1. Introduction

Aajeevika Bureau (AB), Udaipur, is a specialised public initiative established with the mission of upgrading and improving labour and migration-based livelihood opportunities for rural poor in Rajasthan. The Bureau is premised on the notion that the rural migrants are an acutely under-served population and there is a real need as well as potential in helping them increase their incomes, enhance their social security and access their entitlements. It is this broad mandate of strengthening the livelihoods of rural migrants and labourers that AB seeks to serve.

Jaipur apart from being the capital of the state is also the largest city in the state of Rajasthan. This also makes it the largest employment option for a range of workers. The increasing frequency of droughts and crop failures combined with reducing land holdings also forces people to turn to large cities like Jaipur in search of seasonal wage labour opportunities. Jaipur and its range of traditional and non traditional trades is the destination for large numbers of migrant labour. The Bureau provides services to those migrants who are either joining or are at the threshold of joining labour markets away from their home villages. These services include registration and photo ID, training and placement, communication and tracking and legal aid and counselling to migrants.

This is an account of the status and problems of migrant labour in Jaipur. The city of Jaipur draws people not only from the neighbouring districts but also from other states in search of work. Migrant labour usually works in the unorganised sector where s/he is one of the poorer participants in the city’s economic and social life. Often labelled as ‘invaders’, ‘troublemakers’ or ‘having a nuisance value’ by the city’s more privileged residents, they return to their villages for short periods but continue to come to the city in search of work in the absence of alternatives in their home villages.

Aajeevika Bureau has set up an office in Jaipur city in an attempt to address some of the issues of migrant labour of the state. The decision to open an office was an extremely important one as the city is the largest destination site for migrant workers in the state. The Bureau is also considering expansion of its services in other parts of Rajasthan and therefore it becomes important to begin work in Jaipur.

While it is true that large cities like Jaipur offer more employment options, it is also true that these jobs require skills, confidence and networks if migrant labour hope to make a transition from poverty, deficit and often debt to a reasonable livelihood. This also requires the presence of facilitating conditions that include a favourable labour environment, consistent growth of new jobs and opportunities as well as a sensitive administration that considers its migrant population as a critical component of not just the economic growth but also the economic survival of the city. These conditions do not necessarily exist and the migrants live with hardship on the edges of a rapidly growing economy unseen and unheard. The migration cycle continues season after season until the
worker is too exhausted to return again unless s/he happens to be one of the successful few who have earned enough to live in dignity for the rest of their life in their villages.

Who are the migrants in Jaipur? Where do they come from? What are the main sectors and occupations in which they work? What do they earn and what are they able to save? How do they manage to save? How do they move and make progress? What are the problems they face in living and working in the city? And finally, what are the areas that should be the focus of Aajeevika as a specialised agency working with rural migrants? These are some of the questions that we sought answers for in this study that we undertook in March-April 2008.

2. Scope and Methodology

The labour market of a large city like Jaipur is fairly large and complex. A rapid study like this one cannot hope to capture it in its entirety. What this study did set out to do was to identify the sectors where migrant labour was working and their major issues.

Migrant workers work in many sectors in the city. The main concern of this study was to identify and map the seasonal, low end and vulnerable category. The study has therefore not covered those migrant workers who are in a relatively better situation though it does not mean that the workers in the sectors that we have not covered have no issues.

The specific objectives of the study were therefore to:

- To identify the major geographical areas from where migrant labour came to Jaipur.
- To map the major sectors that employed migrant labour and estimate approximate numbers.
- To profile the living conditions of migrant labour with emphasis on their access to basic service and facilities.
- To determine the nature and content of services and interventions relevant to migrants in Jaipur.

The methodology used for this rapid survey has been deliberately kept simple. The emphasis has been on using qualitative methods. The study was carried out in different locations in the city where there was a probability of finding a high concentration of migrant labour using simple tools like a questionnaire, focus group discussions and participant observations. As a result, the study either interviewed or held discussions with 372 labourers. The details of the sample are as follows:

**Table: Groups Covered**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S No</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Area of Origin</th>
<th>Area Covered in Jaipur</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Construction Labour</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>Jaipur, Ajmer, Sikar, Dholpur, Tonk, Sawai Madhopur, Karauli, Kota, Bundi, Dausa</td>
<td>Ajmer Road, Sikar Road, Sanganer, Gopalpura, Jagatpura, Gujar ki Thadi, DCM, Bajaj Nagar, Malviya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nagar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rickshaw Pullers (passengers+ trolley)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Karauli, Dausa, Sikar, Jaipur, Tonk, Bharatpur, Jhunjhunu, Alwar, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sanganer, Ghat Gate, Railway Station, Choti Chaupad, Badi Chapad, Johri Bazar, Ramganj Bazar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Printing Industry Workers</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh, Dausa, Jaipur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Muhana, Sanganer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hamaal (Head loaders)</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>Jaipur, Tonk, Sawai Madhopur, Sikar, Dausa, Karauli, Bundi, Bharatpur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Muhana Mandi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Others (vendors, dhaba workers etc)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>Jaipur, Tonk, Karauli, Sawai Madhopur, Dausa, UP, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tonk Road, Shyam Nagar, Muhana, Malviya Nagar, Jawahar Nagar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>371</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **At work in Jaipur**

Jaipur is the largest business centre for both traditional and modern industry in Rajasthan. One of the major industries is tourism which in turn has given rise to large service sector economy. While many of the traditional industries are related to tourism, there are also modern industries that are not related to tourism. Jaipur district has 19\(^1\) demarcated industrial areas of which 8 are in or close to Jaipur city. Apart from these there are wholesale and retail markets that attract migrant labour. There is a very large trading market in gems, jewellery, handmade paper and products and other handicrafts but the labour in these sectors is of a different kind.

The traditional industries like brass and lacquer work, enamel work, gems and jewellery, granite tiles, handloom, marble statues, printed cloth and textiles, readymade garments, woolen and silk carpets tend to be within families and usually employed labour from within Jaipur or Rajasthan. Over the years, there has been a change and there is a tendency to employ out-of-state migrant workers as they tend to work at lower rates for longer hours and take fewer holidays to attend to family situations.

Some of the modern industries in Jaipur include food items (cereal and cereal products like *atta, suji, besan, daliya* etc, moulded plastics, household electric appliances, wires, medicines, soap and other industrial products.

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\(^1\) Bais Godam, Jhotwara, Kanakpura, Kartarpura, Malviya Nagar, Sanganer, Sitapura, Vishwakarma are the industrial areas in Jaipur City whereas Bagru, Bassi, Bindyaka, Dudu, Hirawala, Jetpura, Kaladera, Phulera, Renwal, Shahpura, Sudarshanpur are in Jaipur district.
4. Labour in Jaipur

The results of this preliminary study indicate that there are several sectors that are occupied largely by migrant labour. While there is no reliable estimate of the number of migrant labour in the city, the 2001 census estimates a population of 23.24 lacs plus a ‘floating population’ of 10 per cent i.e. 2.32 lacs. It is fairly safe to assume that this floating population comprises largely of migrant workers. It needs to be remembered that Jaipur, like any other large city in the country has a fairly large population that lives in its 211 slums. A large proportion of the slum dwellers also work in the same sectors that employ migrant labour.

4.1. Rickshaw pullers

There are two kinds of rickshaws that are found in the city; first the passenger rickshaws and second, the rickshaws used to transport goods, known as ‘loading rickshaws’. Passenger rickshaws are present in most parts of the walled city of Jaipur. Rickshaw pullers stand in small (20-30) or large groups (100-200) in different spots in the city. The major reason for this seems to be that they park their rickshaws at fixed locations. Many of them sleep in their rickshaws while others come to collect their rickshaws. They are not present in the newer parts of town mainly because of the absence of adequate numbers of rickshaw users. The largest numbers are to be found in Ramganj Bazaar area, which falls in the old city and Ghat Gate which is one of the entrances to the walled city. The loading rickshaws are found all over the city as goods need to be transported all across the city. There is a higher concentration near markets or industrial locations.

This is also possibly one of the largest groups of workers in the city. This seems to one of the sectors where there is little investment required to enter. Seasonal migrants take up this occupation as it can be taken up at will between agricultural operations. Till a few years ago, most of the rickshaw pullers tended to be from neighbouring districts of Jaipur but over the past few years people from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar have also joined this group.

4.1.1. Source and Composition

Rickshaw pullers in Jaipur are not just from Jaipur but also from the neighbouring districts like Dausa, Bharatpur, Alwar, Karauli, Jhunjhunu, Sawai Madhopur, Tonk as well as other states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Most of the loading rickshaw pullers are from outside the state, largely from Bihar and Cooch Behar in West Bengal.

2 Jaipur Municipal Corporation, City Profile on its website www……
3 The domestic help sector in Jaipur is dominated by women from Cooch Behar district of West Bengal. It is usually their husbands who ply the loading rickshaws.
A survey conducted by the Kuhad Trust\(^4\) in 2007 indicates that there are 22,000 rickshaws in the city.

Rickshaw pulling of both kinds is a very strenuous activity and this is reflected in the age distribution of the rickshaw pullers – more than three-quarters of the sample was under 40 years of age. The group over 40 years of age was also 21 per cent which is not an insignificant proportion. They continue pulling a rickshaw in the absence of any other options. The age of entry into the business also seems higher with only 5 per cent being less than 18 years of age as they usually try other options before coming into rickshaw pulling. The fact that pulling a rickshaw in traffic is a skilled job that demands greater maturity may also contribute to this. More than three quarters of the rickshaw pullers, 80.7 per cent were married. This is consistent with the age group of the sample as well. The details are:

Table: Profile of rickshaw pullers (n = 52)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 18 years</td>
<td>19-25 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unmarried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (3.8)</td>
<td>8 (15.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 (19.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Rickshaw pullers of the sample were from Jaipur city as well as other neighbouring districts of Jaipur as well as from other states. The table below indicates that 40.3 per cent of the rickshaw pullers are from Rajasthan and almost 60 percent are from other states like Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand. Despite the source being different, the rickshaw pullers are found at the same stand/ location in the city but stay in different groups but there is little love lost between them. The details are:

Table: Source district/state of rickshaw pullers (n = 52)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rajasthan</th>
<th>M P</th>
<th>U P</th>
<th>Bihar</th>
<th>Jharkhand</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 (40.3)</td>
<td>4 (7.6)</td>
<td>5 (9.6)</td>
<td>19 (36.5)</td>
<td>2 (3.8)</td>
<td>1 (1.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Districts of Rajasthan: Dausa, Bharatpur, Alwar, Karauli, Jhunjhunu, Sawai Madhopur, Tonk, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal (Cooch Behar)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

\(^4\) A Jaipur based charitable trust that runs a scheme called *Apna Rickshaw Apne Naam* (an own your rickshaw programme) which helps rickshaw pullers become owners of their own rickshaw through bank financing.
4.1.2. Living and Work Conditions

There were few rickshaw pullers who had chosen this as their first profession. Most of them were working as either agriculture labour or construction labour or as helpers in shops. They enter rickshaw pulling either because of someone known to them is in the profession or because of the fact that it is regarded as profession for which no particular training or investment is needed and there is relative stability in earning i.e. they find work on most days a month. The most attractive aspect of rickshaw pulling seemed to be that they were not working ‘under’ someone that is they could choose their own pace of working.

If we look at their earlier occupation we see that a majority of the rickshaw pullers i.e. 59.6 per cent were working as labour, less than a fifth, 15.3 per cent were engaged in agriculture and more than a fifth, i.e. 23.2 per cent reported doing nothing at all. There was a small number (5.7 per cent) who were studying in school before they came to the city to become rickshaw pullers.

The factors that get people into rickshaw pulling are not nothing unusual – small landholdings or no land, failing agriculture, limited opportunities in their village and surrounding areas and an existing friend or relative who is working as a rickshaw puller. This contact is absolutely essential in the city – to show the ways, to help the new person with the routes usually taken, to help him decide rates and to act as a guarantor to enable the new person to hire a rickshaw. The details of their earlier occupation are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Labour</th>
<th>Nothing</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15.3)</td>
<td>(59.6)</td>
<td>(19.2)</td>
<td>(5.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Many of the rickshaw pullers have spent a considerable number of years in the city. Of the studied sample, 59.6 per cent had spend between 3 and 10 years in the city i.e. they were experienced, understood the sector and the city fairly well, almost a third of the sample had spent over 10 years in the city – 15.3 per cent had spent over 10 years and a similar number had spent...
over 20 years in the city. Spending time in the city usually meant in the same profession as well. Rickshaw pullers usually oscillate between pulling a passenger rickshaw and a trolley rickshaw but rarely do they change their profession completely. The low number of new entrants into the profession can also be seen as an indicator as the declining interest/scope of the profession or as an increase in the number of options available to newer migrants. The details are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table: Number of years in the profession (n = 52)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Working hours for rickshaw pullers depend on the rickshaw stand that they chosen. The ones who are based at the railway station work according to the arrival of trains, which is very early in the morning till about 11 am after which there is a lull and then the trains start arriving later in the afternoon. The ones who are at the bus-stand, and there are fewer here, not because people who come in buses don’t take rickshaws but because the space to park their rickshaws in limited near the main inter-state/inter-city bus stand, do not seem to have a peak as buses keep arriving throughout the day – even though early morning is the busiest time for them as well. The ones who work in the markets arrive later for work but work throughout the afternoon in their rickshaws.

Kameshwar is from Madhubani district in Bihar. He came to Jaipur about 10 years ago after having spent time in Delhi and Himachal Pradesh in dhabas. He thought there was greater income and flexibility in pulling a rickshaw.

He began by pulling a passenger rickshaw but switched to a loading rickshaw as the income is better here. He is currently attached to a furniture shop in Nehru Bazar from where he gets a fixed monthly wage of Rs 4500. This is a large shop where the owner charges at least Rs 100 as delivery charges from every customer. He makes at least 3 deliveries a day. The shopkeeper is obviously making a big profit in deliveries.

If he works after 7 pm, he is allowed overtime at the rate of Rs 25 per hour. He makes about Rs 5500 per month. In case, he is lost and has to make a phone call to the delivery address, the cost of the call is not reimbursed. If on a long drive to Bassi which is 50 kms away and uphill on the way back, he chooses to load his rickshaw on a tractor or tempo for Rs 20 that is not reimbursed either.

Kameshwar continues to work here as with his family of wife and 2 children, he prefers to have a fixed wage. He works overtime so that he is able to send small amounts home and is able to make at least one visit home to visit his family.

The loading rickshaw pullers do not seem to have such fixed timings – their work depends upon the opening and closing of shops and markets.
Some of them are attached to shops and earn a fixed wage from the shops while others collect at street corners waiting to be hired.

The frequency of home visits does not seem to depend only on the distance between their source village and destination city i.e. Jaipur but on money saved in the city, relationship with the family and agricultural cycles as well. The focus group discussions indicate that there are two kinds of rickshaw pullers – those that are from outside the state and those who are from surrounding districts. The ones who are from the neighbouring districts have a very short migration cycle. They come and work in the city and go back after 15-20 days. Every time they go, they spend a few days there, usually upto 15 days and then come back. The reasons for going back tend to be to look up family, give money for running households, rest and recuperation as well as tending fields. Though there was a case where a young man had run away from his village in Bhilwara 3 years ago and had not gone back since then.

Discussions with the rickshaw pullers also indicate that almost all of them hire the rickshaws that they pull. The cost of hiring the rickshaw is between Rs 20 per day. The owner and the rickshaw puller decide the periodicity and location of the payment. In some cases, the owner collects the money every day, while in others the rickshaw puller deposits the money as he passes by the owner’s house.

Barring the ones who are from Jaipur, most of them sleep in their rickshaws or out in the open at night. The major issue seems to be that there are few people who will rent out their premises to rickshaw pullers. They feel that people are not willing to give them rooms on rent as they live alone. A quick calculation also indicates that unless there is very cheap housing available or they share with several others, they simply cannot afford to rent a room.

All the rickshaw pullers who live in their rickshaws in the open depend on roadside eateries for their food and tea as they do not have any facilities to cook. For drinking water, they manage with the charitable pyaoos set up during summer or public drinking water facilities.
Bathing is a luxury they cannot afford everyday. A bath in a Sulabh Complex costs Rs 5 and washing clothes will cost them another Rs 5. Some of them manage to access to water in building sites or common hand pumps but bathing cannot and does not become a routine activity in such difficult living conditions.

Alcohol use came across to be a fairly common amongst this group. Even during the day, it was not unusual to find one or two amongst the group under the influence of alcohol. It seems that staying away from their family in difficult conditions changes the way that they would behave. It was reported a way of getting over tiredness and helped them to forget their aches and pains. Access to medical services is very limited in any case. Few of them reported using government facilities. Aches, pains and fevers were ignored or treated with the help of medication bought from the chemist. Breathlessness and chronic coughs are not uncommon among rickshaw pullers especially those who spend most of the year pulling rickshaws. In case of serious illnesses, most of them go back home for treatment rest and recuperation.

4.1.3. Wages and Incomes

The average monthly incomes indicate that rickshaw pulling is a labour intensive activity with low returns. In the studied sample, only 9.6 per cent managed to earn over Rs 3000 per month and that was because they put in longer hours at work. Most of them, 38.4 per cent earned between Rs 2500 to 3000 per month and the second largest group, 28.8 per cent earned between 1500 to 2000 per month. There is also a small percentage who earn less Rs 1500 per month. These are either people who have just begun or those who are over 40 years of age. The details are:

Table: Average monthly income (in Rs) (n = 52)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>&lt; 1000</th>
<th>1001-1500</th>
<th>1501-2000</th>
<th>2001-2500</th>
<th>2501-3000</th>
<th>&gt;3000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5.7)</td>
<td>(28.8)</td>
<td>(17.3)</td>
<td>(38.4)</td>
<td>(9.6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Rickshaw pullers think in terms of daily wages, the monthly figures have been calculated. Their income depends on many factors – location, season, state of their own health are the major ones. Their incomes are variable as there are no fixed rates for distances as such but only an informal understanding of the rates that will be charged for fixed destinations. The rates are decided based on the kind of customer – foreigners are definitely charged much more, customers who look well-to-do are also charged more than ‘regular’ customers. The main problem that Rajasthani rickshaw pullers face in earning is undercutting by the rickshaw pullers from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Migrants from other states are willing to work at much lower rates because the pressure to earn is much more on them.
The major expenditure is on rickshaw rent which is fixed at Rs 20 per day, food which costs between Rs 15-20 per meal. If we calculate the fixed expenditure per day it would be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S No</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Amount (in Rs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rickshaw Rent</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Meals @ 20 per meal</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tea @ Rs 2 per cup</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bathing, washing clothes, toilet</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Others <em>(bidi, alcohol etc)</em></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is quite obvious that rickshaw pullers cannot afford to incur all these expenditures everyday. What is fixed is the rickshaw rent as the owners have fairly efficient means of collecting the rent. The meals and tea are also fixed though many times, they will make do with a cheaper meal but the teas are usually fixed. Bathing is the expenditure they cut down on.

Substance abuse came across quite often – sometimes the innocuous *bidi*, other times country liquor and even drug abuse. All the rickshaw pullers agreed that it was fairly common and we found evidence of it even during the day. This is not unusual as other studies have also indicted that stressful working and living conditions lead to dependence on some form of intoxicant.

Almost all of them managed to send some money home ranging from Rs 500 to 1500 though the remittances were not very regular. They were as and when they returned home for a visit.

There were very few rickshaw pullers who reported having a bank account, even fewer who had any kind of insurance.

### 4.1.4. Other Issues

Apart from these there are some general issues that affect almost all the rickshaw pullers. These are:

- Many of the rickshaw pullers reported being harassed by the traffic police for parking rickshaws in several parts of the city. The problem is that there are many more rickshaws in the city than there are designated rickshaw stands which forces them to park their rickshaws in other places. They report being pushed and threatened and sometimes receive a *lathi* or two as well. They are often at the receiving ends of the traffic policeman’s *lathi* when they are sleeping out in the open.

- Most of the rickshaws are owned by a few owners who let them out at Rs 20 a day. They have their own mechanisms for collecting the rents. The rental has been Rs 20 for several years now.

- Very few rickshaw pullers own their own rickshaw. One of the most attractive aspects of this occupation is that it needs little investment and can be continued and discontinued almost at will. This is the reason that it
attracts short term/seasonal migrants – who come to the city at regular intervals to supplement the household income from agriculture.

There is the Kuhad Trust which has a scheme called ‘Apna Rickshaw Apne Naam’ that helps Rickshaw pullers own their rickshaw. This is facilitated through financing from the bank. This scheme is open only to residents of Jaipur and the guarantor has to be someone who owns a house in Jaipur. The recovery is done by the manufacturer of the rickshaw who is also Jaipur based. This scheme has been in operation since 2004 and they have helped finance over a 1000 rickshaws.

- It was reported that there were several attempts at forming Unions of rickshaw pullers but no one reported them to be active. The rickshaw stand at the main railway station is one of the largest stands. There are approximately 80 rickshaw pullers here. They have formed themselves into a Union which is not registered. There is a leader, Shri Kamruddin who has a register containing names and addresses of all the registered rickshaw pullers. No one else apart from the registered pullers is allowed to stand here. According to this group, there are several such unions in Jaipur but none, apart from theirs is functional.

4.2. Head Loaders

Head loaders or *hamaals* or *paldaars* are workers who carry a load on their backs or heads. They work wherever there are loading and unloading operations involved. Typically these places are whole markets where trading goes on. These could be wholesale markets of any commodity. This study focussed on Muhana Mandi which is the wholesale market for fruits, vegetables and potatoes and onions.

This wholesale market has shifted from inside the city to the outskirts on Phagi Road since January 2008. It is managed by the .......... Mandi which functions under the Department of Agriculture. An Assistant Director, Shri RP Kumawat is on deputation as Secretary, Mandi Samiti.

Most of the people are the same ones who used to work in the old wholesale market. This new market is supposed to be the second largest one in Asia. Till April 2008, 313 shops had been allotted but all of them were not functioning. The godowns and more shops were under construction. The grocery i.e. pulses and spices market will also shift here.

2 a woman headloader
There are two kinds of head loaders here – first, those who are attached to shop and work there and second, those who are not attached to a shop but work as and where there is work. Shop owners tend to keep a small permanent team attached to their shop hiring more workers as and when needed. A third category of the workers are the women who either sell vegetables in retail or work as headloaders between the shops and the trucks of the buyers. What sets them apart is that they do not load or unload trucks and they go back to their homes at the end of work. There is no record of the number of headloaders working here but estimates vary between 3000 to 5000.

4.2.1. Source and Composition

All the headloaders who were covered as part of the study were from Rajasthan, this was not deliberate but it turned out that there are very few workers from outside the state in this sector. This is a job for the physically fit and this is indicated by the age profile of the headloaders – the majority, 58 per cent were between 26 and 40 years of age; 26 per cent were between 19-25 years; only 3 per cent were less than 18 years and just under 12 per cent were over 40 years of age or to put it in another way 80 per cent of the headloaders were between 19 to 40 years of age. In keeping with the age group and prevalent age at marriage, 92 per cent of the headloaders were married which also implies that they had a family to support. The details are:

Table: Age of Migrant Labourer (n = 122)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&lt; 18 years</th>
<th>19-25 years</th>
<th>26-40 years</th>
<th>&gt; 40 years</th>
<th>Unmarried</th>
<th>Married</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3.2)</td>
<td>(26.2)</td>
<td>(58.1)</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>(7.2)</td>
<td>(92.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

As mentioned earlier, earlier all the headloaders surveyed turned out to be from Rajasthan and from either Jaipur district or the neighbouring districts of Jaipur. There doesn’t seem to be any particular reason from this apart from the fact that currently, a trend hasn’t developed in this sector. The other fact that has a bearing on the issue is that shop owners prefer to have someone trustworthy in the shop as the chances of pilferage are very high and so they ask the existing workers to get someone they personally know who more often than not is from the same area. The details are:

Table: Source district/state of migrant (n = 122)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rajasthan</th>
<th>M P</th>
<th>U P</th>
<th>Bihar</th>
<th>Jharkhand</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>122 (100)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Districts of Rajasthan: Jaipur, Tonk, Sawai Madhopur, Sikar, Dausa, Karauli, Bundi, Bharatpur

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.
4.2.2. Living and Work Conditions

As mentioned earlier, there are two kinds of headloaders in the wholesale market; the first kind are those who belong to other districts and live and work on the work site itself and the second kind are those who come to work during the day and go back to their homes. The focus of this exercise were the migrant workers who worked and lived there. The study indicated that there was a large number of headloaders who were engaged in other activities; 33 per cent were in some kind of private service, 21 per cent were engaged in agriculture and 7 per cent were working as construction labour together accounting for over 60 per cent; it was the first occupation for 38 per cent of the surveyed sample.

This fairly large number is an indication of at least two things – first the pressure on young men to earn their living and the two their limited awareness of the options available to them. It is this group of young men who form the main target group for the Bureau’s skill training and placement programme.

The details are:

**Table: Earlier occupation (n = 122)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service (in school)</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Labour</th>
<th>Nothing</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40 (33)</td>
<td>26 (21)</td>
<td>9 (7.3)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>47 (38)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

This occupation is largely for the young and physically fit and this is reflected in the number of years that the headloaders have spent in the profession as well. The largest numbers i.e. 55 per cent have spent between 3-10 years in the city and there are very few, only 4 per cent who have spent more than 21 years in the city. The details are:

**Table: Number of years in the profession (n = 122)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&lt; 2 years</th>
<th>3-10 years</th>
<th>11-15 years</th>
<th>16-10 years</th>
<th>&gt;21 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 (8)</td>
<td>67 (55)</td>
<td>22 (18)</td>
<td>18 (15)</td>
<td>5 (4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

The study indicated a fairly high frequency of visits to their village in a very high proportion of the headloaders; 97.5 per cent of the headloaders visited their village 1-2 times a month, which is an unusually high number.

**Table: Frequency of visits to the village (n = 122)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-2 times a year</th>
<th>1-2 times a month</th>
<th>As and when called</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
The study used the number of years spent in the profession and frequency of visits to the home village as an indication of both the hardship of the profession and the living and working condition of the occupation. Both these indicators suggest that the work is physically very intensive and cannot be sustained for very long. The high frequency of the visits indicates that the migrants are from very near and that there is a need for frequent rest and recuperation and/or look up family i.e. keep the household running through regular remittances.

Discussions and observations with the headloaders also indicate that both the living and working conditions are very difficult. There are no fixed hours for working for headloaders. Their work is closely related to the arrival and departure of trucks. There are times when the entire loading and unloading process has to be carried out at night, sometimes after a full days work.

The payment is made on a piece rate but there are many processes like showing samples of potatoes and onions that require the gunny bag to be opened, the produce inside scattered to be shown and then repacked. All these processes take time but are not paid for; what is worse is that they eat into the time of the paid-for work. Similarly, they are also asked to label bags or repair them, for which they are not paid.

A large portion of their earning was spent on food and travel. The proximity of their villages encouraged very frequent travel. Many of them travelled back to the work site with some provisions from home. For the ones, who do not travel with provisions, there are a few Babu, Kanchiy, Ramraj, and 4 others all work as hamaals in the Muhana Mandi. All of them belong to the same village in Tonk district and work in the same shop.

Hamaals, in any case believe that an onion peel in the eye will lead to blindness. According to medical doctors, blindness is caused by an ulcer on the cornea which in turn is caused by abrasion due to the onion peel. More importantly, it is curable .. but that is small consolation for Ramavtar. Ramavtar is around 35 years old. He works as a hamaal in the potato-onion wholesale market in Muhana. He began working almost 15 years ago. Some years ago an onion peel went into his eye. He left in untreated and the result is that he has lost the vision in that eye.

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shops outside the mandi premises where they can buy basic provisions and fuel wood to cook. In most of the cases, the hamaals from one shop cook and eat together. They keep a record of expenses made in the city and in case, they get provisions from home, they take turns to get them. They manage to share the chores amicably and there does not seem to be a quarrel on the issue. The single male workers usually lived in the mandi. There are designated spaces called vishramsthalis in the mandi for them to live. These are approximately 8 feet by 10 feet spaces with a roof but open from all sides. There is evidence of encroachment by traders here. Around these vishramsthalis is stagnant water and consequently mosquitoes all over the place. There are drinking water facilities but they are clearly not enough for the large numbers who work here. There is also a sulabh complex but the workers cannot afford to spend Rs 10 everyday to have a bath and wash clothes.

Access to health facilities for the workers in Muhana is non existent. The location of the mandi and the limited bus service makes it difficult to get out of it. To see a health provider they have to travel to Sanganer and then they usually go to a private doctor but more often a quack known locally as a bungali doctor. Apart from the stress and strain of lifting heavy loads for long hours, the headloaders are susceptible to onion peels flying into their eyes, which if left untreated can cause an ulcer to the cornea and ultimately blindness. Tuberculosis and other lung infections are also fairly common – the dust flying from the loading and unloading of potatoes is one cause. Seasonal opportunistic infections due to poor sanitation are also fairly common.

### 4.2.3. Wages and Incomes

The monthly earnings for the headloaders for more than half, 52 per cent were between Rs 2500-3000. Almost a third of the hamaals earned

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5 There have been cases of blindness leading the hamaals to believe that the onion peel per se is the cause of blindness.
between Rs 2000-2500 and these tended to be the newer entrants. There were very few, 9 per cent who earned over Rs 3000 per month.

The details of the incomes are as follows:

**Table: Average monthly income (in Rs) (n = 122)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1001-1500</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1501-2000</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2500</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2501-3000</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;3000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Very few of them reported existence of bank accounts. All of them saved some money and travelled frequently to the village with money that they had earned/saved. This was as often as every 10-15 days. It was possible to do so as they were from nearby districts. The savings that were made were living in the most difficult conditions and denying themselves even the smallest of pleasures like a snack or a cool drink during the heat of the day. There are people who are selling snack food, ice-cream-falooda and fruit juice in the mandi.

If a head loader wants to have a reasonably comfortable existence then the daily expenditure is as follows:

**Table: Daily expenses of a headloaders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S No</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Amount (in Rs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Meals @ Rs 20 per meal</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tea @ Rs 2 per tea</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bathing, washing clothes</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assuming he earns Rs 100 a day, then two thirds of this income is spent on living expenses. This means that he has to forgo either the bathing and/or the snack on a daily basis. This is the reason, why many of them cook together to save money.

### 4.2.4. Other Issues

- Headloading is considered to be an unskilled occupation that can be take up any one. It is a fairly common strategy used by rural young men to supplement family incomes from agriculture and other sources.

- Women who come to the mandi have a different method of working. They are not migrant labour but reside in the slums close to the site. They work in several ways – some of them buy small amounts and sell them at retail prices within the mandi. There are several consumers who come to the mandi in search of a better deal. Some of them work as headloaders but they do not load or unload trucks, but transport vegetables/fruit between shops and between buyers and sellers. A few
of them come to the *mandi* to buy vegetables to sell in their own shops/carts in the city but carry enough loads to earn the bus fare to and from the *mandi*. This was their strategy to bring down costs – so someone like this would carry between 15-20 loads for an hour or so to earn Rs 20 for the bus fare.

- Muhana Mandi is projected to be the second largest wholesale market in Asia. There is enough space to grow as well. One is not sure of the planned facilities but judging from the current process, it is unlikely that facilities for workers will be on priority, or if there will be facilities then they will be extremely shoddy like the current *vishramsthali* which is just a partially covered space with no facilities. Meanwhile, private entrepreneurs have moved in with facilities and services that are needed in the Mandi.

### 4 Services and Facilities in Muhana

#### 4.3. Construction Labour

Construction activity in a city is considered to be a sign of a growing economy. Jaipur is growing and this is indicated by the visibly growing construction activity. One indicator is the increase in the number of *chowkhati* which some estimate is now over 40.
As part of this exercise, *chowkhatis* at the entrance points of Jaipur were visited. Each of these had both *beldaars* (helpers) and *mistris* (masons). There are many more helpers than masons and this is seen in the division of the sample of construction labour – 56 were helpers and 18 were masons.

The workers who come to the *chowkhtis* are the ones who are not linked with a contractor. The services they offer are largely unskilled work in the construction industry, as seen by the smaller proportion of *mistris* available at the *chowkhti*. Skilled workers are more often than not attached to either a shop that offers a service or a specific contractor who offers these services. Most contractors prefer to hire workers who are either known to them or to some other worker who works with them. The more established contractors also tend to have their own team of workers which they send to the sites on hand. In case, they themselves do not have work at a given point, they ‘adjust their workers’ with those of a friendly contractor in order to retain them. The relationship with a contractor usually lasts for 3-4 years though it sometimes extends to as much as 10 years. The career path of a worker seems to begin as *beldaar*, then become a *mistri* and finally a contractor of labour. A good worker rarely stays a *beldaar* and quickly becomes a *mistri*. The women tend to stay at the *beldaar* level as no one seems to be willing to train them as *mistris*. Skilled workers like plumbers, electricians are almost never found at the *chowkhti*.

### 4.3.1. Source and Composition

Workers in the construction industry tend to be in their most productive years. In the surveyed sample, more than three quarters of the sample was between the ages of 19 to 40 years though more than two-thirds of the sample was between the ages of 26 to 40 years. There were few who were either below 18 years or over 40 years. Though there was evidence of young boys in school coming to the city to work during their summer vacation to earn money for next years schooling. Given the age composition, it was not unusual to see that almost all of them, 93.2 per cent were married.

Labour at the *chowkhatis* was largely found to be from Rajasthan, 94.6 per cent though there were small numbers from the neighbouring states of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

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Mukesh is from a small village in Karauli district. He has just finished grade IX - he wants to continue schooling but his family cannot support him. His elder brother works as a *beldaar* in Jaipur. During the summer vacation Mukesh tagged along with him. He managed to earn about four thousand rupees which he thinks will be enough to support him for books, fee and uniforms for the coming academic year.
The source districts indicate that the labour is coming from the surrounding districts of Jaipur as well from rural and urban parts of Jaipur district as well.

The details are as follows:

**Table: Profile of construction labour (n = 74)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 18 years</td>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>(17.5)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>(67.5)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 40 years</td>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>(6.7)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>(93.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source district/state of migrant**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rajasthan</th>
<th>M P</th>
<th>UP</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(94.6)</td>
<td>(2.7)</td>
<td>(2.7)</td>
<td>(0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rajasthan Districts: Jaipur, Ajmer, Sikar, Dholpur, Tonk, Sawai Madhopur, Kota, Karauli, Bundi, Dausa

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

### 4.3.2. Living and Work Conditions

Living and work conditions for construction are as varied as the construction sites that they work on. Their choice of accommodation seems to depend on a variety of factors – whether they are seasonal migrants or long term migrants, whether they have migrated alone or with their wife or other family members among others. The ones who have migrated alone tend to live on the construction site wherever possible and in many cases in the open or under flyovers.

**Waiting at chowkhis**

A *chowkhi* in the city is a great leveller, even more so when one has to stand there everyday in search of employment. The *chowkhi* is recognised as a place where labour congregates and can be hired. Contractors go there to hire labour. It does not however have a *locus standi* like a bus stand or railway station. This effectively means that while a *chowkhi* exists physically, usually at a busy crossing, once the labour goes away there is no evidence that it is a place where a large number of people collect to earn daily living. There is no facility for shade or drinking water or toilets. It is almost as if people who work in the unorganised sector have no right to anything organised, even if it is a place to seek work.
Workers who have migrated with their wife or any other member of the family tend to take a room on rent in a slum. The monthly expenditure on accommodation is anything between Rs 300-350 to Rs 500 per head.

The food that they manage to eat also depends upon the place where they live – those who live on the site eat in cheap roadside restaurants and those who have a place to live usually manage to cook in their temporary homes. The latter is almost always preferred but not always possible. If we were to compare the two situations in the city to what they have left behind to find work, it seems that it is much worse in the destination end. This is just in terms of the physical facilities available without taking account of social networks. The worst is the situation in drinking water, especially where people live on roads and they have no access to drinking water relying on shops and other tanks put up for charitable purposes. Even so, these only provide water for drinking and almost never for bathing or washing clothes. Toilet facilities are non existent in both villages and cities but villages tend to have greater open spaces. The facilities for electricity, cooking fuel and transportation are more or less the same, if not worse especially for the workers who live on roads who do not cook but eat at roadside restaurants (dhabas) or hesitate to use public transport as it costs money. Medical facilities also turn out to be more expensive as fewer people manage to go to a government facility and end up going to private medical practitioners (often quacks).

Ramavtar is from a neighbouring district of Jaipur. Recurrent droughts and a tiny landholding drove him to the city and his family is in debt. He has been coming to Jaipur for 3 years. He has learnt masonry on the construction site. He is however not too choosy about his work; if he does not get masonry work on a particular day, he works as an unskilled labour. For him, it is important to earn as much as he can.

Manphool and his wife Surja are from Niwai Panchayat Samiti of Tonk district. They belong to a backward community. They have some land in the village but no irrigation facilities. They have 3 small children who live in the village with their grandparents. Manphool and Surja have been coming to Jaipur for the past 5 years. Both of them work as construction labour. Neither of them is trained in anything else and so they work at the lowest level i.e. as beldaars (assistants to skilled workers).

The wage rates are different for men and women and so Manphool can manage to earn between Rs 130-150 a day and Surja can earn between Rs 110-120 a day. They manage to find work for 20-22 days a month which makes their combined monthly income at least Rs 4800. Even this lowest amount that earn is much more than what they could hope to earn in the village. They spend approximately Rs 2000 on living and eating. The remaining money is sent back to the village.

Their children are small and so their trips to the village are very frequent. Surja is uncomfortable travelling alone or staying alone in Jaipur and so they travel together all the time. Their trips are to look up their children and to finance the family back in their village. Even though it is hard and insecure life, they continue as there are no other options and as Surja said, ‘bachhon ko bhokha thodi maar sakte hain.’ (how can we let our children starve?)
The situation is somewhat different for those who have been migrating for several years and understand the way that things work in the city. The sample indicates that a majority of people, 79.7 per cent, found at the chowkatis had been there for less than 10 years. It seems that people who continue to work in the construction sector either build enough contacts to get attached to a contractor or go back to the village. The pattern of migration of the construction sector would need to be researched in greater detail. The details are:

Table: Number of years in the city (n = 74)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&lt; 2 years</th>
<th>3-10 years</th>
<th>11-15 years</th>
<th>16-20 years</th>
<th>&gt;21 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 (4)</td>
<td>59 (79.7)</td>
<td>3 (4)</td>
<td>3 (4)</td>
<td>5 (6.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Most of the migrants 66.2 per cent, were seasonal migrants and visited their home village once or twice a month; almost a quarter, 25 per cent were long duration migrants who visited their home village once or twice a year. The details are:

Table: Frequency of visits to the village (n = 74)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-2 times a year</th>
<th>1-2 times a month</th>
<th>As and when called</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 (25.6)</td>
<td>49 (66.2)</td>
<td>4 (5.5)</td>
<td>2 (2.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

The visits to the source village also depended not just on the distance between the source and the destination but also upon the nature of the family left behind as well their engagement with the agricultural operations in the source village.

4.3.3. Wages and Incomes

Wages and incomes of labour in the construction industry fall in a fairly narrow range. Almost half of them earn between Rs 2000 – 3000 per month. A fifth of them, 20 per cent manage to earn more than Rs 3000 per month. The monthly income of construction labour depends not just on the wage rate that they are able to earn but also upon the number of days that they are able to find work. It is very rare that migrants find work for more than 25 days a month, the largest numbers of workers reported finding work for 15-20 days a month. Very few of the migrants reported existence of bank accounts or indeed any other form of formal saving mechanism. None in the surveyed sample
reported inclusion in any kind of social security scheme like insurance or pension plans. The details of average monthly incomes are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$\leq 1000$</th>
<th>1001-1500</th>
<th>1501-2000</th>
<th>2001-2500</th>
<th>2501-3000</th>
<th>$\geq 3000$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2.7)</td>
<td>(8.1)</td>
<td>(17.5)</td>
<td>(20.2)</td>
<td>(31.08)</td>
<td>(20.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

The major objective for migration is saving to send home which in turn supplements the earning in the source villages usually from the often failing or inadequate agriculture. It is not unusual that the money that they earn in the city has already been spent i.e. the family has incurred a debt in their absence and their earnings are used to pay it off. Seasonal migration to the city between agricultural operations is being seen with increasing frequency so much so that it seems to have become a livelihood strategy for families with small landholdings and many dependents.

4.3.4. Other Issues

- The people who come to the city in search of wage labour are those with a very small resource base though not necessarily from socially backward communities, some of them are Rajputs as well. What is common to them is a small resource base in the village, limited opportunities for employment in the village and/or an outstanding debt.

- Having a family member working in the family ensures greater liquidity as well as some amount of regularity in income that small agricultural operations do not permit. This is corroborated from other studies done elsewhere\(^6\).

- There is recognition in society and amongst policy makers about the role of daily wage workers but no space and till now stated policy to create dignified living and working conditions. The budget speech of 2008 by the Chief Minister recognised the need to upgrade conditions at the \textit{chowkhati}. Rajasthan is also one of the first states to announce a pension plan for the unorganised sector. The implementation of both these however remains to be seen.

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\(^6\) ARAVALI-UNDP study on Livelihoods in Rajasthan, 2003
4.4. **Block Printers**

Printing is one of the oldest industries of Jaipur. The traditional hand block printed fabrics with vegetable dyes of Jaipur are actually made in the neighbouring towns of Sanganer and Bagru. The traditional craft is now dying out – it is only members of the *cheepa* community and some handicraft/export houses who continue to be engaged in this craft. Hand block printing with vegetable dyes has been almost completely replaced by screen printing with chemical dyes.

There are three distinct stages in this industry – dyeing, printing and fixing of the print/dye plus the associated activities of loading, unloading fabric, cutting, folding, ironing and packing. Each stage involves labour. Almost all of this labour is migrant labour from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Engaging migrant labour is a fairly recent trend that began 8-10 years ago. The Rajasthani labour who was employed tended to take time off frequently that affected business. Out of state labour tends to stay for a period of 6-8 months before taking a months leave.

There is little mechanisation in this sector apart from a few processes in dyeing and the replacement of the hand block by a screen. The dyeing process uses fuel wood as LPG is too expensive.

Estimates indicate that there are 300-350 registered printing factories and a similar number that are not registered. The factory owners report that in the recent past, almost all the costs have gone up that have reduced the profit margin. Apart from that there is a case in the high court wanted the closure of the factories as they pollute the ground water. The registered factory owners contribute to build an effluent treatment plant that was never completed let alone commissioned.

4.4.1. **Source and Composition**

Almost all the labour employed in this sector are from Uttar Pradesh or Bihar. This is the only sector, in which there were so many out-of-state under age workers were identified as part of the study.\(^7\) As the table below indicates, 38 per cent of the sample was under 18 years, 32 per cent were between 19-25 years of age, 27 per cent were between 26-40 years and less than 2 per cent were over 40 years. It is quite clear that this occupation is also for the young and physically fit as indicated by the declining number of workers in the older age groups. Corresponding to the age group, more than half the workers at 52 per cent were unmarried.

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\(^7\) There are several sectors – gem polishing, domestic work, helpers at shop *aari-taari* work to name a few where are large numbers of children are employed but few of these are out-of-state migrants.
As mentioned earlier, a large proportion of the labour comprises out-of-state migrants, 36 per cent of the sample was from Uttar Pradesh and 53 per cent of the sample of dyers and printers was from Bihar. There are very few people from Rajasthan who are working in this industry as labour. Almost all the owners are however from Rajasthan. Here too, there is an interesting divide that is quite clear – a majority of the dyers belong the Muslim community and a majority of the printers belong to the Hindu community. A possible explanation for this divide is that traditionally, the dyers or the rangrez were almost always Muslim whereas the printers or the cheepa could be either. The current divide therefore seems to indicate that the form of the industry may have changed but the traditional grouping remain more or less intact. The details are as follows:

Table: Profile of dyers and printers (n = 55)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Unmarried</th>
<th>Married</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 18 years</td>
<td>21 (38.1)</td>
<td>29 (52.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-25 years</td>
<td>18 (32.7)</td>
<td>26 (47.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-40 years</td>
<td>15 (27.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 40 years</td>
<td>1 (1.8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Table: Source district/state of dyers and printers (n = 55)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rajasthan</th>
<th>M P</th>
<th>Gujarat</th>
<th>U P</th>
<th>Bihar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 (12.7)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20 (36.3)</td>
<td>29 (53)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Districts of Rajasthan:

4.4.2. Living and Work Conditions

The dyeing and printing industry, after the decline of hand block printing with vegetable based dyes, is one that involves long hours of work in heat and with chemicals almost always without any kind of protection. There is an element of seasonality in the sector that leads to periods of intense activity followed with days of very little or no work. Monsoons are a low activity period for
both dyers and printers as there is a problem of drying the dyed and printed fabric. Printing is difficult when it is very hot as the printing tables are wax lined which melts in the extreme heat. Apart from this, there is the festival season that leads to increased demand and therefore longer working hours. The dyeing industry is now partially mechanised. There are 22 stages of dyeing and the only mechanisation is that the fabric is submerged in the liquid which is either water or dye, with a mechanised motor.

The next major stage is drying the dyed cloth and this requires a special frame called an adaang that is almost 20-22 feet high and is a key piece of infrastructure required by the dyers. It can cost upto Rs 1.5 to 2 lacs to rig. This job requires a certain amount of skill as the heavy, wet bale of fabric has to be dried in a particular manner. It is a risky job and yet there are no safety measures that are thought of. The young workers clamber up the frame usually bare feet and walk up and down the frame to dry the fabric.

The printing, which is largely screen printing, takes place in a separate factory and that too involves several stages depending upon the number of colours used as only one colour is applied at a time. It requires a different set of skills and it is unusual for workers to switch between the two jobs.

There is a third stage that is the fixing of the dye called ‘rang kholna’ which is considered to have the greatest level of risk involved as it involves fixing the dye with a mixture of chemicals with acid. This study does not cover this group of workers as the field workers were unable to meet them.

As has been mentioned earlier, most of the workers in this industry are now from out of the state. The ones who are either single or migrate without their wives almost always live as a group in the factory premises and the ones who are accompanied by their wives usually live outside the factory in rented premises. The living conditions vary depending on the factory and the kind of space that they are able to hire. Some of the factories have a large enough space to cook, eat and sleep. In fine weather they sleep out in the open but in bad weather, they sleep in the godown where the fabric is stored or any other sheltered space. The factory owners
do not usually create a special living area for the workers – some of them do construct a bathroom for the workers but never a toilet. The workers who live in the factory, construct a chulah to cook their meals – some of the owners, in the dyeing factories are generous enough to allow them to use the fuel wood that is purchased for the furnace used in dyeing; they also use the coal which is a by-product. The ones who live in rented spaces make their arrangements which is either a chulah or a kerosene stove or a combination of the two. Payment patterns determine the amount of food that they can purchase and so it varies. The migrants, by and large, buy ration for 4-5 days as both money and storage space are limited.

Private health providers and quacks are the only source of health services. For minor ailments, they also buy medicines on the advice of the chemist.

The age of entry into this sector is fairly low as was seen in the earlier section where the largest number of labour were under 25 years of age. This is corroborated when compared with their earlier occupation where this was the first job for almost half of the surveyed sample (45 per cent). The other largest group was employed as (unskilled) labour at 47 per cent. This is further supported by the fact that more than half, 54 per cent had spent less than 2 years in the city and none of them had spent over 10 years in the city. The details are as follows:

Table: Earlier occupation (n = 55)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Labour</th>
<th>Nothing</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (1.8)</td>
<td>26 (47.3)</td>
<td>25 (45.4)</td>
<td>3 (5.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(figures in parenthesis indicate percentages)

Table: Number of years in the city (n = 55)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&lt; 2 years</th>
<th>3-10 years</th>
<th>11-15 years</th>
<th>16-10 years</th>
<th>&gt;21 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 (54.6)</td>
<td>25 (45.4)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(figures in parenthesis indicate percentages)
Almost all the labour employed in this sector is from outside the state and therefore have longer migration cycles. This is seen in the frequency of their visits to their village. Almost all of them, 89 per cent visit their villages once or twice a year at festivals. The details are:

**Table: Frequency of visits to the village (n = 55)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-2 times a year</th>
<th>1-2 times a month</th>
<th>As and when called</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49 (89)</td>
<td>6 (11)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(figures in parenthesis indicate percentages)

Discussions with the factory owners and workers indicate that the festivals of *holi*, *rakhi* and *diwali/chhat* are the times when most of the workers would like to be home. This is therefore the time when the factory owners are looking for extra labour. The general practice seems to be to employ a core of workers and as one or two of them are usually away, a few temporary ones are also hired. Every year when the older workers go home, they also come back with a few more workers who either replace someone in the same factory or go to a neighbouring factory.

### 4.4.3. Wages and Incomes

Labour in this sector is rarely employed directly by the factory owner, especially in the dyeing sector. There is an agent involved to gets labour from the other states who is in touch with the owner. The owner pays the agent who in turn pays the workers. The owner pays the agent on a piece rate who in turn pays the workers a fixed rate.

In the printing factories, the payment is made on a piece rate. The earning here therefore is variable. The labour tends to work very long hours during the season when work is possible in order to tide them over the time when they will not be able to find work.

Dyeing is considered to be lower paying occupation as compared to printing. Most of the dyers earn between Rs 2000-2500 per month, though some of the dyers who have been working in the same factory for several years earn around Rs 3000 per month. The average earning of the printer works to be Rs 3000-3500 per month as there are several days when they cannot work. When it is too hot, the wax on the printing table tends to melt and they cannot work during the monsoon either. Despite the difference in the earnings in the two sectors, it is rare for people to shift between the two – the printers tend to remain printers and the dyers tend to remain dyers. The details are as follows:

**Table: Average monthly income (in Rs) (n = 55)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>&lt; 1000</th>
<th>1001-1500</th>
<th>1501-2000</th>
<th>2001-2500</th>
<th>2501-3000</th>
<th>&gt;3000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
None the workers surveyed had a bank account. They lived on advances received from the labour contractor and their accounts were settled at the end of the migration cycle. They managed to save between Rs1000- 1200 per month, so they went back home with Rs 6000-8000, depending upon the length of the migration cycle. The ones who lived with their families managed to save less.

4.4.4. Other Issues

- The printing industry in Jaipur has an association called the Sanganer Kapda Rangai Chapai Association. It has a membership of approximately 400 members. There is an almost equal number of factories who are not members of the association. To set up a factory, the factory owner needs to seek permission from the Labour Department and needs a licence under the Rajasthan Shops and Commercial Institutions Act that needs to be renewed annually but many of the owners either ignore the rules and regulations or find other ways of getting past these regulations.

- Some of the factory owners were of the view that many new players were moving in the industry – who were getting into it for short term gains as it was possible to earn much with an investment of Rs 1 lac. The dying industry needed only 2 major pieces of equipment – a ……… for dyeing and a bamboo/concrete frame for drying the fabric. The unregistered ones usually set up shop in a rented space and all of them do not even continue after they make a tidy profit from the business or when they sense trouble in the offing.

- With the partial mechanisation of the dying process, it has become a skilled operation and the new workers need to be trained for at least 10 days. Drying the fabric is considered to involve lower level of skills. The issue in drying is the speed at which they dry on the high frames whereas in the dying process they need to learn how to operate the machines.

- The printers have fixed clients and work on contracts. For the local market, the designs are selected by the owners whereas the material produced for the export market usually has professional design input.

- Almost all the factory owners complain that the margins have reduced with the increasing costs of labour, colours and fuel wood. The factory owners are therefore always on the lookout on ways to reduce costs; cutting down labour costs is usually the first method which usually means paying less to labour rather than efficient processes. The other strategy used is to reduce the input costs; this is done by using cheaper dyes. The ones who produce for the export market cannot take recourse
to this strategy as the quality standards are higher and they have to use good quality dyes to maintain the desired standards.

- Working conditions were tough for all the workers in this category. Exposure to heat for dyers, climbing on 20-25 feet high frames for drying fabric without protective gear, exposure to chemicals are all part of the process. The worst segment is the dye fixing, where the printed fabric is subjected to a mixture of nitrate salts and hydrochloric acid. We were told that the emerging fumes damaged the skins of the workers. (The researchers were not able to visit these sites).

- There is evidence of many young boys being employed in the dyeing process. This work, as in the other sectors is for the young and physically fit – there are few workers who work beyond the age of 35 years. They retire and go back home.

4.5. **Other Migrant Workers**

This section covers two groups – miscellaneous workers who were covered as part of the sample and form small groups on their own and workers from outside the state of Rajasthan.

4.5.1. **Vendors and dhaba workers**

Vendors in this case are defined as those workers who are selling anything on the street i.e. they are selling goods of some kind but do not have a pucca shop. These include those who sell cheap utility items (fancy good in local parlance) and street food on carts, who sell bed sheets and grass mats by vending their wares on their heads and those who sell their goods from the pavement. Street vending and vendors are characterised by:

- The migration patterns are not fixed for this group. Many of the street vendors who are either mobile themselves or have mobile shops tend to be seasonal migrants. Those who have a fixed spot to vend their goods like street food or ornamental plants or cane furniture tend to be on long migration cycles i.e. they visit their village once or twice a year. Some of the vendors, who have relatives working along with them like the street food vendors take it in turns to visit the village so that the business does not suffer.

- This group is very varied not just in terms of the product that they sell but also their place of origin. It is not unusual to find chat-pakori sellers from Lalsot in Dausa, ornamental plant sellers from Agra district in Uttar Pradesh, cotton blanket sellers from Shyopur in Madhya Pradesh, embroidery needle sellers from Pali district of Rajasthan, grass mat (chatai) sellers from Sultanpur in Uttar Pradesh or cane furniture sellers from Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh.
• The age group varies from very young children both boys and girls migrating with their families to old couples who have more or less made Jaipur their home.

• The incomes naturally depend on the nature of the goods that they sell. Barring the street vendors who calculate their income on a daily basis, which works out to be approximately Rs 200 per day (this is excluding costs), the others tend to calculate their incomes on a return on investment. A plant sellers for example buys a truck load for Rs 100,000 and sells it for Rs 150,000, the difference of Rs 50,000 is however not the net profit as the costs of watering, help, bribes etc have to be deducted from this. The business is seasonal as well. Discussions indicate that despite complex calculations for each sector the average monthly income from any of these businesses worked out to be in a fairly narrow range of between Rs 3000 to 6000 a month.

• The living and working conditions, like for any other group of migrants are tough. Some live in rented rooms, some live on the pavement next to their stock, some camp out in the open with their families and stock, some live on the railway station at night but are forced to leave it (by the police) during the day. Arrangements for daily needs like water, bathing, toilet are remain a challenge and arrangements are as varied as for the accommodation. The ones who are camping on the railway station use the facilities at the railway station at odd hours. There are some who put up temporary tent like structures for living and sometimes bathing as well on the pavement where they live. Few of the migrants manage to access toilet facilities – most of them go out in the open. The longer term migrants tend to take a room on rent on a shared basis which gives them access to common toilet and bathing facilities.

• This group, like all other migrant workers in the city has no access to government medical facilities. Minor illnesses are ignored or help sought from private medical practitioners or quacks. In case of serious illnesses, almost all of them go back home to rest and recuperate.

_Dhaba_ workers form a large group on their own but covering them was beyond the scope of this particular study as it is very difficult to speak to them or observe them at work. This group comprises a large number of children and the owners are almost always present making it difficult to speak to them.

• The _dhaba_ workers tend to be young boys, usually from within the state. They either have a close family member or relative who is working in the city.
• The work in the *dhaba* is considered relatively easier as it does not involve hard labour and is therefore a preferred option to place younger boys before they move on to harder labour. It also provides a place to stay and food to eat.

• The workers here have a very long day with little break as the *dhaba* once it opens early in the morning usually closes late at night.

• The younger workers are involved in almost all the operations from chopping vegetables, washing dishes, sweeping the floor and waiting on tables. The only operation that they are not involved in is the actual cooking.

• Their earning such as it is, is rarely given to the workers but to the relative who places them on the site. Some of the older workers are paid directly by the owner.

4.5.2. Out of state workers

Jaipur is a destination not just for workers from within the state but from other parts of the country as well. Migration seems to follow a pattern both in terms of selection of destination and occupation. This has been observed in migrants who are from within the state and in those who are from outside the state.

Out of state migrants from outside the state usually belong to four states – Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal. Many of the migrant workers from Bihar are from the poorer districts of North Bihar i.e. Sitamarhi and Madhubani. Almost all the migrants from West Bengal are from Cooch Behar district. There did not seem to be clearly discernable patterns that could be seen from Uttar Pradesh or Madhya Pradesh, though the migrants tended to be from the neighbouring districts like Agra in Uttar Pradesh and Etah which is not neighbouring but it cropped up in several discussions in relation to ice cream vendors and almost all the migrants from Madhya Pradesh seemed to be from Shyopur district which is just across the border.

Similar patterns were seen in the choice of occupations.

Women from Cooch Behar almost always worked as domestic help and their husbands worked as rickshaw pullers or construction labour. The rickshaw could be either a passenger or a loading rickshaw. Labour from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar was usually to be found in the transport sector either as rickshaw pullers or loading rickshaw pullers or working as dyers and printers in the block printing industry. Labour from Madhya Pradesh was to be found either vending something or in the construction industry.

Apart from these patterns, what sets out of state migrants apart is the feeling of vulnerability that they displayed. The level of vulnerability seems to be directly proportional to the distance of the destination from
the source end. The migrants also made arrangements to reduce vulnerability. Some of them carry identification issues by the village panchayat that is signed by the sarpanch or the mukhiya. Many of them travel with their voter ID cards in original, not photocopies. What really sets them apart is the strong urge that they display in being with people from their own region. This is reflected both in their choice of occupation and accommodation.

Almost no one comes to a new place without some kind of social or political network. There is evidence especially in the case of migrant workers from Bihar to seek political clout through proximity to local politicians. Many of the labourers from Bihar also come through labour agents who in turn have affiliations with local political leaders. As one migrant commented, ‘\textit{itni door aayen hain to bina intezaam kare thode hi aayen hain}’ (we have not come so far without making any arrangements).

In migrants from other states, the social networks appeared to be stronger than the political networks.

Life for all migrants is a struggle in terms of meeting basic needs. The migrants from outside the state have to deal with the fact that assuming they were to access government grievance redressal mechanisms, they have little visibility and recognition in government offices.

The only times that they are mentioned is in connection with their practices of undercutting existing wage rates in almost all the sectors – whether it is plying rickshaws or domestic service or in the construction industry. Things got to such a level in one of the chowkhatis that they are pushed out and so they have formed their own chowkhati. This practice of undercutting is also an indication of their vulnerability where they seek to make a place for themselves with their employers by asking lower wage rates, working for longer hours and taking fewer days off. One of the reasons that many employers prefer to hire them is because they tend to take fewer days off as is seen in the printing industry.

A report on domestic workers\textsuperscript{8} also indicates that employers prefer women from West Bengal as they are neatly turned out, their quality of work is better and they take fewer days off.

\section*{5. Courage in the face of adversity}

Rural-rural migration continues to be important but rural-urban migration appears to be growing at a faster rate. This is because of the numerous opportunities in urban construction, manufacturing and services. It is very likely that migration and commuting will continue to increase because of wage differentials and improving communications, infrastructure and transport services. However, hardly any systematic effort is being made to address this reality and plan for it properly. Migration continues to be highly expensive and risky for the poor because the overall policy and institutional system is not migrant friendly - thus travelling,\textsuperscript{8}

\textsuperscript{8} Study on domestic workers …
finding accommodation, negotiating work and pay rates, accessing government services (health, education and subsidized food) and remitting money home are all problematic for poor migrant workers.

Jaipur like every other growing urban centre is a hub of growth and opportunity. Being the capital and the largest city in the state coupled with its proximity to the national capital makes it a centre of high growth. This in turn implies that it needs labour of all kinds to keep it working and growing which in turn attracts migrants from all over the state and other states as well. The migrant workers find themselves working and earning more than they would have in their villages but less than other larger urban centres; the nature of engagement is such that their low skill sets, the temporary nature of their work and lack of political influence ensure that they are marginalised almost everywhere. There is grudging recognition in the resident population and policy makers that labour is needed for the city to grow and work but little acceptance of the need to have a dignified life for them.

There are several common struggles that the labourers in the unskilled and unorganised sector have to deal with on a daily basis even as they continue with their hard work. This section attempts to bring these issues together as a precursor to reflect on what the Bureau and other organisations need to be doing in their work in Jaipur.

The study across the various sectors has helped establish the fact that migration is not a spur of the moment decision. There are fairly well established systems and networks that facilitate migration. Younger migrants enter the urban economy through friends, relatives, contractors or agents who are very strong influences on the choice of their occupation. Their first few years in the city, in a way determine their path for advancement and growth. It is not surprising therefore to find that there are specific migration streams from source areas to destinations such as Jaipur.

Thus a socio-geographical cluster in a district of Rajasthan or another state will begin providing labour for a specific trade or occupation at the destination and this will become a well established pattern of labour movement. Any long-term work with migrant labour in Jaipur therefore has to recognise this chain of intermediaries and networks and understand the relationship between source-identity and destination-profile. It might be essential, in a number of cases to work with agents and intermediaries so that the quality of services and protection to migrant labour improves.

In terms of Aajeevika Bureau’s own strategy it therefore becomes imperative to identify and dialogue with labour intermediaries in different sectors. Some of this dialogue can certainly happen in the city, but a fair bit will need to take place at source-ends from where these arrangements actually arise. The Bureau will need to organise occupational groups that can in turn look after the interests of those entering the market in their sectors. Also the intermediaries can be enlisted and motivated for ensuring better practices and ethical treatment in the market towards migrant labour.

Almost all the migrant groups have a real crisis of identity and those who are from other states have a crisis of legitimacy as well. The length of migration does not seem to impact their legitimacy, it just teaches them to cope a little better. Unable to
establish their credentials as lawful residents of the city, they go without very basic services that all city residents take for granted – subsidised rations, bank accounts and credit, rental spaces, and gas connections. If at all these services are accessed, it is by paying hefty bribes or commissions or using other people’s identity. The lack of identity is a common deterrent for economic advancement. People are unable to take risks and undertake new ventures because of an overriding environment in which they remain unrecognised and invisible. Due to their ‘invisibility’ and lack of recognition by Government, particularly city authorities, attention is rarely paid to providing them services as a group. The city plans and allocations do not take into account that there are large numbers of people who spend most of their living and working life in the city but are unable to claim any service spaces. The Jaipur Development Authority indeed regards them as a ‘necessary evil’ and has no plans to integrate them in the city plans.

The registration and photo ID service of Aajeevika immediately becomes contextual in such a situation. The registration of migrant workers can create a database of workers into the city that can be used by planners. The photo ID will give a strong sense of association and visibility to the migrant labour and also create new level of trust and confidence in the market towards the migrant labour.

The economic activities that migrant labour enter in the city are unorganised and informal where the level of engagement is often short term with low returns. These sectors are always on the look out for younger people who can be paid less and the older migrants find themselves eased out of the sector. The career of a migrant worker rarely lasts beyond 20 years compared to the 35-40 years of a worker in the organised sector. The informal nature of their work leaves them open to frequent exploitation and labour abuse with no recourse to legal redressal. Similarly, despite living in a city, they are not aware of new opportunities and avenues. This is because, migrant labour is so deeply caught in the current economic web at such a low end that new options and pathways do not immediately become obvious. It is in these situations that the training and placement services of Aajeevika Bureau have the potential of becoming a much sought after service in the city for both new and older migrants. Similarly there is a need of a legal aid and counseling cell in the city.

Shelter and sanitation is clearly a problem that impacts almost every migrant worker. Where shelter is available, there is a tendency to over crowd and because shelter is often not available, large number of migrants are found sleeping in the open on sites, under flyovers, in makeshift tenements and squatting clusters. In this scenario of deficit, sanitary facilities such as toilets and drainage appear to be a luxury that few even consider. Undoubtedly this has a major implication on the health and well-being of seasonal migrants. They remain highly susceptible to infectious diseases and psycho-social disorders.

Access to financial services such as savings, credit and in the case of migrants, remittances can act as a powerful boost to economic advantage. However, across all occupation categories, availability of formal services remains an issue. Earnings are not managed properly and large amount of their income remains unquantified. Bank accounts are rare and earnings are commonly with their employers/contractors. The migrant is often the loser – if the money is with him there is the danger of robbery.
and if the money is with his employer, he might unwittingly bind himself to the employer and become indentured. Most migrants are debt ridden and have difficulty paying off their one time debt. Those with entrepreneurial inclinations are unable to start up due to unavailability of funds. There is an increasing felt need for financial services such as loans and savings as well some kind insurance cover to combat the nature of their jobs and the health hazards they face at the destination ends.

The day to day problems that migrants face across sectors extend well into their economic life. This study has repeatedly found cases of extortion, police harassment and hafta collection to which small vendors and labour service providers are subjected. Again, there is no political or bureaucratic patronage that can protect migrants from such extreme hardship and help them construct a dignified livelihood.

The discussions with city authorities in the course of this study showed the extent of apathy and indifference to the existence and problems of migrant labourers. In this context of denial, the task of providing protection and services to migrants at large scale becomes truly daunting.

The dispersed and unorganized nature of migrant labour is the most important underlying all problems. There are a number of basic areas that need to be addressed. Some of these are areas that can be most effectively addressed by government programs and policies, some by organisations such as Aajeevika Bureau and some by coordinated efforts by a number of organisations concerned about this important group of the rural and urban poor.
The Jawahar Circle Fast Food Group

Annex 1

Jawahar Circle is a popular park of Jaipur. It is also said to be the largest Circular Park in Asia. On summer evenings and weekends, it is usually crowded with families and young people. Over the past few years, it has also become a popular place for street food.

There is a range of food and drink that is available near the park. Food and drink is sold from gaily decorated hand carts all parked together in an area that is allotted to the group. During the course of the mapping exercise, we found out that there is a group of 25 hand carts who are there. All these are members of a Union that is registered with the Delhi Based Bharat Mazdoor Union. They have applied to the Jaipur Development Authority for the allotment of land but they did not receive that – what they do have is a permission from the JDA to set up this street food market. They also have a letter from the JDA assuring these 25 people that they will receive allotment on priority if and when JDA sets up a market near the Park.

They have, it seems by consensus, arrived at the maximum number of hand-carts that they will permit to stand near Jawahar Circle. It is currently 25 vendors. They have also decided the number of carts for each kind of food. None of the vendors can change the product that they have been selling. The cart-mix currently is:

- Ice cream – 9 carts
- Bhel Puri – 2
- Pani –patasha – 3
- Paav-Bhaji – 5
- Baraf ka Gola – 1
- Idli- Dosa – 1
- Matka kulfi – 1
- Neembu Soda – 1
- Chow Mein- 1
- Chana Jor Garam – 1

Most of these are owners of their own carts. All of them have employed 1-2 people, usually their relatives. This is to help them out in their work but also to enable them to go back to their village without a break in the business.

There are several subgroups within this large group. The largest subgroup is that of the ice cream vendors. There seems to be 1 owner known as Panditji. He is from Etah and he moved here almost 30 years ago after leaving his job in the Hindustan Lever Limited factory. He began vending ice cream and today owns at least 4 more carts. All these are branded ice creams. He seems to have a reputation of being a tough nut and according to him even the police constables cannot get away by eating his ice cream for free unless he chooses to give it to them. His linkages are with the ice cream factory where he deposits a security of Rs 5000 per cart. Depending upon the sales, the company decides to give him more than one cart. He has employed 4-5 people but none of them are his relatives – they are all migrant labour.

There are 3 pani ke patashe stalls in the place. All three are brothers from Lalsot. Apparently all Lalsot in Dausa is the home Chaat-Pakodi and a is major occupation of migrant labour. These three brothers also 1-2 employees each – usually members of their
extended family. The eldest of the three brothers went with someone from the village to Nagpur many years ago and learnt the trade. He came back as he wanted to be nearer home and set up a business here. They have land in the village but since there are 6 of them apart from the father to share it – it is just not enough to sustain the family.

There are 5 paav-bhaji stalls here – two are run by the owners themselves and one by an employee of one of the owners. one of them has been selling paav-bhaaji since 1991 and has been relocated 3 times. He began at Statue Circle where they were removed as one influential industrialist who lived close by did not want street food vendors near his house. They were then moved to a covered nallah near C Scheme when they were asked to move again. When the next allotment happened in 2001, he had gone back to his village and therefore missed out the opportunity. He has been here since 2004. There are some commonalities:

- All of them have been in Jaipur for several years but all of them (barring the ice-cream vendor from Etah) go back to their villages regularly – almost every two months.

- All of them say that they would not be doing this work if they were not making at least Rs 2000-3000 per month per stall. This is profit after deducting expenses.

- There are no facilities for them to prepare any of their food items on site – so the pani-patashe makers prepare everything before coming to sell. The paav-bhaji vendors boil all the vegetables and assemble them on site. The ice-cream vendor sellers sell only packaged products. The kulfi seller also gets prepared material.

- All of them have to get the water they need to wash plates or for the customers to drink as well.

- None of them reported police harassment because they have the permission to run their stalls.
The Case of a Street Vendor

Sampat Kumar is from Jahazpur in Bhilwara. He sells plastic goods and other ‘fancy items’ on a *thela* (cart). Typically, the goods are daily use items and their cost rarely exceeds Rs 10. These include *bindis, kajal*, cheap lipstick, small shaving mirrors, string, clothes pegs, dustpans, small toys, plastic dishes etc. Sampat has been in this profession for the past 8 years. It is not as if he do not have any land in the village – his family owns about 9 beegas of land but now after digging to 110 feet, there is no water in the well and no money to dig further. This has forced Sampat and his brothers to move to the city. His father is in the village and he can manage the single rain fed crop that they cultivate.

Initially, his brother migrated with another young man from his village, then gradually all the 3 brothers came to Jaipur. All of them live together along with their sister and her husband and another 3 people from their village. They are all vendors of fancy items. They live in rented rooms with a tin roof. These rooms are basically 20-25 temporary shelters constructed by a building contractor in an empty plot of land. The monthly rent for each room is Rs 650 including electricity. Sampat shares his room with 2 others and therefore pays Rs 215. There are 3 common toilets and bathrooms.

All of them do not eat together but none of them eat separately, there are different eating groups. They use fuel wood which they buy at Rs 3 per kg. The costs for eating are split but work out to be around Rs 2000 per month. If he falls ill, then he goes to a private doctor or quack (*bungalee* doctor). In case of serious illness he goes back home. Last year, he lost 5 months as he fell ill.

He stocks up his cart from the wholesale shops at Nahargarh Road. His *thela* can stock goods worth Rs 10,000 but at the time of the interview he goods worth Rs 6000. There is a 30 per cent margin. On an average, he manages to sell goods worth Rs 500-700 per day i.e. make Rs 150-200 per day. To be sure there are days when sales are very good and days when sales are quite low or to quote, ‘*grahak aur maut ka koi bharosa nahin*’ (God and the customer cannot be trusted). According to Sampat, the increase in road coverage has had an adverse impact on his sales – now it is easy to push a *thela* and this has increased the number of vendors. Sales have also decreased as the number of fancy goods stores has increased tremendously.

It is not an easy life, he begins his work around 9 in the morning and if he finishes in the evening between 7 and 9. He has a fixed colonies and fixed nap time. In fact, he has made an arrangement in the cart for him to take a nap as well as a cassette player. As he put it, ‘*meri apni gadi hai or isme 10-12 ghante guzarta hoon*’ (It is my own cart and I have to spend 10-12 hours on it).

Despite it being a hard life, he seems to prefer it over a fixed job as the earnings are there for those who want to work hard combined with the flexibility of being able to go home as and when he wants.
Many of the pavements of Jaipur, like that of any other large city have a variety of vendors. In Jaipur, there are several places, where one sees small groups of plant vendors – outside SMS Hospital, near Imli Phatak, Durgapura, DCM near Shyam Nagar to name a few places. It is unusual to find a lone plant seller though vendors of other products are to be found singly.

The plant sellers occupy a significant amount of space on the pavement as each seller has hundreds of plants. Most of these are ornamental plants for urban gardens. Many of these plants are expensive and therefore need to be guarded. The price range for these plants can be from Rs 10 to Rs 700-800, depending upon the variety and size of the plant.

Selling plants is not a low investment activity and the value of the stock of each seller can be between Rs 100,000 – 150,000. These plants are procured either from Agra, Kolkata or Andhra and come by truckloads.

Each plant seller usually has at least one helper with him, who is usually a family member. The ones who are from the surrounding districts go home as and when they want or need to as they take it in turns to go. There are many plant sellers who are from Uttar Pradesh and have been in Jaipur for over 20 years or so and are more or less settled here with their families. They go back only during the school vacations.

Despite the relatively high investment needed to be a plant seller, incomes are not very high. For an investment of Rs 100,000, they make a gross profit of Rs 50,000. Once the cost of watering the plants which includes buying the water, loss due to plants dying, payment to the police for using the pavement, salary to helper are deducted, it does not leave very much.