



**Livelihood Profile of Kumbhalgarh
Block
(Rajsamand District, Rajasthan)**

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Introduction

Rajsamand district was carved out of Udaipur District in 1991 and was named after the famous Rajsamand Lake built by Maharana Raj Singh of the erstwhile Mewar Kingdom. The district's headquarter is situated at a distance of 352 km south of Jaipur and 67 Km north of Udaipur. The district of Rajsamand encompasses a total area of 4,550.93 sq. km and is located between 24° 46' and 26° 01' north latitudes and between 73° 28' and 74° 18' east longitudes.

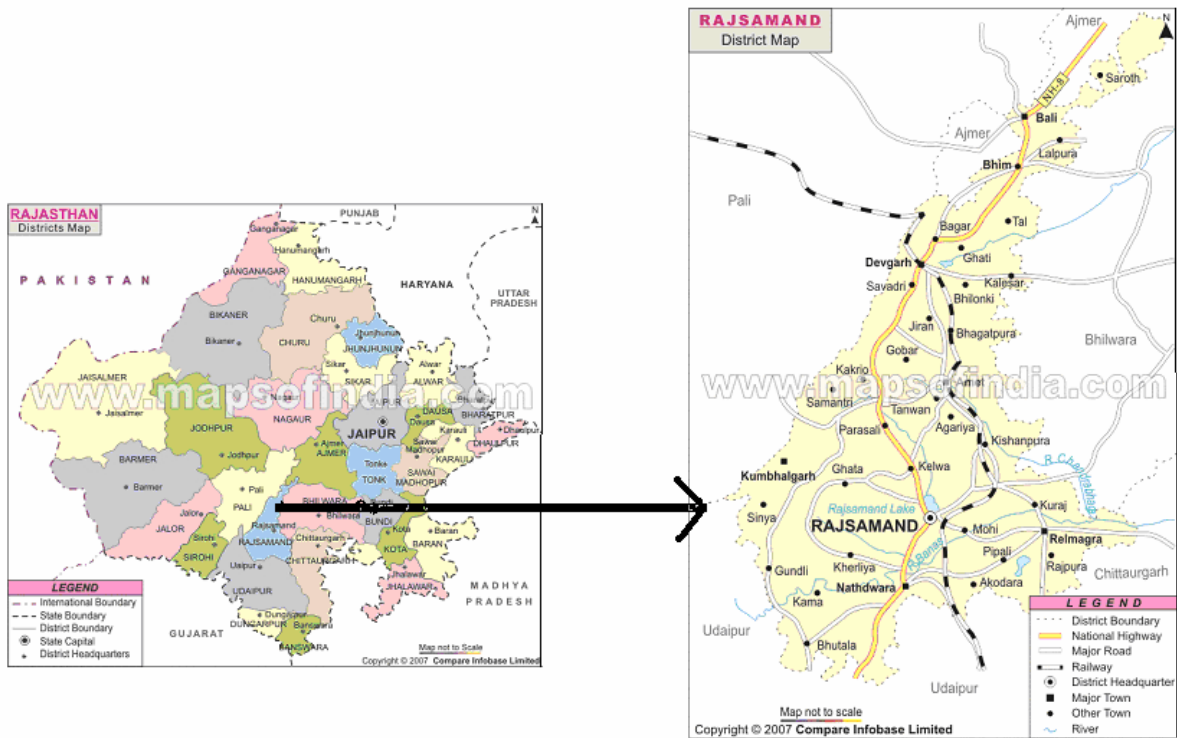


Figure 1: Map of Rajsamand District in the state of Rajasthan, India

Rajsamand district is surrounded by Ajmer in the North, Pali in the West, Udaipur in the South and Bhilwara in the East. Administratively, Rajsamand is divided into four Sub-divisions, 7 blocks (*Tehsils*) viz. Amet, Bhim, Deogarh, Kumbhalgarh, Nathdwara, Railmagra and Rajsamand. The total population of Rajsamand district is 9,87,024 with the sex ratio of 1000:1000 (Census 2001).

The Kumbhalgarh *Tehsil* is located at a distance of 48 km (on the west) from the District headquarter. It is famous for the Kumbhalgarh Fort, which is the cynosure of the tourists coming to south Rajasthan. In the royal history of Rajasthan, it is said that the Fort remained unconquered during the long continued battles between the Mewar kingdom and the Mughals.

Kumbhalgarh Block

Geographical Profile

The Kumbhalgarh Block has an area of 771.5 Sq. km. and is surrounded by Udaipur District on its South, Pali District on its West and Bhim, Rajsamand and Nathdwara Blocks of Rajsamand District on its North, East and South-East respectively. It is the second largest block or *tehsil* in terms of area after Nathdwara in the district.

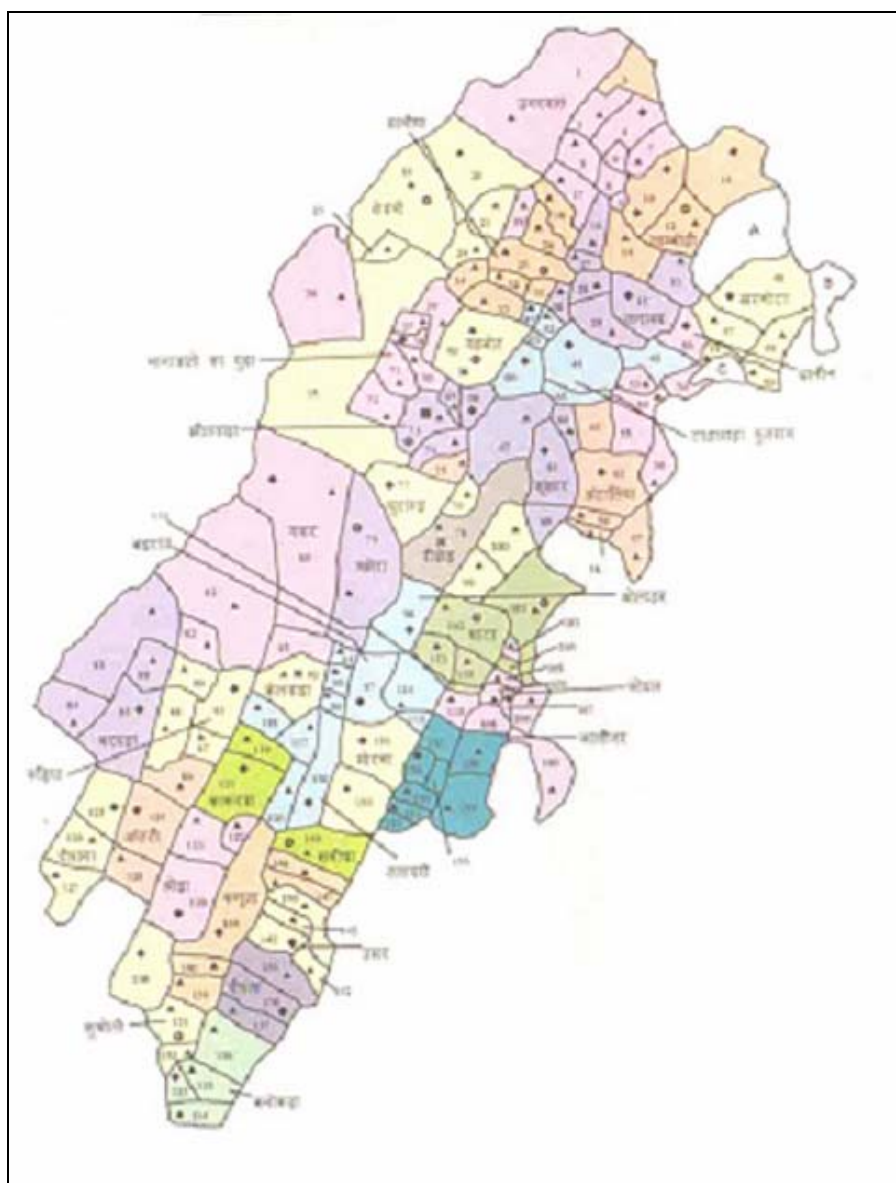


Figure 2: Kumbhalgarh Block of Rajsamand District

The climate around the year is pleasant as the block is situated on a higher elevation (around 900 m above sea level) and boasts of having the second highest point in Rajasthan (known as Jarga Hill). Majority of Kumbhalgarh Block is covered with hills and rocks and is quite undulating.

Table 1: Land use in Kumbhalgarh Block (in ?????????), source

Total Area	77150	100%
Agricultural Land (A.L.)	11902	15%
Irrigated Area (% of A.L.)	4813	40%
Forest Area	4968	6%
Common Land	60277	78%

Due to this reason, the agriculture land in the block is meager - at around 15%. There is little scope for diverting other common lands (almost 79% of the total area) for agriculture because of the hilly terrain. Forest cover is scanty, comprising 6% of the total area of the block.

Communities in Kumbhalgarh

The predominant communities in the block are from castes other than Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), however the population of STs is significant at 27% (according to the 2001 census). Scheduled Castes constitute around 9% of the total population of the block. Rajput, Brahmin, Jain and Meghwaal are the other caste groups that are present in the area.

Table 2: Demographic Profile of the Kumbhalgarh Block source??

Number of Households	27959
Population	131346
Sex Ratio	1000
SC Population	9%
ST Population	27%
Population Density measure??	170.25

Livelihood of the communities shows a pattern along caste lines where Jain and Rajput families show a higher rate of migration outside of Rajasthan in comparison to Tribal communities (however the rate of migration amongst tribals is steadily increasing). The nature of employment also seen to vary across caste groups. While Jains and Rajputs are involved more in setting up their own business and going for skilled and semi-skilled jobs, majority of tribal people migrate for unskilled and low paying jobs. The primary reasons for such a pattern are the existing contacts and networks of the former as well as higher educational levels in comparison to the tribals.

Livelihoods in Kumbhalgarh Block: A description

Agriculture: Agriculture is the primary occupation for most households in the block. However, meager landholdings and the rain fed nature of agriculture (only 40% of the area under agriculture is irrigated) make this a low income-generating occupation for the households of Kumbhalgarh block. Lack of knowledge and implementation of modern agricultural techniques and practices, use of low yielding seeds and little use of fertilizers are some other reasons for the low productivity in agriculture.

Main crops cultivated in the block are maize, wheat and sugarcane. In fact 60% of the total Sugarcane production in the district is from Kumbhalgarh. The production per hectare of these crops in Kumbhalgarh is the lowest amongst all blocks in the district. Even if one assumes reaching the maximum production levels in agriculture, it may not suffice for an adequate livelihood of households in the *tehsil*. Moreover, the availability of agricultural land is a constraint that will remain. At present, 15% of the total geographical area is under cultivation. This may be increased to a maximum of 20% by diverting common lands for agriculture purposes. This is because most of the land in the *tehsil* is undulating in nature and the fertile areas suitable for agriculture are already being cultivated.

Livestock: Livestock or animal husbandry is another component of the livelihood profile of the households of Kumbhalgarh. The undulating landscape of the *tehsil* and the small size of the agriculture plots require a farmer to have at least a pair of bull. This is reflected in the number of cattle in the block. The number of buffaloes in the *tehsil* (the number in 2001 being 49635) is the highest in the district. Most of the families surveyed in a study covering ten panchayats reported not selling the milk in the market. Instead, the milk (which was in very small quantity) was used within the household for making buttermilk. The number of goat and sheep kept is not high in comparison to figures in other *tehsils* of the district. **Source of all this data???**

Forest and other common lands: Forests constitute only 6% of the total land area and fall under the Tropical Dry Deciduous Forest type. Southern and Western parts of the *tehsil* have a fairly good stock of NTFPs like Ratanjot, Sitalal, Mahua and Khakhra. Most of these are present around agricultural land. The other common land that includes pastures and other revenue lands make up 79% of the total area. Both the forestland and the other common lands are severely degraded due to the heavy livestock pressure and the lack of a proper management regime of these lands.

The fourth major livelihood strategy is through out migration that is dealt in greater detail in the next section.

Migration from Kumbhalgarh Block

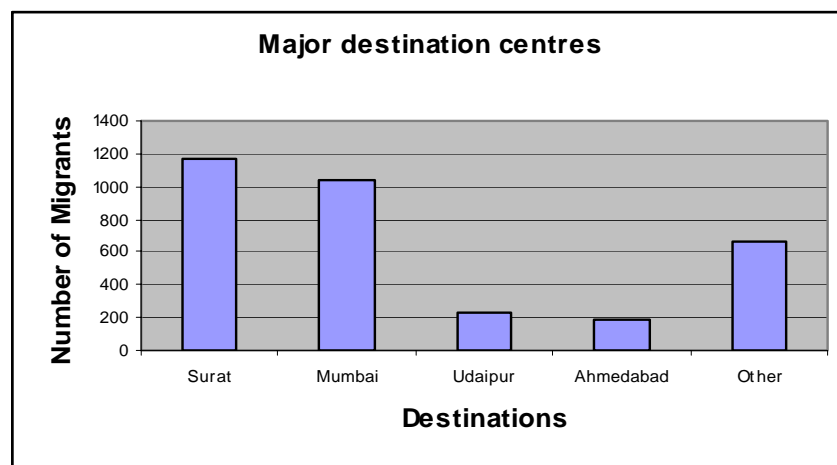
Lack of agricultural land, low productivity in agriculture and livestock, degradation of forests and other common lands in the recent past along with a rise in population have led people to migrate out of their village in search for better livelihood options. This search sometimes takes them to far off areas of India such as the states of Andhra Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh. Migration outside the state from this area is not a recent phenomenon. However, the migration in the past was mainly for better livelihood options or setting up a business. Migrating for wage labor and for unskilled work is more recent

There is dearth of information and understanding of migration trends especially at the micro or village level. Recognizing this, Aajeevika Bureau conducted a survey in the *tehsil* to understand the trends in migration and issues related to it. In the Kumbhalgarh Block, a migration survey had been completed in 10 panchayats by December 2007 and the data available from this shows some interesting trends that are described below.

Inter and intra state migration is predominantly undertaken by men who leaving their families in the village in order for the latter to take care of the land, livestock and other assets. In most cases, the age ranged from 13 to 35 years. Most of the discussions in these panchayats seemed to indicate that after a certain age, the men come back to the village and start doing something in and around the village itself. This may be prompted by many factors such as not getting promoted in their job, occupational health problems, problems in the family in the village, etc.

Destinations of migrant populations from Kumbhalgarh

Preliminary surveys in 10 Panchayats of the Kumbhalgarh tehsil suggest that 37% households send one or more of their members in search of livelihood outside the village.



Graph 1: Important destination centers for migrants from Kumbhalgarh

A closer look at the data shows that majority of the people are migrating to places outside the state, especially to Gujarat and Maharashtra. While 15% of the migrants migrate to places within the state, the remaining 85% go out of the state in search of employment opportunities. Within

the state, Udaipur is the most preferred option for migrants. This may be due to its attractiveness of being nearer to home as well as providing ample opportunities to get a variety of unskilled work. Almost 45% of intra state migrants from these Panchayats go to Udaipur. Kelwa, Rajsamand and Pali are other preferred destination for the migrant workers from here.

Category	Destination of migration	% Within the group	% Within the total migrant pop.
	Within Rajasthan		15.34
	Udaipur	45	7
	Rajsamand	13	2
	Kelwa	11	2
	Pali	13	2
	Others	18	3
	Outside Rajasthan		84.66
	<i>Gujarat</i>		<i>48.4</i>
	Surat	74	36
	Ahmedabad	12	6
	Others	15	7
	<i>Maharashtra</i>		<i>32.33</i>
	Mumbai	97	31
	Others	3	1
	<i>Other Places</i>		<i>4</i>

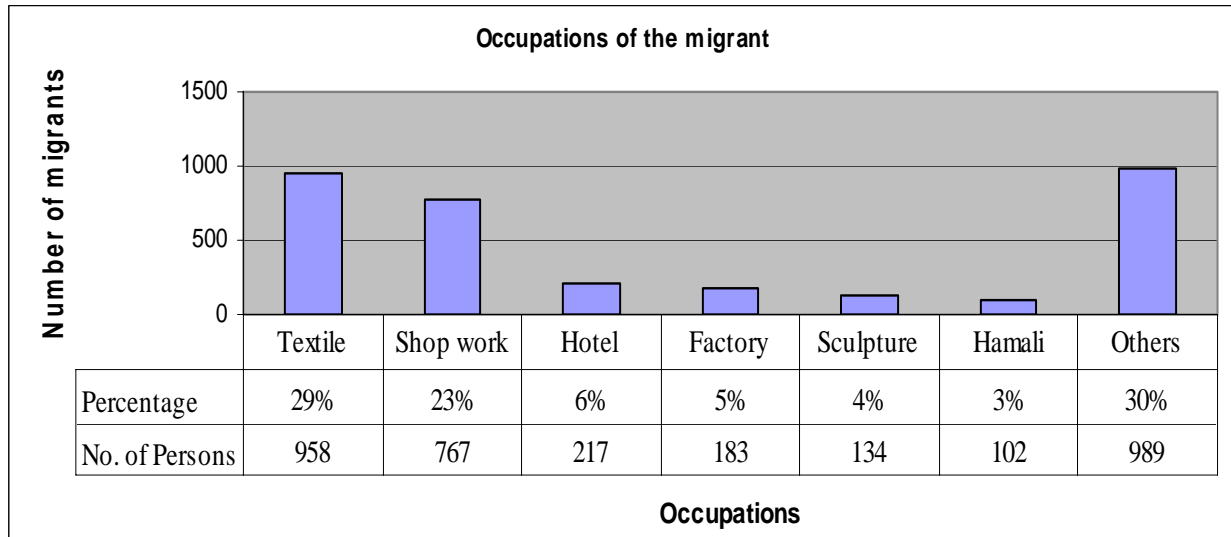
Table 3: Destinations for migration from Kumbhalgarh Block

Around 48% of the total migrants migrate to Gujarat and 32% to Maharashtra from the surveyed Panchayats. Preferred destinations in Gujarat are Surat, Ahmedabad and Ambaji amongst others. In Maharashtra, 97% of migrants go to Mumbai

Nature of work upon migration

There is a variety of work that the migrants from Kumbhalgarh Block undertake in different destinations. Often, one destination caters to a particular type of occupation. For example,

migrants to Surat are mostly involved in sari cutting and related occupations. In Udaipur and Mumbai, the migrants are involved in 19-20 different types of works. These range from unskilled work of loaders (*Hamaali ka kaam*) and sari cutting to skilled work like making of sculptures and jewellery work.



Graph 2: Nature of work undertaken by migrants from Kumbhalgarh Block

Most of the people migrating to places outside Rajasthan are involved in sari cutting works or are working in shops. These two occupations provide employment to more than 50% of the total migrants from these panchayats. Other important occupations are Hotel, manufacturing units/factories and making of Sculptures. Sculpture makes often go to far off areas such as Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh to sell their statues.

Issues in Migration

While every household (and its family members' occupations at the destination) has its own issues while dealing with out migration, there are some common issues that most undertaking migration face. These are described below.

Caste-based Discrimination in work: Rajputs and Jains were probably the first migrants from the Kumbhalgarh Block to other states. They already have a head start in different professions in which they are working. These communities utilize this position of power to block entry to other communities (such as tribals and *dalits*) into these fields. Often, bigger responsibilities are also not given to the latter, relegating these castes to the lower end of the labor market. For example, in the textile trade, it is the tribals who are given the menial jobs of sari cutting, folding and making a stitch whereas the Rajput community is mainly involved in supervising and salesmanship. Low education levels and lack of exposure of tribal community further aggravate the situation and prevent them from growing in their occupation.

Exploitation at the workplace: It is common to come across migrant workers that have faced exploitation during their employment outside the village (see box below). Most of these cases are either related to financial exploitation or physical abuse. There are many instances when the employer does not pay due wages at the end of the term and these migrant workers do not have

access to kind of support to ensure against such payment irregularities. There are also cases where the employer has physically abused them on the smallest of faults or just because they have answered back.

Vajaram of Pipala village is a seasonal unskilled migrant who has worked in the labour markets in Udaipur, Kelwa and Rajsamand. Two years ago, he along with five people from his village went to work in a stone quarry for a contractor. The contractor regularly paid them wages for 12 months but did not pay wages for the last two months of their work. Initially when they asked the contractor for the same, he said that payments would be made once stones are sold. He refused to talk to them on the phone and vanished thereafter.

Vajaram said that the group of 20 workers with him had faced the same situation with that contractor. The total amount for two months (at the rate of Rs.100 per day) comes to Rs.6000 per person. Hence, Rs.120000 in total were still to be paid by the contractor. They do not know where the contractor has gone and are not aware of the legal help they can seek to get their hard earned money.

Lack of identity and consequent exploitation: Migrant workers lack any sort of identity in the places to where they migrate. The employer provides them with an identity card only if they are working with a well-known company (which is rare). This lack of identity becomes a problem especially when they have to deal with the police. Often the latter, suspect them of the theft or any other crime that happens in the area where they work. This suspicion can often lead to physical and mental torture. This can be solved to a certain extent if they were to possess some proof of their identity with details on who they are and where they come from.

Lack of support in times of need: There are times when, migrant workers are in need of financial and other support (such as legal aid). In times of an emergency (such as an accident) or when they are in urgent need of money, they have to resort to asking their employers or take a loan at high interest rates from other informal sources. Such negotiations gives the employer even greater power to exploit his position to his gain.

Lack of support for the family in the village: While working in other states, the migrant labour continues to remain concerned about his parents, spouse, children and/or other family members back in Rajasthan. These migrants thus prefer to stay joint families that can ensure a better support system at the village. However, wives of these migrants have reported a loss of freedom and decision-making power in such joint family household setups. This is especially true at times when their husbands migrate. Moreover, in times of financial need or ill health in the family, the wives find it harder to avail loans when their husbands are away.

Unhealthy working environments: Most migrants (especially true for Tribals), work as unskilled labour where work environments are invariably harsh and unhygienic, work hours are long and wages are abysmally low. Moreover, work in metal and chemical factories implies hazardous and high risk work environments. The average work life of persons engaged in such occupations is short.

Child labor: In some of the occupations that were surveyed, a significant number of children (under the age of 14 years) were found to be employed. Some of these occupations include work at the textile market, roadside tea stalls and small eateries/restuarants. These children are given

the most menial of jobs such as cleaning utensils, sari cutting etc. in these occupations. The work involves very hard work with long working hours. The pay is extremely low and often children work as apprentices where only token money is provided. Being induced into such work at an early age severely restricts the future of these children to grow in their existing work and closes other occupation choices as well. They are void of any options for education - formal or informal.

Health Problems: During the long periods of migration, the laborer sometimes falls ill. During the period of illness, the individual is unable to work and there are expenditures on medicines and consultancy fees at clinics for which he has to borrow from the employer/contractor. If the illness extends longer, the person is forced to return home, as he does not find any physical or financial support at the place to where he has migrated. In such circumstances, not only does he lose his job but he often also falls into debt, worsening his financial and livelihood situation.

Tulsiram of Manchda village in Kumbhalgarh Tehsil is 30 years old. Tulsiram completed his studies upto class 10 when his brother took him to Mumbai to work in a shop. For the last five years he has been working in a factory in Deev which makes cardboard boxes. His brother had been working in Mumbai for many years but wants to return due to ill health.

Tulsiram left the job in Mumbai within two years of working there as the wages given to him were meager. However, the wages he gets in Deev are no better. The nature of the work is unskilled and his daily wage at present is only Rs 110. This is after five years of working with only an increment of Rs.5 every year.

Tulsiram wants to return home now as he does not see any future in his present occupation. However, he knows he may not find work if he returns.

Lack of professional growth: Most occupations that migrant workers from Kumbhalgarh take up do not have much scope for growth. Occupations sari cutting and packing in the textile market, shop work and loading (*hamaali ka kaam*) in which a large number of individuals go, do not provide any avenues for significant growth either in wages, skills or responsibilities (see box above).

Long working hours and backbreaking work does not leave any scope for them to diversify into other occupations. Migrant labour engaged in such work thus typically migrate for shorter durations and subsequently the returns from these are also very little.