '*Rakhwal*' (custodian). These are the private day care centres being run by some person in the community catering to the demand of the working women in the locality. The timing of the centre is generally from 8 in the morning to 9 pm, which suit the garment factory workers who have longer shifts. They take children from very young age to school going children with the aim of providing custodial care to the children. The charges of these centres, as informed by the workers range from Rs 500 to Rs 1500 per month, per child. This however was a very expensive option for the workers and most of the women who participated in the discussion informed us about this arrangement but have never used it for long. "Around 6-7 years back I used to leave my 3 children in the '*Shishu Palan centre*' in the locality and paid Rs 1200 per month for it. I was earning only Rs 1800 at that time, so I had to discontinue this sort of arrangement. I informed a distant relative who was living nearby to keep an eye on my children when I go to work", one of the garment industry worker whose children have passed the age of six mentioned during one of the discussions.

Women working as Domestic Workers

Some of the domestic workers mentioned that sometime they take their kids their workplace, if the employer is good, but that is not a permanent arrangement as they themselves are afraid that if the child will break something in employers' house that would become a liability to them. One of the domestic worker cited that "didi plays with my daughter and also teaches her sometime but I am afraid if she would break something accidentally then didi might get angry...no one would like that". As for the garment factory workers taking their children to their worksite is not an option, even in case of emergency.

As the domestic workers do shift based work – one in the morning and another one in the evening, they come back in the afternoon to look after their children. Most of them cited aforementioned reason to

leave the children alone by informing the neighbor to keep an eye on them. Some of them even mentioned that because the worksite is far away from their homes they only go for one shift to be with their children, especially young ones.

Need for maternity benefits and childcare provisions

When any of the 8 FGDs started it was obvious that the wages and the terms and condition of work had more priority in their life than childcare provisions or maternity entitlements. As mentioned earlier also that they generally had their make shift arrangements for such needs. However, as the discussion proceeded the absence of such provisions and its impact took the momentum and most of the women shared their experience that how maternity entitlements and childcare provisions can help the women and ensure optimum child development.

Many of them said that they were not able to work properly because they were worried about their children whom they have left unattended. Someone in the group discussion shared her thoughts that while at work she keeps thinking about their children – (“have they had food, are they safe or not?”) but she has no other option but to leave them alone and come to work to earn money. They said in such conditions the child is neglected which adversely affect their development and are trapped in the cycle of poverty and appropriate environment of care and love is needed for the children even when they go out for work. Nonetheless, when the question of whose responsibility it should be to provide such facility came up then most of them had no answer to this. Some of them mentioned that state should provide such services but when we discussed further that how will this happen, they were of the opinion someone from the organizations like us should take this issue further.

Women working in the Garment Sector

A garment industry worker in one of the discussions shared her story of how she lost her young son because there were no arrangements for childcare in the company she worked. She couldn't take off from work because she feared termination from work for asking leave, she asked her daughter to take his son who was ill to the local doctor. The doctor was a quack and gave him some vaccination because of which he died. She says if there would have been some facility in her company premises she could have worked and her child would have been alive.

In case of garment factory workers who have long and stringent working hours, the private '*Shishu Palan Kendras*' or '*Rakhwals*' in the locality which charge money for just the custodial care of the young children depict the acute need of childcare provisions for working women.

Women working as Domestic Workers

Most of the women, when asked would such provisions help, resonated with a yes but were clueless on how and who should take the responsibility of providing them. To them if any organization can run a childcare centre in their locality then the children could benefit a lot from it. In one of the discussion the women, unanimously said that these days it is so important for even girl child to be educated and any such centre or an Anganwadi nearby their area would be very useful for the children.

Living conditions of the workers

The living condition of the domestic workers as well as garment factory workers and their families were poor but domestic workers were living in shanties (although on rent) as compared to the garment factory workers who have been living in pucca rented rooms in the area near the industries. One of the FGD which was conducted at Pahadi Basti with domestic workers, there they were living on the encroached land and were not paying any rent for accommodation. However, they faced difficulties in terms of fear of eviction and local goons using this unregulated area for criminal activities. Each and every house, be it of domestic worker or garment factory worker had electricity connection but for water they collected it from a common source.

The landlord from the local community of Jats and Yadavs was much of a nuisance to the migrant workers and their families as they not only charged rent and electricity charges as they wished but also kept an eye on tenants' activities. Raising voice against any injustice would mean that the tenant would need to vacate the plot and moving to another plot doesn't solve their issue. One of the women in the discussion stated that "the landlord charge them Rs 8 to Rs 10 per unit of electricity but the government rate is much less but we still pay a higher amount because if we will say anything we would need to vacate the plot and the story would be same with the other plot's landlord. So we pay higher price rather than confronting the landlord".

Concluding Remarks

From the study it is clear that for the women working in the unorganized sector in India getting maternity benefits or the childcare support is still a far cry but the focus group discussions conducted with the women in the unorganized sector has at least initiated a discussion among them around their entitlements w.r.t maternity benefits and childcare provisions.

Non implementation of existing provisions to lack of provision and regulation has made the women and children more vulnerable. Women are juggling their paid work and childcare work single handedly which has even resulted in loss of life for some.

The maternity benefits should be universal and unconditional to include all women in the country and that the maternity leave should be extended to six months for the women give birth to a healthy baby and to recover. The crèche or the day care facility should be provided for all and not linked to number of women in a factory or the number of children at the worksite. Importantly, the state should ensure effective implementation of the existing laws and provide the social security net to this most vulnerable group of migrant women workers.

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Annexure I - Existing provisions for Maternity benefit and Childcare for garment workers and domestic workers

Unlike the domestic workers in the country whose condition of work is not regulated by any law, the condition of work and other welfare measures in the work place for the garment workers are covered under **the Factories Act, 1948**. The legislation clearly mandates the provision of crèche facility in the factory, if the number of women employees is minimum 30.

Article 48 of the Factories Act, 1938 states:

Crèches -

(1) In every factory wherein more than thirty women workers are ordinarily employed there shall be provided and maintained a suitable room or rooms for the use of children under the age of six years of such women.

(2) Such rooms shall provide adequate accommodation, shall be adequately lighted and ventilated, shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition and shall be under the charge of women trained in the care of children and infants.

(3) The State Government may make rules—(a) prescribing the location and the standards in respect of construction, accommodation, furniture and other equipment of rooms to be provided under this section;(b) requiring the provision in factories to which this section applies of additional facilities for the care of children belonging to women workers, including suitable provision of facilities for washing and changing their clothing;(c) requiring the provision in any factory of free milk or refreshment or both for such children;(d) requiring that facilities shall be given in any factory for the mothers of such children to feed them at the necessary intervals.

As for the maternity benefits for the women working in the garment manufacturing industry the **Maternity Benefit Act, 1961** is applicable. However, this act is applicable only to woman who is on the pay rolls of the company and who has worked for a period of atleast 80 days in the last 12 months immediately preceding the date of her expected delivery.

Under this act a pregnant woman worker is entitled to a paid leave for a period of eighty days prior to delivery to eighty days succeeding delivery or miscarriage. The act also states that the women who have delivered a child will get two nursing breaks of prescribed duration until the child attains the age of 15 months. As per the **Haryana Maternity Benefits Rules**, the duration for the break is 20 mins each and in

case the creche or a place where the children are left by the woman is not in the vicinity of worksite, a period upto 15 mins more may be allowed for the purpose of journey from crèche to the worksite.

As the majority of women workers in the garment factories are employed on contract basis they are not covered under the Maternity Benefit Act. As the name suggests the **Unorganized Worker Social Security Act, 2006** which requires central government to formulate a scheme for maternity benefits to cover women working in the unorganized sector.

Indira Gandhi Matritva Yojna is a conditional maternity benefit scheme which was piloted in 53 districts in the country in 2010. It is a conditional cash transfer scheme for pregnant and lactation women of 19 years of age or above for first two live births. In 2013 the scheme was brought under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) as it provides partial wage compensation and good nutrition to the pregnant and lactating women. Under the scheme there is a provision of cash maternity benefit of Rs 6,000 which is paid in two installments. This is currently not applicable in the Gurgaon district in Haryana.

Apart from central laws and schemes the state of Haryana has some schemes for the pregnant women working in the garment industry. As per the **Labour Welfare Board schemes, 2015** - any worker (women or wife of male worker who (i) is earning maximum of Rs 20,000 per month, (ii) has been working in the factory for atleast one year is eligible to receive a sum of Rs 7,000 as financial help for delivery of two children and three children in case of three girls.

Integrated Child Development Scheme is one of the earliest schemes which has been instrumental in promoting the health and nutrition of child and mother. ICDS was started by the GoI in 1975. The six services which are provided by the Anganwadi center are:

1. Supplementary Nutrition Service
2. Pre-school education
3. Immunization
4. Nutrition and Health Education
5. Health Check up
6. Referral Services

Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for children of working mothers which was revamped in 2006 provide assistance to NGOs for running crèches for children from six months to six years of age in rural as well as in urban areas. The centre is open for eight hours per day. It is a pan India scheme and as on Jan 2015 there are 23,293 functional crèches.

Annexure II - Focus Group Discussion Notes

Focus Group Discussion I

Date – 2nd Feb 2016

Notes from the FGD with Domestic workers in Carterpuri village, Gurgaon

Key takeaways

- It was a mix group of women - those who have children under six and those who have elder children
- For health checkups during pregnancy and even for delivery they pay out of their pocket and get no support from the employer or the state.
- Their hospital expenses for delivery are in the range of Rs 4000 – 5000 from their pocket as they go to a nearby local private clinic. For this take advance from their employer and repay by pay cuts in from their wages.
- They also said they know there is an Anganwadi hospital in the area for normal health checkup requirement by the government but they also charge money for treatment.
- Women who are in dire need to earn money keep working till 7-8th month of pregnancy and others, who can afford, leave the job on their will.
- Generally, it is the employer who would tell her to take rest during pregnancy and rejoin after delivery if they want. So they have to leave work when they are pregnant even if they don't want.
- Joining back work after delivery also depends on the economic well-being of the woman; some of them join just after few days but most of them return after 4 -5 months break.
- Some of the employer let the domestic worker bring her young child along with her to work but they said they make the child sit in the corner and work but most of the employer prefer they do not bring the child to work.
- So they leave the child to with the neighbours or the lady who is on leave to take care of the child when they go to work or at times leave the children all alone in the room they live in.
- The group was aware of the Anaganwadi centre in their locality but they don't avail the services from the centre because some people have reported that the Anganwadi worker do not give food on time to the children and even beats them. So they want to avail any services from the centre.
- There is no such provision of crèche in the building where they go for work. Some of the women said the security guards don't even let the workers sit in the park in the building, let alone having an earmarked space for their children.
- When asked about the state responsibility in providing facility such as crèche, a lot of them said if there is any provision like this either by the state or in the building they work in, it will help them to work and earn more money. They will not have to worry about their children while they are working.
- Some of them also questioned that women who work in factories get ESI cards and avail other facilities but because they are domestic workers, they don't have access to basic benefits such as health.

- Few of them said that not only the government but the employer or the building they work in should contribute/provide them such basic services.
- Some of them have been living in Gurgaon for the last 20 years but they don't have any identity proof from their current address.
- The local landlord wouldn't allow the domestic workers to have any identity proof from their current locality, as this would increase his tax liability.

Observations

- The FGD rather turned out to be a community discussion with different participants including women and men
- Women didn't express the need of childcare or maternity provisions as the most important need for them and it was not because none of them had a younger child but there were other important issues that they were concerned about such as wages, working condition, their education, unity among workers to demand their rights, etc.
- The reliance on informal structure for most of their needs be it childcare, loan or health, can be one of the reasons for not expressing the need of maternity benefit or childcare as a pressing need.
- When asked about the responsibility of the state in providing crèches, maternity benefits they all agreed that it will be good if it is provided but none of them really wanted the state to provide these, in such conversations they mentioned more the employers contribution and liability.
- Most of the women were not even clear about the idea of the crèche and it was explained to them what do we mean by crèche and what services are provided in the crèche.

Focus Group Discussion II

Date – 5th Feb 2016

Notes from the FGD with Domestic workers in Nathupur village, Gurgaon

Key takeaways

- Most of the families were from Nadia in West Bengal. Majority of them were Muslims.
- Some families have been in Gurgaon for last 12 years on the other hand some families had migrated just 6 months back
- Most of the women in the group discussion had atleast one child of less than 6 years
- None of the women in the group knew the meaning of Creche and when asked about Anganwadi they said they don't know about it.
- Later on after much probing they said they call Anganwadi as the 'centre' and said had used the centre in the village not here

- Here in Gurgaon they are not aware of Anganwadi the location etc. and use the service.
- When asked about ASHA which none of them knew, however when further probed they told about women coming home for immunization etc.
- Most of them informed that they started working after 1 and half years of delivery of their child except for 1 or 2 who worked till 5 months of pregnancy and then went to their village for delivery.
- Most of them were working as domestic help in nearby kothis.
- While women went out for work, most of the time the child remained unattended with neighbours being asked to keep supervision. However, some also informed that some or the other family member had to be there to take care of the child all the time.
- They also informed that some of them took their children to their workplace while some employers were fine with this (actively engaged in playing, education of the child) while some couldn't even think about it fearing that the employer would not allow or they are not able to work properly. Some also had fear that if the child accidentally breaks something in the house the employer would get angry.
- Some of them they left their children in their in villages because they will get to learn Bangla in school there.
- They were saying that the education is really important for children both for girls and boys. Although none of them was even literate they said educating the girl child has become so important to find them a suitable match for marriage
- Most of them work in 3 - 4 houses and some even 5.
- They start there day at work from 5 or 6 in the morning come back in the afternoon and then go at 4-5 pm for the next shift and come back by 8'o clock
- They informed that there was some doctor or physician who sits once a week in the nearby government school building. Though they were not sure if he was a government appointed officer/ doctor who was there for immunization of the children.
- One of the women stated that she only works in one house only and she deliberately does so because she wants to spend more time with her child, as he often falls sick. But when asked that if the child is fit and fine would you want to work more then she replied that she doesn't know the answer right now but still she would prefer to spend time with the child.
- To this we asked her in that case she would not send the child to the creche, if there is one nearby to which she replied that in village she takes the child to the 'centre' but she is not familiar with any such facility here and she is too new here. (trust issues)
- When asked who could provide such childcare provision - 'state' was centrally seen as the provider of these services. When we asked who the state is? How will this happen? To this they responded that we as NGO workers would take this forward collectively.

Observations

- One of them said they have health card of children which they use here in Gurgaon, we asked her to show us those cards. Those cards were in Bangla, to which we were surprised that the govt. administration here is Gurgaon is using cards which the migrants can read.

- For them the priority was more about wages and terms and conditions of work or employment than adequate childcare provisions.
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Focus Group Discussion III

Date – 7th Feb 2016

Notes from the FGD with Garment Factory workers in Sarhol, Gurgaon

Key takeaways

- We started the discussion with taking stock of the meeting Nari Shakti Manch had with them last Sunday, which about sexual harassment at work place and maternity benefits.
- Many women in the group didn't have children under the age of 6 years but they discussed about the time when their children were young.
- When asked that were they can take their children to factory, they all unanimously stated that they are not allowed to take their children in the factory premises.
- None of the women present in the group was working when they were pregnant or worked before child birth. They came to Gurgaon from their villages only after giving birth
- One of them said she started working after the younger one was of three years and the other informed us that her younger one was 5 years then she started working.
- When asked with whom they left the children when they started working, the women who started working when her son was of 3 years said that she left her son with the elder daughter who was of 7-8 years.
- When asked about her daughter's education, she said because she had to take care of the younger child she didn't go to school. She was the one taking care of the younger child - feeding him, caring, bathing, etc. The women said her daughter only raised her son.
- When we asked others that were they allowed to take their kids to company, they said they will not and don't allow children inside. They said taking one day off from work is so difficult can't even think of taking children to company.
- Later, she had lost her son last year only because she could not take off from work to take him to hospital when he was not well.
- It was during winters last year that her six years old son had cold and cough she wanted to take her to a doctor but she couldn't take off from work, so she asked her elder daughter to take care of him. She later said she was scared to ask for a leave because she feared that she might be chucked out from work.
- It didn't get better so she asked her daughter to take him to the nearby doctor in the basti. According to her the 'Bengali doctor' in the locality apparently gave some injection to the boy and after sometime he was no more.

- She was in the company working when someone came to tell her that her son is not responding, she rushed to the clinic but the child was no more.
- She has 3 daughters and she lost the only son who was the youngest. She couldn't stop weeping still now and that has damaged her very badly (emotionally)
- She said there is no facility for the women who has young children and she has suffered because of that.
- She even had an ESI card but couldn't take her son to hospital because she couldn't take off from work.
- She even filed a case against the doctor but he ran off and closed his clinic.
- She also said that now she will be visiting her village and there people will taunt her that she lost her child because earning is more important to her than the child.
- When asked who takes care of the young child when the mother has gone for work, many suggested elder siblings, neighbours and some said they leave the child alone in the room.
- One of them told us about the 'Rakhwal' in the neighbourhood who takes care of 8-9 children depending on her capacity to manage when the mother has gone to work. When probed further they said there are some women in the locality who keep children for some fee. As per their knowledge they take around Rs 1000 per month per child for 8 hours per day.
- Some of them mentioned it is not easy to give Rs 1000 - Rs 1500 and that's why many a times they leave the child alone in the room.
- They even said without any proper facility to keep their children and the make shift arrangements they are not able to focus on their work, even at work they are concerned about their children
- When asked have they seen any room in the factory premises for children with toys and other things, one of them said she has seen but only when the buyer visit is happening. They decorate the room, get the bedding and toys and click pictures of that room.
- When asked don't you tell them that you already have the room so let us use this room for our children, to this the participants replied that they were not aware about the purpose of this room but have informally learnt about it that this for kids in the factory.
- They also said they got to know about the purpose of the room through NSM meetings only.
- When asked is there a solution to this problem of childcare when the mother is working, one of them said there should be some facility where the child could be looked after when the mother is working, a place which is safe for the child, because otherwise the parents suffer the most if there is no such facility available.
- When asked about Anaganwadi, they all said they have heard about it but only one or two knew what is the centre all about. One of them said it is mainly to give food to young children. She also mentioned that the AWC here (locality) doesn't provide food on regular basis to the children of the migrant workers rather they consume it among themselves only. Once or twice they get food (children of the migrants) but later on they refuse to give them any.
- Another one informed us where the AWC is in the locality and rest said they know where the school is but not the AWC. The one who knew where the AWC is, said that whatever the govt. facility might be because of corruption it never reaches them. The supply arrives but the workers distribute it among themselves rather than reaching out to the beneficiary.

- As the GWs get only one day off - Sunday it is difficult to meet them or take time from them.
 - They were saying that the one day off that they get they attend "shiv charcha' which a religious congregation and then they come to NSM meeting - their husbands tell them they are missing on a holiday also.
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Focus Group Discussion IV

Date – 17th Feb 2016

Notes from the FGD with Domestic workers at Pahadi Basti, Gurgaon

Key takeaways

- It was a mix group of women - mothers of children under six years and even grandmothers who have young grandchildren
- The slum is illegally located on the encroached land of Municipal Corporation of Gurgaon
- Some 300 households are living there from various states - MP, UP, WB, Jharkhand and Rajasthan
- I leave the child at home alone and some have left working and some leave their young children with elder siblings
- One of them who leaves her young child with a 12 years old when asked doesn't the 12 years old boy goes to school - she said he goes to school and the younger one accompanies him. After further questioning we got to know they go to a make shift run by an NGO in the area. But to this also she said that it is difficult even for the elder one to focus on studies in the school.
- One of them said she also leave the younger child with the elder sibling but she doesn't go to school anymore and takes care of the younger sibling.
- Some of them leave even their 3 years old in the school (informal) in the Basti, which is open from 9 to 1 pm.
- When asked about creches, everyone said they haven't heard about this term and when asked about Angwandi they all said they have heard and know where it is in the nearby settlements (Sikanderpur). There is none in the Basti as it is on the encroached land.
- When probed further on the Anganwadi they said it is for immunization and health check ups, polio but some also said the kids also get food to eat but they don't use the facility as it is far from their home.
- They also said although the AWW told them to come daily and take the food for the children but they don't go because of the distance
- When asked about where the delivery was done we got a mixed response - some of them had gone to their respective villages, some had gone to public hospitals and some to private hospital
- And one of them said when the child was born in Gurgaon they had gone back to their village because there is no facility here, no one to take care of the child and the mother.

- The lady who said she had taken her daughter in law to public hospital for delivery did not get any monetary entitlement under any scheme rather they had to spend some money. Also she mentioned that the facilities are not good in the sarkari hospital - when her daughter in law was in labour pain no one was there to take care of her.
- The lady who had gone to the private hospital had to spend Rs 20000 on her delivery.
- They told us that in villages usually they get money after the child delivery but not in the city (Gurgaon)
- They knew about the ASHA didi but said no one come to their Basti, but someone from some NGO hold camps in the Basti
- They also said they themselves leave their job when they are pregnant. As the employer is interested in work only, they don't ask you to leave - they even say that you shouldn't have these many kids.
- Few of them have worked till the 8th month of pregnancy and then left the work themselves and the employer didn't give anything. They help by the way of giving loan and ask them to repay by doing certain tasks, some waive off the debt if they feel like. They also informed us that they were doing everything even in their 8th month, and the motivating factor was to earn so that after child birth they have some money in their hand.
- Some of them said that some employers do say to take rest but make sure that you get a replacement. The women said the rich here can feed the dogs and don't give an extra penny to the workers
- One of them said that her child was born in the private hospital and when why not sarkari hospital she said that she lost her first newborn in sarkari hospital and don't trust their services. The quality there is not good. She spent Rs 6000 in the private clinic in Nathupur for her delivery.
- They said they have heard about Anganwadi but not a creche or a day care centre
- When we asked that do they take their young children to where they work, one of them said why should we take children to work, if we do take them how will we work then? They also said no one apart from them are allowed in the apartment complex, they have their id cards and anyone without the I card can't enter the complex
- Another women said in Kothis she can take her grandchildren with them to work sometimes but in apartment complexes only who have I cards are allowed so they don't even take their kids to work.
- They go for one shift of work as they live a little far away from their work place
- They said when they are at work half of their attention is fixed on what is happening at home and the work also suffers.
- When asked that do they think or want any support in childcare - the first response comes as who wouldn't want it. Then we further probed about who would provide the support they said they are not aware who can help them. Some of them said the at home sister in law, elder daughter can help in childcare - she will not go to school but stay at home and help with childcare.
- One of them said her 12-13 years old daughter take care of the younger sibling and the household work when she goes out to work, she knows that her elder daughter suffers the brunt but there is no other option "dhaka de gaadi chal hi rahi hai" she said

- We further probed that who do they think should provide the creche facility, they were not able to answer that and then someone mentioned that some sahiyka should run the creche.
 - One of them said that she was teaching in the Basti where she was living earlier, some madam had helped her to teach in the centre, but she doesn't teach in the school run in this Basti. Someone appointed by the NGO (who is an outsider) comes to teach here.
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Focus Group Discussion V

Date – 28th Feb 2016

Notes from the FGD with Garment Factory workers at Kapashera Gali No. 11, Delhi

Key takeaways

- 8 -10 women who are working the Garment Factories of Gurgaon (Udhyog Vihar) participated in the discussion. Some have been working in the garment factory for 3 years and some for 12 years
- Most of the women said they didn't work till the time their children attained 6-7 years and there was someone to look after them.
- They said when they join work, either they leave their younger children to elder siblings or to the relatives living nearby or sometimes alone
- When asked is it easy to work when they leave their children at home like this to this they replied that that's why they don't start work till the time their children are old enough and even after 6-7 years they can't focus completely on work but because of the financial constraints they have to work by making informal arrangements for the children. Earning money is really necessary.
- One of them mentioned that she has started working now because earlier her husband didn't allow her to. But now the family has disintegrated and they have kids so she also needs to contribute financially.
- Another one said that she was working when she was pregnant but was chucked out from work. They didn't give the reason that it is because of pregnancy but because of health reasons. She said this happened 11 years back and now that company no longer exists.
- Yet another women said she was pregnant and working till eighth month of her pregnancy. Although she has worked in many garment factories but she was in security when she was pregnant and was working on contract basis. When we asked did she leave or was chucked out of job then she said they started creating problems for her. Standing all day and working was becoming difficult for her, if she spend a little extra time in the washroom then the supervisor will start abusing her and he said you are not able to work you rather leave this job. Then keeping in mind her physical health she left the job herself.
- Then after her child was of six months she started working again in garment factory. She has worked in many garment manufacturing companies because she said even when she fell sick and took leave she was removed from her job.

- She was asked not to come to factory from the next day, and she was not given any monetary benefit rather she mentioned she didn't even get her salary and someone else on her behalf collected her salary when she had gone to the village.
- She used to leave her children with neighbour earlier when she left for work. Now her younger son is of six years and elder daughter of 10 years and both of them go to school and she is working in tailoring department in the garment company.
- We asked her that didn't she ask him to pay her salary then and there if he wants her not to come to factory - she along with others said this is not the way and they can't raise voice like that "sahab log zyada jaante hai - abhi bhi aisa bolne se nahi chalega". They mentioned that the supervisor will say "2 mahiney baad anna, 3 mahine baad anna" would make excuses and delay their payment
- When we her on what basis the supervisor said that she is not able to work and told her to leave the job she said that while working she would want to sit for some time and then he would say that this is not the way - stand and work don't sit (even when she was pregnant)
- She said now also when they use the washroom there is a female attendant who would even abuse them for spending more time and if they attend any emergency call she would say go to work - you don't get salary for talking and abused her. The supervisor would abuse her if she is not able to meet the target - if it is 60 pieces per day then even if she does 30-40, the woman would get to hear a lot from the supervisor.
- Some of them said that earlier no one used to get maternity leave but now women do get paid maternity leave of 3 months, one woman's relative got the benefit and she worked for full 9 months of pregnancy. When we asked her was she on contract she said the women who received the benefits was a permanent employee working for 4-5 years in that company.
- Then one of the facilitator asked that do women working on contract basis receive any such benefit all of them said no - they don't.
- None of them knew about creche facility in their factory, they said kids are not allowed in the factory. Some of them said when the buyer visit is scheduled they will open a room - decorate it with toys, make the factory clean and as soon as the buyer leave the room is locked and everything is back to normal.
- One of the women said that there is a centre in the locality for keeping young children and take some Rs 600 per month.
- When we asked them do you think there should be a creche in the factory most of them said yes but one of them said no because if we will take our children with us to the factory then how would we work?
- The rest of the group pitched in to make her understand the working lady will be able to work because someone else will be taking care of her children and not her.
- After listening to all still she said that the company would never prefer or employ a women with children and then the group said that this lady is thinking for the company and not about the working women - us.
- When we asked them if their job is terminated when they are pregnant then what do they do to earn money - some said generally the woman would go back to her village but some one of them

mentioned that she would be dependent on whatever her husband earns which is not sufficient and because of that the women will bear the brunt of ill health and this affects the health of her child also. She said she herself has lost a child 7-8 years back because the girl was born malnourished.

- It was also shared that when they don't get work in the garment factory the women take whatever job comes in their way. As one of the women was working as a security guard till the time she got job in the garment factory again, she into tailoring now,
 - Some of them shared that now beautiful and young women are preferred for job in the factory and they chuck out the women who are old (age wise and the time they have spent in the factory as well).
 - They said that women of 18-19 years are preferred as they can extract more work from them. One of the older women in group got angry and said that nothing is going to change as she said there is no unity among women, and that the masters or supervisor choose some women to fulfill their sexual desire because of which those women get all the benefits and the rest who raise their voice are chucked out of their job.
 - Another women mentioned that in one of the factory a video was made.
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Focus Group Discussion VI

Date – 18th March 2016

Notes from the FGD with Domestic workers at Nathupur, Gurgaon

Key takeaways

- All the women in the group had children, some young children and some had elder who have got married (18 - 20 years)
- Most of them have been living in the city for more than 8 years and have come from Nadia district of West Bengal. Some of them were from Bihar as well.
- Most of the women started working after child birth. Only 2 of the 10 ladies present in the FGD (who are working) were working when they were pregnant and they left the job after first and second month resp. because the work was strenuous and they were not able to do it.
- When asked that was there any pressure from the employer to leave the work both of them said the employer was not bothered and it was their decision to leave as the employer who doesn't cooperate much would not have become more troublesome.
- When asked that did they go for check ups during pregnancy the reply was that they were not aware about this and when in pain then they approached the nearby doctor.
- One of the lady said that because she was not getting regular check ups done during her pregnancy she developed some complications and the govt. hospital in Gurgaon referred her to

big govt. hospital in Delhi. She didn't know the name of the Delhi hospital, someone in the group said it was Safdarjung to which she agreed.

- Most of them had institutional deliveries in the village, some of them even in the city had institutional delivery.
- One of the lady said that she had gone to private clinic for check ups because in govt. hospital they don't do proper check ups and she doesn't trust the govt. hospitals service but for delivery she had gone to a govt. hospital only (because the treatment in private is expensive). She said the doctor she used to go to was working in the govt. hospital but also ran a private clinic and she used to go to her clinic because the doctor will attend to her more in the private clinic than the hospital. Another lady added to this that in the govt. hospitals there are long queues which meant sacrificing one day of work. That's why she preferred check ups in the private clinics
- Another one said she had gone to govt. hospital in the village and ambulance was sent to pick her up. She stayed there for 2 days and got Rs 1000 as well. She added that people who have BPL card get these not all, when some of the other women in the group said they didn't get any money.
- She even said that in her village for two children the mother gets money but these days even for the third child some get money.
- When asked about ASHA, they all knew that there was ASHA didi in the village but didn't get regular check up done.
- One of them said she joined back work after 5 months of delivery and when asked how she managed childcare she said that her sisters are here in this area so she used to leave the child with them. Now the child is of 2 years and when asked what she does now she said now she leaves her kid with the her sisters children. And three of them together manage themselves as all three of them go to work. She mentioned that all the three children are in the age group of 2 to 4.5 years. When we asked does the eldest girl who is 4.5 years old can manage the younger ones she said she can't but there is no other option. She has come here to earn money can't sit at home to take care of them.
- Another one said she joined back after the child reached 2 years of age. And inform her neighbour to keep a watch on the children when she leaves for work, another lady added the children keep watching cartoon all the time when their mother leave them at home.
- When asked if they are satisfied with this sort of care arrangement then a strong no was the reply and they said they were not able to concentrate on work properly as they keep thinking about what the children might be doing at home.
- They said they know that the current arrangement is not good for their children as there is no one to look after them the kids generally go with some vendors, go missing but they have no option as they have to earn their living.
- When asked that do they take their young children to work, they gave a good laugh to it and said that the madam wouldn't even allow them to come as it will affect their work. They added if they take the children for one of two days the employer wouldn't mind it and rather love the children but not everyday.
- No one was aware of a place where young children are taken care of. And said would be good if there is something like this is available.

- When asked about the Anganwadi in the area, a lot of them women knew where the AWC is in the locality. Interestingly, the children present in the group got so excited and mentioned that they knew where the AWC is in the area.
 - Although they know where the AWC but not many avail any facility from there. One of them used to go there but then stopped and when we asked about the reason she said someone told her that they will take their children away.
 - One of them said her girl who goes to the school used to take the younger ones along with her to AWCs as this is next to the school, but many mother didn't allow their children to go along. They are scared of sending the child alone or with another elder child.
 - They were so reluctant to take their children to AWC and when probed them more and more they said they don't trust the people there as their kids are very young. Children who were 5 - 6 years old still go to AWC to get food.
 - We asked them should we open a childcare centre in the locality to this all said Yes, but then we asked as they don't send their children to AWCs then they wouldn't send their children to such centres but they said if they see the set up and trust the one running it they will definitely send their children to the centre.
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Focus Group Discussion VII

Date – 18th March 2016

Notes from the FGD with Garment Factory workers at Kapashera, Delhi

Key takeaways

- The FGD was attended by 10-12 women and most of them were mother of children under six years of age.
- A majority of the women who joined for discussion were working in the garment industry as contract workers or daily wage labourers.
- When we asked them that do you face any challenges because you have to go to work and take care of the young child at home, one of them said that they the kids whole day just roam around and are generally neglected. When probed further she said that her elder daughter of 10 years take care of younger son of 4.5 years and that her daughter herself is young and is not able to properly take care of the younger sibling.
- Another woman informed us she leaves her younger child of 4 years with her 8 years old daughter but the daughter goes to school also. On further discussion she informed us that when her daughter goes to school then the younger child is at home alone, all by himself.
- Another woman said that she leaves both her children alone in the house when she goes to the factory to work and both the children are under six years of age - one of 5 years and the other of

3 years. She says at times when they are not listening she even tie her children with rope and leave for work but then tell her neighbours to keep an eye on them.

- One of the women said that her mother lives with her and takes care of two children, both of them are under six years of age.
- When asked is there a problem if they leave their kids alone in the house, they unanimously said that 'preshani toh rehti hi hai aur tension rehti ki bacche chhod ke jaate hai'
- We asked them do they keep a check on the kids when they are alone by calling them or by some other way, they said nothing like that they don't. Only in the evening they come home and meet or talk to their kids.
- Then we asked are they able to work properly, all them together said that their worry about the kids 'man to yahi rehta hai, dil toh yahin rehta hai'. They said they are worried at work that their children have had food or not, are they safe? But what can they do they have to earn money so they have to leave their children home and go to work.
- Two of the women said that they had been working when they were pregnant, the others started work after their children were little old.
- One of the women who was working when she was pregnant said that she left her job when she was six months pregnant and when asked her about the reason for leaving, she said that she was not keeping well and her feet were swollen.
- She said as she was contract worker that time, she didn't get any medical help from the employer. She didn't go to her village rather stayed in the city only and didn't get any checkups done. She delivered her baby at home only. She also spent around Rs 2500 from her pocket for delivery at home. And joined back work after the child was one and a half years old.
- Other women also said that they too their delivery also took place at their home only.
- One of them said that she had gone to the hospital in UP (her native village) for delivery. She said for her first child they had gone to a private hospital as her husband was more concerned about the quality of the service and the child then the money. Second time she had gone to a government hospital because there was relative working there at that hospital that time.
- Another one also said that she had gone to government hospital for delivery. She started working when her child was of six months, she was not working during her pregnancy. Now her mother takes care of children when she goes for work.
- There were some saying that in some hospital no money is given because of corruption but a senior woman countered their statement by saying that if you get your checkups (3 months) properly and have your documents in place then you will definitely get the money from the hospital.
- Both of them said they got money under the scheme for the second child and had used the ambulance to reach the hospital.
- She cited example of her daughter and daughter in law that they had gone for institutional delivery to government hospital and didn't spend any penny. Her daughter in law was even referred to a private hospital (Mata Chanan Devi Hospital, Delhi) because of some complications but there also they didn't have to spend anything. The hospital is a private hospital but for certain time duration govt.

- We asked them do pregnant women get maternity leave in their factory, one of them said that if the women is a permanent employee and works during her pregnancy then she gets three months paid leave after the delivery. And on who are on contract then they don't get any leave or any other benefits.
- The permanent workers get benefits from ESI also but nothing for the contract worker.
- They even mentioned contract labour can get some of the benefits only if we talk to the 'thekedar (middle man)' not the company management.
- When we asked them have they heard about creche, they said they don't know much about it and after we explained to them the meaning of creche, most of them said that such centres are being run here in Kapashera.
- One of them informed us that there is a creche in Gali No. 6, Shishu palan centre and they take Rs 900 per month per child (from 8 am to 9 pm every day). The said it is private centre, some woman from the community is running that centre.
- The facilitator informed us that there are some day care centres which are being run by an NGO named Nirmal Chayya in the area.
- They agreed that the creche or a day care centre will be useful for them as they can go to work without any tension about the safety of their children.
- When we asked that they have heard about Anganwadi all said yes but only one knew where AWC in the locality is, and others didn't say anything. But then it was asked that is there AWC in their villages - all of them strongly affirmed 'yes'.
- They said AWC is for children - they give meal for young children, and health services. We asked them once again that is there no AWC in the locality, most of them said must be but we are not aware of it.
- Some of them said there was one AWC in the locality but it has been shut down. They have sent their children to the centre, but now it has been shut. They didn't know the reason for closing the centre.
- We asked them that have they ever taken their kids to the factory where they work. All of them said no because they will not allow the kids to enter the factory premises.
- One of them said that very recently she had taken her kid along with her just to collect her money and then also she was told to keep the child out of the factory "isko bahar nikalo"
- We then asked how many women work in their factory they said there are many women but most of them are on contract but when asked for a specific number they said must be 100 and above
- We informed them about the provision of creche under the factory act and asked them - does anyone has seen a room for children in their factory premises, the answer to this was a resounding NO.
- They also informed us that there is no unity among women and that why they are not able to collectively demand their benefits.
- They said when there is a buyer visit then they open a room for children. Also, they said that the supervisors train the workers to speak certain things to the buyer. When we asked them why do they agree to speak what the factory management wants them to the buyer they again said unity

issues. No one alone wants to take risk of speaking the truth and lose the job, because the rest generally would support the management for the fear of losing the job.

Focus Group Discussion VIII

Date – 28th March 2016

Notes from the FGD with Garment Factory workers at Kapashera, Delhi

Key takeaways

- The discussion was attended by 6 women workers, 2 of them have left their job in the garment factory and work on piece rate basis from their home.
- All the women present in the discussions were mothers but only one of them had a child under six years. Almost all of them have been living in the city for more than 10 years.
- They mentioned that they were not working when they were pregnant because their employer never considered or offered reduction of work and it was difficult for them to work and they wanted to take care of their health than work in that condition
- Most of them said they didn't work when their children were young. One of them said that she was working in between when her daughter was 2 -3 years for 1 and 1/2 years but then left it because childcare was becoming an issue and even her neighbours used to taunt her for not taking proper care of her child.
- She used to leave her daughter with the neighbour for the period she was working when her daughter was young
- She informed us that she was working when she was pregnant but left in the 3-4th month of pregnancy, when asked for the reason she said her house was far away from the company so walking was difficult and in general considering her health she left the job.
- Another one said that when she was pregnant with her youngest child she had gone to her village, because there was no one here to look after her and her two children.
- She started working after her children were born and there were financial crisis. She was working when her children were young and she used to leave her children in the local 'Shishu palan' (a place where the care taker kept children of working parents in exchange of money) in 2013
- The shishu palan school used to take Rs 500 per child per month from 8:30 am to 9pm. And it was difficult for her to manage as what she used to earn most of it used to get spent on the day care and the food for children.
- Her son got sick when he was in the school and then someone known from her village came to live in the same locality so she started leaving her children with her.
- She has been living in the city for almost 17 years.
- Both of them said they left the work because the children were not been taken care of properly. One of them said that she had to leave her 9 months old son in the shishu palan and still he was

not keeping well so she left her job. Also, the shishu palan was not ready to take this young a kid and she has to request and plead them to keep her son.

- She said there were 15-20 children of different age group in the shishu palan at that time. She negotiated with them and used to pay Rs 1200 for one month for three children. Adding to this she mentioned keeping children in the centre was so expensive, she used to earn Rs 1800 then and out of which Rs 1200 was spent on day care facility.
 - They said it is very difficult to manage job and children and another added household work as well.
 - They said it is very difficult for a woman to manage all three works and even if the woman wants to work she can't and the main reason is childcare other household works can still be compromised but not childcare.
 - When asked do women get maternity leave, they informed some do get. One of them said that her neighbour got 3 months maternity leave and she even extended her leave for 3 more months (without pay) but it was MDH company.
 - When asked about what about garment factories one of them said that earlier there were cases where women were getting Maternity benefits but now more and more work is given out on contract and therefore women are not entitled for maternity leaves.
 - She then said that the contractor these days are even cheats, and one of them has duped her as well. She was on leave so he collected her wages and when she came back he never back her money. She had complained in the factory she was working for but they also said they have given it to the contractor so they are not answerable.
 - She said that earlier (10-12 years back) in one of the Garment factory 'Gaurav Richa' she has seen a creche in the factory and there 2-3 care takers for children. And the mother used to get break during the day to go to their children in the centre. Now there is none, other woman added that now even in "Gaurav Richa" factory most of the work is on contract basis.
 - The contractor is a big problem, a lot of them run away with the money. One of the women said that initially for three days he paid her at the end of the day and after that he said he will give after 15 days. After 15 days he ran away with her money. The women in the region also don't do the background check. When asked that why she didn't approach the company, she said the company paid the contractor in front of her only, so she can't go to the company now.
 - They also said they are facing trouble even at the plot that they are living in, as the landlord troubles them with increased bill for electricity and charge their own per unit rate (ranges from Rs 8 to 10 per unit).
 - Also, they pay minimum Rs 300 even if they have consumed less units. When we asked why don't you tell him that you will pay as per the unit rate they said the landlord says 'if you want to live in this plot then pay the money he is asking for otherwise find a new place'. And they can't keep shifting so they pay as per landlord's demand.
 - And even if they find another plot to live, the story will be the same. There also the landlord will charge the electricity bill as per his demand.
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