

**EMPLOYMENT AMONG SLUM DWELLERS**

**Overview and Strategy**



Summary of Draft Report and suggestions for  
action plan based on ILO Study-Action  
Project conducted by the Regional Office for  
Asia and Western Pacific of the International  
Council on Social Welfare, Bombay.

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## FOREWORD

An ILO-assisted project is currently being carried out by the Regional Office of International Council on Social Welfare in four slums of Bombay. Aiming to improve the employment and income levels of the slum dwellers, the project has just concluded its study phase which surveyed the skills and employment of 2,000 slum households. The slum-based study has demonstrated ample scope for harnessing training, credit, management and institutional resources to an integrated development effort, capable of improving the lot of people who are very much a part of the employment scene but earn too little to provide for their basic needs.

According to Dr. Brahm Prakash, Project Director, studies carried out so far have confirmed that "to live in a slum is already an achievement. It is a step up from the pavements for the homeless seeking jobs." The slum dwellers, he says, have stable links with the employment market. "We are aiming at helping them to help themselves not only for jobs but for better jobs."

Knowledge about prevailing employment patterns and unutilised job potential will, it is hoped, lead to a second, action phase of the project which will help the poorest in these communities to raise themselves to at least the minimum income level. Tentatively, the evidence obtained from the study phase suggests the following approaches.

One of the most important means of raising household incomes is to increase the number of earners per household since labour is the only asset they possess. Since a good number of the labour force is unemployed at present, the need for generating additional employment cannot be overemphasised. In so far as many housewives (about 30 to 40 per cent) who are at present outside the labour force are willing to work, provided suitable employment opportunities compatible with

their domestic responsibilities are made available, additional employment opportunities will help supplement the household income.

The second important means of action will be to augment the income of those already working. Since many are already working on a full-time basis, often long hours, there is little scope for increasing the quantum of employment. Thus, it will be necessary to raise their productivity and hence, incomes. For those who are employed for wages, there are at least two possibilities: (a) to improve their skills and promote job mobility, and (b) to encourage them to go into self-employment activity. For those already self-employed, it would seem possible to diversify the nature of their activity, upgrade the technology and skills, eliminate constraints in terms of excess to resources and markets, increase the demand potential for their goods and services, and thus improve their incomes.

The primary concern of the project, according to Dr. Brahm Prakash, is for the lowest stratum of the labour market with emphasis on occupational mobility leading to a move up on the social and earnings ladder, and on improving the income opportunities for the self-employed.

Following the approaches outlined above, for the Action Phase of the Project, it is intended to formulate three sub-projects:

- (a) Sub-project 1: This project will be designed to promote self-employment on the one hand and increase the income and productivity of those engaged in the informal sector on the other.
- (b) Sub-project 2: This project is expected to generate employment and income opportunities.

- (c) Sub-project 3: This project will focus on wage employees and will attempt to improve their income partly through labour market policies but mainly through skill generation and greater occupational mobility.

Conventional methods of administering assistance are considered inappropriate when dealing with such fragile areas of employment generation. Ways have to be found to communicate with the target population on the same wavelength. As Mr. S.V. Sethuraman of the ILO's Employment and Development Department puts it, "It is no use giving a man a pair of crutches without first building his self-confidence to use them". The same need for careful assessment of requirements applies to grants of credit and provision of training.

In view of the exploratory nature of these projects, the execution of the projects has to take place in a phased manner.

Preliminary inquiries show much of the resources needed for programme inputs are locally available. These include credit from banks, costs of expanding the training system, and provision of infrastructure facilities. However, some international inputs, through the ILO, are also envisaged.

The action phase of this project promises to be an experiment not only in methodology but in bringing together a very large number of institutions—municipal and State authorities, banks, welfare and training bodies. It could be a pilot scheme, opening the way to similar activities in other slums of the world.

In the Asia and Western Pacific Region, ICSW is intending to eventually extend the project to several countries some of which have already expressed interest in being associated with the action phase of the project.

May I take this opportunity to place on record the grateful thanks of ICSW Regional Office to Late Dr. S.D. Punekar, the first Hon. Director of the Project, Dr. Brahm Prakash, the Hon. Director of Study Phase, Dr. S.V. Sethuraman, ILO Consultant, Dr. D.S. Raj, Regional Director of ILO, Mr. Sushilkumar Shinde, Chairman Advisory Committee alongwith members of the same and the project staff.

ICSW, Bombay  
25th April, 1981

*S.D. Gokhale*  
S.D. Gokhale  
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## PREFACE

This is a brief summary of the Draft Report of ILO Study-cum-action Project being conducted by the Regional Office for Asia and Western Pacific of the International Council of Social Welfare Bombay. The summary also includes some suggestions towards strategies for better employment/earning opportunities for the slum dwellers. The Draft Report itself is now under revision and will be ready by July, 1980. Due to brevity this note had to, of necessity, gloss over several details, therefore only the final report is recommended for a thorough examination of issues involved.

Although the complete list of the acknowledgements will be provided only in the final report nevertheless we feel compelled to thank few of our friends even here. First of all an acknowledgement has to be made of late Professor S.D. Punekar who was the Director of the Project till his untimely death. The field work of the project was completed under his able supervision. I am grateful to Shri S.D. Gokhale for having provided me an opportunity for fulfilling the task which was left behind unfinished by my esteemed colleague, and a well wisher. The Regional Office of the ICSW under the dynamic leadership of Shri Gokhale provided ready and invaluable assistance to the project. I am also grateful to Dr. M.S. Gore, Director, Tata Institute of Social Sciences for his constant encouragement. Those who know him will certainly appreciate what a pleasure it is to work with him.

I am thankful to Dr. S.V. Sethuraman of ILO who has been largely instrumental in giving the project much of its shape by his active involvement, monitoring and critical feedback through all stages. Special mention has to be made to Dr. Sadananda, (NCSDCT), Tata Institute of Fundamental Research for helping us, in so many ways, to get the data processed. With his pleasant, helpful disposition he saw us through

many 'crisis'. The fact that we look forward to reprocess the data in near future again, speaks for him and their set up in no uncertain terms. Acknowledgements of personal friends and family members who helped me with the job in one way or the other will have to wait for the final report, but the assistance of Miss Asha Doshi is gratefully acknowledged in preparation of this brief note. However, I remain responsible for all the errors.

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25th April, 1981

## SLUM DWELLERS - Need for a perspective

A large proportion of urban population in principal cities of India is poor and lives in deficient surroundings - generally known as slums. The typical profile of an urban poor reveals that the person suffers from chronic under-employment or suffers from frequent unemployment. Moreover, he works in jobs which have low productivity and low paying capacity. Uncertainty regarding his earnings and negligible amount, if at all any, of his initial capital forces him to accept any job and living conditions. Obviously the factor which propels him in this direction in the first place, is the absence of any work whatsoever in the rural areas where he migrates from. Thus most of the slum dwellers antecedently belong to the rural poor population, and when they migrate to the urban centres they do so along with their mini socio-cultural world. Problems of the slum dwellers in urban centres are a combination of their economic poverty and the socio-cultural adjustment required of them in their interaction with the urban world. Needless to say, after a certain phase of urban dwelling, the problems of the slum dwellers themselves undergo a metamorphosis. Thus the study of slum dwellers and strategies for action programmes to alleviate their conditions encompass both static and dynamic aspects of the problem.

The analysis of slum dwellers can be approached from several viewpoints. They may be viewed as unwanted migrants who flock to the cities due to reasons lying outside the urban regions, who defile these beautiful citadels of present day civilization with their culture of poverty, etc. Or, alternatively, one may view them as the very brain and brawn which sustains the multi-faceted services of the urban centres. It is our submission that the slum dwellers have not been thoroughly understood as yet, particularly their role in the initial stages of industrialisation and development. The



reasons for this deficiency are many. But prominent among these are the different peculiarities of various sub-streams of migrants, its varying causes and courses, its heterogenous skill base, and finally its unorganized foothold in the myriads of city hierarchy. All of these factors get finally transformed into low paying jobs and adverse living conditions. It is felt that strategies for action programmes for alleviating their present dismal conditions cannot be meaningfully spelt out without having some perspective on these issues.

### The Survey

It was with this view that the Study-Cum-Action Project was sponsored by ILO. First part of the project consisted of the survey of pattern of employment in the slums of Bombay. The underlying idea being that such an understanding would be necessary for examining the potential action programme. More specifically the questions to be researched were:

- (a) The demographic and socio-economic composition of the slum dwellers.
- (b) Magnitude of unemployment and underemployment among urban slum dwellers in selected slums.
- (c) Prevailing employment pattern particularly as these related to various segments of job markets.

It was expected that the study phase will lead to action programme which among other things will focus on the following:

- (a) Approaches for improving productivity of prevailing employment motifs.
- (b) Feasibility of expanding employment potential of the sample population through alternative approaches.
- (c) Ranking of employment strategies, to the extent possible, according to their employment generating potential.

- (d) Adaptability of the more efficient approaches in other slum areas of the Asian Region.

### Research Methodology

The study is based on a survey of two thousand households in different slums of Bombay during the year 1978-79. The selection of the slums was done purposively. The entire economically active population among the slum dwellers in Bombay was considered as the universe. For intensive and reliable investigation within the available time a small sample was drawn. For this purpose, four slums were selected on the basis of socio-economic indicators, geographical location of slum, age of slum and its nature, etc. Weightage was also given to previous or existing contacts with the particular slum.

The selection of households was done on the basis of random sampling method. Care was taken that all colonies within a given slum got a pro rata representation on the basis of their population share. Before the finalization of the sample size and the questionnaire schedule, a pre-testing was carried out in six slums. The final design was arrived at after such pre-testing and its evaluation. The questionnaire itself was sub-divided into several segments in order to get detailed information about all members of the households. Other than the household section, the sample had separate sections for each of the wage employees, self employed, unpaid workers, unemployed and housewives.

### Slums - their individual entity

In this note we are presenting an over-all picture of the slum dwellers. We describe them, their families, their background and how do they live? We also go on to sketch different profiles of workers among them particularly wage employees, and the self employed. In this effort we work out an exceedingly smooth profile of the slum dwellers and in the process do away with their specificities, peculiarities etc. We describe the scenerio as if all the slums are a homogenous lot. As if there are no differentiations among them. Nothing could be farther than the truth. Each slum has sui generis characteristics which set it apart from others. It may differ in size, shape, neighbourhood, time of growth, and in terms of its constituents etc. Hence, what is presented as an overview, is true only for that vintage point. This caution is particularly relevant for action programmes which are often based in their micro setting. This is also applicable to the sample we have studied. We had selected four slums but quite often we present our findings, for obvious reasons, without specifying the inter-slum variations. We earnestly hope that while this general picture may help us in acquiring some understanding of the slum dwellers, it will not however camouflange the distinctiveness of each such habitat.

### Slum Households - a profile

Two thousand slum dwelling households studied in our sample constitute approximately ten thousand population; with an average size of households of 4.94 persons. Majority of the slum dwelling households belong to Muslims, Hindus (scheduled caste) and Hindus (others). Their respective percentage in the drawn sample was thirty seven, twenty seven and twenty five. Major languages which are spoken in these slums are Marathi/Konkani, Urdu, Hindi and Tamil.

About half, of these families antecedently belonged to rural areas and the remaining seemed to have been already in the non-agricultural sector. In terms of the occupation of the family (father's occupation) forty four per cent of the households belonged to the primary category i.e. agriculture. The next highest group belonged to the miscellaneous worker category. Thus in all nearly two-thirds of them either came off the marginal cultivation or work already in the tertiary sector. Most of the slum dwellers (77%) studied in the sample had been living in the city for more than fifteen years. Moreover about forty per cent slum dwellers were living in the slums for as many years. Hardly any inter slum mobility was reported in the sample except by way of reorganization of slum as a part of an improvement programme.

In a typical family there are on an average 1.04 wage employees, 0.24 self employed and 0.04 unpaid workers. Thus usually a family has 1.32 workers out of the average family size of 4.94 i.e. twenty seven per cent of the total family population is economically active. But, in terms of the distribution of work force across the families, more than seventy per cent families are single worker families. About twenty five per cent of the families have either two or more than two workers. Remaining families (three per cent) have either less than one or no worker at all. On an average each family reported 0.35 worker to be unemployed. And if we include this in the reckoning of the labour force, it comes to be 34 per cent of the total population which is quite low. But, in terms of the distribution of the unemployment across the families, nearly seventy five per cent of the families did not report any unemployment. Entire unemployment was concentrated in a one-fourth segment of the population. This segment thus reported on an average 1.4 unemployed per family. Most of the unemployed are young people in their early twenties (mean age approximately 22 years). The pattern of distribution of total work force and the unemployed workers across the slums was found to be rather even.

Profile of a Slum Household

<u>Description of Membership</u>	<u>Persons</u>
Full-time housewives	0.96
Working members	1.34
Children under 10 years of age	1.69
Students	0.47
Unemployed members of the family	0.35
Disabled and retired members of the family	0.13
Average size of the household	4.94

## WAGE EMPLOYEES

Wage employment is the most widely prevalent way in which slum dwellers participate in the labour market. We found 2073 wage employees in our sample and describe them here broadly under three heads: 1) employment, 2) education (training & skill) and 3) wages.

### Employment

The top four sectors in which the wage employees are engaged are manufacturing, personal services (restaurant/tea shops etc.) transport sector and fourthly trade & commerce. The precise share of each of them varies from slum to slum. In terms of employers the major two employers are large enterprises, and the government organizations. Rest of the wage employees belong to the informal sector. The pattern of predominance of one or the other of these three sectors of employment changes across the slums. It should be noted that nearly ninety five per cent of the wage employees are full-time employees and even those who have reported to be casual and temporary employees work on an average 23.6 days a month and 10.9 months per year. About ninety per cent of the wage employees work outside their slums and in almost all cases the distance is long enough for them to use some kinds of public transportation. When asked how long they had to wait for their job, it seems most of the migrants got their jobs within less than six months of waiting period. The waiting period is relatively less in the case of those who were illiterate than the literates. This reflects on probably the 'choosing' nature of educated workers. The overall variation in the waiting period across the slums is only plus minus eighteen per cent.

The mean duration for which the wage employees have been working the present job is 9.5 years. Although it varies only by seven per cent across the slums, the variation within each of the slum is quite significant. But keeping in view

of the fact that about four-fifths of the wage employees were working still on their first job, the variation essentially reflects the different period in which the job might have begun. There is very little job mobility among the slum dwellers. Whatever little mobility is reported largely confines itself to movement from the informal small scale sector to large enterprises or government jobs. It seems that the informal sector serves as a useful entry point for the new migrants. It holds out the labour between their arrival on the scene and their ultimate absorption in organized sector, presuming that they get absorbed. About eighty four per cent of the employees reported to have found their jobs through their relatives and friends.

#### Education, Skills & Training

In terms of education, nearly one-third of the wage employees are illiterate and another one-third of them have education higher than grade five. Only 5.5 per cent of the wage employees were educated upto S.S.C. or equivalent thereof.

Educated workers tend to work more in those work organizations where the work situation is seemingly more stable. It is reflected in the data when we cross tabulate the days worked against the level of education in the case of temporary and casual workers.

About twenty nine per cent of the wage employees responded that they were engaged in occupations where special skills were required. Rest of the seventy one per cent wage employees did not have any special skill. About twenty seven percent of them reported that they had to get some skill/training for getting the jobs. Tailoring, driving, machine operating and jari work seem to be the most often required

skills in our sample. Sixty per cent of those who obtained the skill got it through on-the-job-training and another twenty per cent got it through friends and relatives.

### Wages

The mean value of the wages is Rs.320.45 per month. We have earlier mentioned that nearly seventy per cent of the households are single worker families. If we assume that this single worker is the only wage earner, then in their cases the per capita annual income works out to be slightly less than Rs.780. The variation across the slums being plus minus fifteen per cent, it is clear that in case of poorer slums the per capita income will be Rs.662 while in the case of richer slums it will be Rs.895. Both of these are below the poverty line for Bombay. But we know that in each household there are on an average 1.32 worker hence the total family income is actually likely to be higher by about one-third.

Wage employees in the younger age-group earn substantially less wages. Sometimes earning even less than fifty per cent of the mean wages. On the higher side 50-59 age-group reporting the highest mean category is only eighteen per cent more than over all mean wages. So the range of fluctuation is from Rs.150 to Rs.400. Mean wages of employees who have education equivalent to or higher than S.S.C., earn much higher wages. At times the difference goes as high as fifty per cent more than the mean wages.

### SELF EMPLOYED

In our sample we had 488 persons working as the self employed. These were essentially found in the three slums viz., Dharavi, Cheetah Camp and Jogeshwari. Madala had only



very few people in this category. Most of the self employed persons were married and their mean age was thirty five years. Most of these undertakings had been operating for past six to seven years. Nearly forty eight per cent of the self employed had been unemployed before launching themselves into this kind of activity. A yet another group consisting of twenty three per cent of the self employed was working as wage employees in small enterprises. In other words from the point of view of antecedents of the self employed a substantial number of them were not earlier engaged in well paying jobs. This observation was also collaborated by the nature of the undertaking they were earlier engaged in.

Most of the self employed slum dwellers are engaged in the three sectors: (i) trading, (ii) preparation & trading of food items, and (iii) manufacturing. A large number of the self employed operate from within the slums and from their residents which are mostly 'kuccha'. In terms of the regularity of the work, self employed work for more than twenty five days per month and more than eleven months per year.

Some of the self employed workers were assisted by unpaid workers in their operation. On an average each self employed was assisted by 0.18 of unpaid workers. In addition these undertakings also created paid employment for 0.16 worker on the average for each self employed.

About eleven per cent of the self employed were being provided raw material by the buyer of the product while a large section (forty seven per cent) of them were buying the raw material regularly on their own. But median value of the raw material used by each of self employed person comes to only Rs.567. About two-thirds of the self employed reported that no skills were required for conducting their present

business. Carpentry, tailoring and leather works emerged as jobs which generally required skills.

About two-thirds of the self employed undertakings were financed by their own savings. Only thirteen per cent were financed with the help of friends and relatives. Another 7.7 per cent respondents were receiving help from commercial banks. As in the case of raw material, the median value of the business equipment used in such undertakings is only Rs.360.

The disparity in the mean earnings of various self employed in the slums was so much that the distribution generated displayed more than one peak. We approximated the curve with the help of two different income curves. One for the lower income group and the other for higher income group. The lower income group earns on an average Rs.98 per month (with standard deviation of 64.3) and accounts for as much as forty per cent of the self employed workers. On the higher side the mean earnings are Rs.723 with a standard deviation of 446.6 and accounts for about sixty per cent of the self employed workers. In other words about 40 per cent of the self employed workers earn less than even one-third of the mean wages.

About half of the self employed denied if their incomes had increased over the last three years. The other half did provide answers which reveal the increase to be the order of 9.4 per cent per annum. The long term rate of growth of income over the last decade as reported has been 4.9 per cent per annum.

About two-thirds of the self employed were either serving their own slum residents or the residents of the neighbouring slum. The difference in the earnings of those who are dealing with outside the slums is about more than twenty five per cent than those who are operating within the slums.

On the whole it seems that while dealing with self employed and while recommending it as an alternative way of generating employment in the lower echelons of the urban economy, one needs to be careful in discerning the segments in which such employment is going to be generated and what is going to be the likely yield to the self employed.

### UNEMPLOYMENT

It has been mentioned earlier that six hundred and forty five persons were reported to be unemployed in our sample. This is roughly equal to about twenty per cent of the total labour force which is available from these slum households. It definitely is a high level of unemployment which needs to be rectified at the earliest possible. But a household-wise configuration of the same unemployment statistics reveals that these are all concentrated in the thirty per cent of the households, as the remaining seventy per cent of the household did not report any unemployment whatsoever. Going by the mean age of the unemployed persons which is around twenty two years and keeping in view the fact that most of the families have been living in Bombay and slums for more than fifteen years, it would seem that most of these unemployed persons are second-generation slum dwellers and that they have been brought up here. This is presuming that they have been living with their households throughout the past. May be the problems of these young people are laced with the problems of the urban youth culture. Particularly so when we realize that about a third of these have been unemployed for more than five years. One needs to explore this aspect of the problem in detail.

In terms of their educational background, it was reported that about seven per cent of them had SSC or equivalent education. About forty per cent had education between grade

five to grade ten. But about thirty per cent were illiterate. Other than this the unemployed persons did not have any skill base. Nearly one-fourth of these unemployed had held a job sometime in the past but for some reasons could not continue it. The reasons given for discontinuation were a combination of different factors. Some of the factors the respondents did not have any control over, e.g. market factors personal factors like visit to home, or illness etc. were also cited as responsible for job termination. But one thing which was common in all such cases is, that nearly seventy per cent of such jobs were in the informal sector. Earlier we have made an observation that this sector provides easier access for the new entrants but then people move on to the large manufacturing sector or government jobs. It seems that some of these young people, who have been employed for long time did not make it.

Most of these young persons were still looking for some job opportunities but only a small number (twenty three per cent) were willing to consider starting a business of their own. Among the preferred line of activity suggested by those who expressed such desire, the most frequently cited activity was provision stores, and vegetable/fruit shop, paan/bidi shop, vegetable/fruit vendor etc. The major reason advanced in favour of the preference was that these undertakings did not require any special skills.

#### UNPAID WORKERS

In our sample we have details on eighty one unpaid workers who are mostly unmarried male members of the family. These unpaid workers in our sample were reported <sup>in</sup> Only three out of four slums. Wadala slums did not report any such worker. Nearly one-third of these workers were illiterate and another forty per cent had education between grade five

and ten. Seven out of the total eighty one had SSC or equivalent level of education. About fifty of these unpaid workers were engaged in the enterprises of their own family. They mentioned that they were working as unpaid workers because they wanted/become skilled workers. Another one-third of the unpaid workers were doing so because they did not have a job and they thought this would help them get one. But almost all these persons were working full time.

About forty five per cent of these workers were willing to undertake some sort of business if the opportunity was provided. It should be noted that this is higher than twenty three per cent response derived in the case of the unemployed. But the remaining were not willing to take up business but would take up if some alternative job was provided to them. Most of these unpaid workers did require some financial assistance to start their own work, the assistance required was less than Rs. Five thousand in almost all the cases. But one-third of them required even less than one thousand rupees. On the whole one gets the impression that the willingness to get on to some job/business is seen to be a bit more in the case of an unpaid worker as compared to unemployed persons. It may be due to the fact that friends and families of unpaid workers have some business in which they are engaged whether paid or not. While probably the unemployed persons mostly belong to wage employee families.

### HOUSEWIVES

As stated earlier in our study we also examined a few aspects of housewives of the alum-dwellers. The basic objective of the exercise being two fold. One to gain a better insight into alum households and the other to see the extent of free time available during which these women could undertake some paid employment. The mean age of the

housewives was around thirty two years. Nearly two-thirds of them did not have education at all. Only 1.2 per cent had done SSC or equivalent thereof, whereas another fifteen per cent had education between grade five to grade ten. But as one would expect, in the lower age cohorts the illiteracy was reduced to one half from the over all level of two-thirds, mentioned above.

About thirty six per cent of the housewives were willing to take up jobs if offered. But there were wide fluctuations from slum to slum. Of those who were willing to undertake work nearly sixty two per cent were prepared to work only within the slum while the remaining thirty eight per cent of them were even prepared to go out of the slum for accepting the job. When asked why the housewives were not working then, sixty five per cent of them stated ill health and the responsibility of the children as the prime reason for not working. But it is noteworthy that when asked if they were willing to work if child care was provided, the percentage of the women willing to work jumped from 36.7 to sixty one. This clearly reveals that the major constraint which keeps the slum dwelling womenfolk off the job market are the domestic chores and their being engaged in looking after their children. This information proves of immense value to us in making some suggestions regarding the child day care services and provision of other amenities in slums so as to release the women labour for job markets.

### Slum profiles

In this section we will try to provide individual profiles of the four slums which were focus of our survey. The major reason for such an effort being that we think that most of the slums have their unique features. The time at which they come to be the part of the city in which they are located,

the period for which they have been there, etc. are some of the features which impart each slum a fairly distinctive profile. It is with the intention of recording a few of these specificities that we are pulling out some of our findings and then restating these in this form. In this connection two things should be noted. Firstly we are bringing out only those aspects of which are important from the point of view of employment. Secondly, only those features of employment survey which are not common to all of them are being mentioned here. The main reason being that most of the common features have already been stated in the earlier part of this note. Needless to say that presentation of these individual profiles of the slums does not imply that there were no universal aspects across the slums, but, here, we are only interested in highlighting their unique specificities. Such an exercise might be significant for action phase.

### Dharavi

In the case of this slum, different segments of the population i.e. Muslims, Hindu (SC/ST), Hindu (Others) etc. were more evenly matched. Although the mean duration of job in the case of wage employees (10.16 years) is found to be highest in the case of Dharavi, nevertheless it had relatively less people in the high wage category of Rs.500-1000 per month. About fifty per cent of the slum dwellers are engaged in the manufacturing sector. Large enterprises emerge as the biggest employers in this case. The slum also has the distinction of reporting the largest number of those who were earlier self employed and then subsequently became wage employees. This may be due to the fact that a lot of manufacturing units have sprung up within the slum. This is also evidenced from high skill availability in this slum. The slum also reported a prominent share of drivers, tailors, machine operators, weavers, and auto-mechanics. But notwithstanding skill, and technical nature of work, mean

wages in the case of Dharavi are somewhere in the middle ranges. In the case of self employed all the three sectors of employment (trading, preparation & trading of food items, and manufacturing) share the place fairly closely to each other. Food items take the lead with thirty two per cent self employed engaged therein, trading activity is next with twenty eight per cent and manufacturing takes the third place with 27.6 per cent of the self employed. Taken together these three activities account for nearly eighty eight per cent of self employed. Income and earnings in the case of self employed for Dharavi are once again in the middle category. Dharavi had the largest number of self employed having linkage with the market outside the slum. In the case of Dharavi nearly three-fourths of the housewives did not have any education and only 26 per cent of the housewives were willing to undertake some job. Non-availability of the job ranks as the second most important reason for not being able to work in the case of housewives of this slum.

### Cheetah Camp

Cheetah Camp has a substantially large number of Muslim households, but has relatively fewer scheduled caste households. There are fewer disabled or retired family members as dependents in the households of this slum. Not only Cheetah Camp had relatively fewer people earning in the higher income group of Rs.500 to 1000, but it also had largest number of people in the bottom category of less than Rs.200 per month. Personal services and other services as a sector of employment accounts for about fifty two per cent of the employees in the slum. In terms of employees, the Government emerges as the largest employer in the slum of Cheetah Camp. Relatively higher incidence of temporary and casual employees is also found more in the case of this slum. But the mean waiting period for the first job is also



least in this case. The slum also has the highest number of those who were earlier self employed but are presently wage employees.

It is reported that the highest number of the skilled wage employees are in this slum. It is probably due to the fact that eighty per cent of the jari workers are concentrated here. Other prominent occupations in this slum were tailoring, driving, fitter and leather product workers. The mean income is found to be minimum with value of Rs.292.74 (standard deviation of 178.04). Trading as the main activity of the self employed emerges as the prime category in this slum followed next by food items. The slum also has minimum mean income across all the slums for the self employed. In terms of the outside linkage the place of the slum was third out of four slums. The illiteracy of the housewives was nearly on top with three-fourth of them as illiterate like in Dharavi. But the number of housewives willing to undertake the job was higher than that of Dharavi. This difference could perhaps be attributed to lower wage earnings and the consequent need for more employment.

### Jogeshwari

Like Dharavi, Jogeshwari also had different social segments of the population matched quite evenly. It has highest proportion of people in the high income group of Rs.500 to 1000. Employees living in this slum have been working for a long time as displayed by the second highest mean value for duration of work. In terms of sector of employment, seventy per cent of the wage employees are equally divided between manufacturing and personal services. Large enterprises emerge as the principal employers. There were very few cases of wage employees who were earlier self employed in

this case. The skill availability in the slum was relatively high, but wage income were somewhere in the middle ranges. Trading emerges as the main activity of the self employed. Fifty per cent of the self employed belong to this category. The mean income for self employed is found highest to be in this case. It also helps in explaining why self employed have not shifted from this to wage employment, as in the other slums. In terms of links outside the slum, Jogeshwari had the second place. Quite significantly the housewives in the Jogeshwari are more educated than the mean level of education of housewives found in other slums. This is found to be true across all age groups. Nearly 46.5 per cent of the housewives had education of one type or the other. The rank of the slum in terms of willingness of housewives to undertake jobs was also second highest.

### Wadala

This slum is predominantly inhabited by the Scheduled Caste Hindus and has a rather low share of Muslim households. Twenty per cent of the disabled and retired personnels were in this slum alone. Wadala has a larger proportion of earners in the category of Rs.500 to 1000. Smallest mean value of the duration of job of 8.86 years also occurs in this slum. In the case of this slum personal services account for forty per cent of the wage employees. Government emerges as the largest employer as in the case of Cheetah Camp. Only a few wage employees were earlier self employed in this case. Only 11.2 per cent of the wage employees reported to have had any skill. Highest wage income occurs in the case of Wadala at Rs.344.5 (with standard deviation of 171.4) Wadala reported a smaller number of unemployed persons. It also did not report any unpaid worker.

## TOWARDS ACTION PHASE

In the preceding pages we have provided some empirical evidence regarding the pattern of employment as revealed by the survey. We have described the households which reside in these slums and various types of labour force. It was stated above that the major aim of the research project is to proceed towards integrated development of the slum dwellers with special focus on the employment/income generating measures. In this part of the note we attempt to synthesize the results and delineate certain aspects which may be helpful for us in developing a proper action programme as it relates to employment/income generating measures.

In capsule form it can be stated that the survey has lead us to the following conclusions. Most of the households are fully engaged in the market system as wage labourers, as self employed entrepreneurs, as unpaid workers in the family business or as trainees. The precise nature of their job whether as wage earners or as self employed varies from the immediate economic conditions of their neighbourhood. But notwithstanding these specific variations nearly two-thirds of them are earning incomes which are below the poverty line. Low pricing of their efforts seems to be a pervasive phenomenon which transcends their individual and/or group distinctions.

Some of these may be technically skilled people but they still earn paltry wages. Some of these are working for large organizations and Government undertakings but are still living in conditions of dismal poverty. There are instances where poverty can be explained in terms of unemployment but then we also have cases of people who are working for a good part of the year and are still suffering from all sorts of deprivations. It seems that ultimately,

confluence of lack of skills/assets on the one hand, and intervention of exogenous variables embedded in the market system on the other, leads to their poverty. Needless to say we cannot and do not intend to raise all the issues concerned with urban poverty here, but, we will certainly like to point out the aspects which are closely related to employment and earnings.

In very simple terms the action phases will have to tackle the following aspects:

1. To increase the earnings of the already engaged wage employees.
2. To provide employment to the unemployed persons dwelling in the slums.
3. To increase the earnings of the poorer self employed workers.
4. To ensure at least one working member in those three per cent families which have reported not a single working member in their households.
5. To provide employment opportunities to the housewives and other womenfolks who are willing to undertake jobs and to facilitate their working by providing them with basic social services on a more systematic basis.
6. Finally to guarantee equal payment for equal work in the case of those women who are being discriminated on the basis of their sex in the present labour market.

#### Constellation of Policies

These specific objectives will require multiple inputs of different types on different fronts. We feel that these

inputs may be in one or more of the following sectors.

- (i) Production: choice of product, inputs, location, its quantity, work conditions, training facilities social security, welfare and ecological aspects.
- (ii) Marketing: nature of competitiveness, nature of commodity, its brand names, distributive net work and the nature of consumers.
- (iii) Fiscal: credit requirements, periodicity and cycle of working capital, institutional arrangements, overall credit policy.
- (iv) Technology: technological options, forging and/or decomposing of new technologies, its diffusion in the market and acceptance by producer.
- (v) Education/ Training: skill inculcation, formal and informal training, on-the-job-training, off-the-job-training, continuous education.
- (vi) Infra-structure: provision of residential estates, housing for industrial areas, workshops, means of energy/power, transport, irrigation and availability of other bulk resources.
- (vii) Social Services: provision of basic human services like water, health, housing, children's day care centres, education, etc.
- (viii) Social Organizations: organizations of labour, of poor neighbourhoods, minorities, and other vulnerable groups of people.

It is obvious that all of the above mentioned aspects have direct/indirect bearing on the pattern of employment and earnings. If augmenting the employment opportunities is an important aim of the national policy then certainly an orchestrated input of these various type of goods and services becomes a necessary condition. In such situations it would be necessary that all major economic decisions maintain a high level of sensitivity towards the interface of their policies vis-a-vis the employment opportunities. It will be an ideal aim to pursue.

But, in a more pragmatic sense, we know that at a given point in time and for a given product-market linkage, many of these inputs may be already there, and yet the results may not be forthcoming as per expectation. The reason being that one or the other sector might be causing bottlenecks in the system and keeping the other facilities unutilized. In case of some products it may be technology, in case of others it could be lack of credit, and so on.

Thus, we see that the constellation of policies which we have minimally sketched above can be viewed at two different levels. Firstly, at total provision level where everything needs to be provided before employment policy can be usefully implemented. Here it is interpreted in the static sense. Secondly, as an on-going condition where successively each of the operating constraint has to be relaxed from time to time in a bid to achieve higher employment. Here the same set is being viewed in a dynamic sense. Needless to say that overall harmony of both aspects i.e., initial provisions and successive adjustments needs to be presented for bringing home the desired results.

It should be noted that for putting forth a plan for action phase we will have to identify the operative constraint in case of each target group. The validity of our prescribed policies will depend upon the accuracy with which we discern

these constraints. We will need to examine our cases quite closely to do that. The results of our survey helps us in identifying those groups in whose case the incidence of poverty is high. Our employment promotion programmes will have to be geared to the needs of the target group. By the way of illustration we provide below some details according to targets group as analysed in the report.

### Wage Employees

Action in this section of the project will focus on the low paid wage employees of both formal and informal sectors. We know that wage rates are lower in the informal than in the formal sector, particularly when the stability and regularity of the market is taken into consideration, hence, the major focus on such employees. The strategy for augmenting their earnings can take three possible forms viz.,

(i) Increasing their productivity by technological improvement or generating better skills, or providing better tools/equipment etc. Most of the ill paid employment positions cannot be made to yield higher wages unless the productivity of the labour increases. But productivity improvements will have to be such that the employer can easily be made to adopt them. For bringing about such improvements, one will have to examine the total working of such enterprises and then come up with such suggestions that they are readily feasible and applicable to other similar units.

(ii) To augment labour utilization. This may be done either by suggesting some reorganization of jobs, or by providing some complimentary avenue of work during the slack hour(s) day(s) etc. This is quite a fertile area to explore. In this sector of the project, it would seem quite compatible to supplement the irregular wage employment (controlled by

others) by gap-filling self-employment (self-controlled). But, if it were found that the cause of fluctuation in the employment is due to over supply, then arrangements will require to be made to siphon-off the excess labour to other sectors. If the cause of fluctuation is traced to lack of adequate infrastructure, or lack of other inputs, then the content of corrective action will have to be geared accordingly.

(iii) Higher Wage Payment. Where employment is found to be regular and productivity is also high (as reflected by wage/profit ratio) but still the wages are low, some measures to persuade the employer for paying higher wages will have to be undertaken. It is commonly observed that most of the labour in the informal sector is unorganized and does not get its due share of wages. Nor is it in a position to plead for an increase due to their utter ignorance as well as dependence of their livelihoods on such jobs. In such cases, by educating labour and making them aware of their rights, they may be made to extract more out of their environment. Such education/training should go a long way not only in developing more awareness in labour force but also in creating socially responsible entrepreneurs. Additionally, where market imperfections exist in the shape of a lack of information regarding the job market as well as ulterior impediments in the way of getting the positions such as payment of bribe, etc., efforts would be geared in such cases towards provision of information of not only the existing types of jobs but also the formal procedures to be followed in acquiring the job without any recourse to 'payments' and other illegalities.

It should be noted that we have not confined ourselves to the usual suggestion that the wage employees be promoted to self-employed persons. In fact we have gone beyond it. While the more aspirant of wage employees should certainly be assisted for such promotion, our primary concern here is



to improve per se the job positions of the lower strata of the labour market. In the absence of such a committed approach, one may succeed in helping only those who become self-employed but may not be able to help those who replace these people as new labourers. Hence our emphasis will be on improving the position of job as such in the total market structure - so that no new person gets stuck in these positions. We feel that this view point is important and needs to be kept in mind while dealing with the segmented informal labour markets of the society.

### Self Employed

As far as the self-employed are concerned we have two-fold objectives. Firstly, that our strategy should result in more earnings for them. Secondly, that as and when they expand the scale of their undertaking. They should be able to give fair wages to other employees or their co-workers. More specifically, we would like to emphasize the following action vis-a-vis the self employed:

- (1) The main attempt would be to provide necessary financial, technical, raw material and other inputs at reasonable prices so that the production costs could be reduced. This should lead to greater margin of earnings for the self-employees. But care will have to be taken that these measures essentially remain labour absorbing. Encouraging labour-saving devices per se does not solve our basic problem. If anything, it makes low-paid employees worse off by making them unemployed. The major upshot of this approach will be that it may help in enlarging the scale and profitability of operations and thereby improve both labour utilization as well as earning capacity.

(ii) The second area for action would be to try and eliminate some of the gross imperfections in the product market by eliminating monopsonistic or near-monopsonistic situations for such self employees. No amount of the benefits which one may be able to provide to the self employed through cheap inputs, will be retained by him in the long run if he is dependant on others for selling off his product. He must have some degree of control over disposing off his commodities. In its absence, he will be vulnerable and subject to exploitative practices. It is our experience that small producers undergo a lot of hardship as they do not themselves have marketing alternatives. A programme to bring them together, make them understand the nature of the market and reveal to them the extent of mutual dependence could thus equip them with certain degree of control over their products. If some progress is made on this score, the utilization of the inputs described in (i) above, will also improve considerably.

For those who are unpaid workers (either working in their own family enterprises or with other enterprises in order to learn some skills) help could be of two sorts (a) that which enables them to become self-employed (b) that which assists them to acquire skills relevant for wage employment.

This sector of the project would therefore entail assistance in production, marketing as well as provision of credit facilities on the one hand, and provision of training aimed at developing the requisite skills on the other.

### Unemployed

In the case of the unemployed situation seems to be far more different. Most of the unemployed are young people in their early twenties. It seems that the ranks of this group

have been swelling over the past few years. Secondly, we found an abnormally high concentration of all the unemployed in only about thirty per cent of the households. It seems that most of these young men have been brought up in Bombay and their expectation may be somewhat different than those of fresh migrants who are coming from villages. In the action phase we need to split the groups into various parts and then provide them necessary assistance which will have to be a many faceted one in their case. There are large number of unemployed who were even prepared to go out of Bombay if some job was assured to them. This idea may be worth pursuing. One more suggestion which one would like to put forth for the action phase is that if we are going to provide some social services, education/training facilities etc., in the slums, then some of these young men could be mobilized and gainfully employed in those undertakings. If we can provide employment to some of these people locally it will help in substantially augmenting the purchasing power of their families.

### Housewives

From our sample we find that nearly one-third of the housewives are willing to take up some paid employment right now, and if some child care is provided then the number of such persons goes up to sixty per cent. This is the largest pool of unutilized labour which we come across in the slums. But before we can utilize them we do need to improve their household front with the help of systematic provision of basic amenities so that they can make themselves freely available for the jobs. Particular attention needs to be provided to health facilities of the women workers. Unless some kind of assistance is provided for this purpose it will not be possible to engage them in regular job situations.

The above description of some aspects of the action phase has been provided essentially as illustrative strategies.

The precise form these suggestions may take will depend upon the resources, time constraint, and the intervening agents. Nevertheless few broad conclusions seem to be emerging out of the above discussion and we give them below as summing up of the brief note.

### Programme

Task No.1 : There are enough young unemployed people looking for jobs who must be given assistance in getting the jobs. This we mean to suggest as Task No.1. More intensive information will need to be collated (most of data is already existing) and inputs may have to be provided on several fronts simultaneously. But helping this segment of population seems to be the single most important factor.

Task No.2 : Those women workers who are now willing to work inspite of the present dwelling conditions should be the next target for making jobs available to them. Jobs for this target group may have to be selected a bit more carefully. To that extent this task is more delicate than to provide jobs to the unemployed people reported in the preceding para.

Task No.3 : We should provide some basic social services in the slums and this releases another whole lot of women workers for the employment market. The details of the programme will be same as para No.2 above but we will have to provide amenities as a pre-requisite.

Task No.4 : Those self-employed who are having low earning need to be assisted next. We will have to provide them almost a total package of most of the required inputs and monitor their progress for sometime otherwise the efforts are likely to be eroded.

Task No.5, : Those wage employees who are working as casual employees or on irregular basis are another group which needs to be looked at. Some of these may want to become self employed and will need to be assisted accordingly. Others may like to take up more secure wage employment.

Task No.6 : Those wage employees who are working stably but their earnings are low constitute the subject for this task we must find ways and means of increasing their wages either via productivity increases or via greater share in the profits of the enterprise. It has been discussed above in an earlier section of this note.

Task No.7 : Finally none of the above developmental tasks can proceed meaningfully without proper monitoring, appraisal and the participation from the slum dwellers themselves. As of now mechanism exists for this kind participation. We must attempt to develop this and it is a pre-requisite to ensure the development of the programmes on the right lines.

Notes & Tables

### The Data Base

We have approximately four hundred fifty variables on the two thousand cases which we studied in the survey. In the Draft Report only a fraction of that has been analysed and presented. We are hopeful to examine and analyse the data in detail for various specific aspects of the employment generation and urban poverty. A brief profile of the data base is being given below for the interest of the professional researchers, financial and other institutions which may be interested in obtaining specific details before launching various employment generating action programmes. The enquiries should be sent to the author at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, or to Shri S.D. Gokhale, Assistant Secretary General, International Council of Social Welfare, 175, D.N. Road, Bombay 400 001.

In the household section we have information regarding the religion, mother tongue, and the composition of the household detailing the number of housewives, children, students, disabled and retired members of the family and working members. There is information regarding the father's occupation, the total monthly income and their opinion regarding Government's assistance in supplementing the family income. We also have information regarding the willingness shown by the households to leave the slums in favour of other alternatives.

The section on wage Employees has information regarding the sex, age, marital status, literacy and education of the wage employees. There is information describing the kind of job the does (which has about 72 categories), the period he has been on the job, the sectors of work the employer is engaged in, and whether the job is temporary or permanent. It has information regarding the location of work place, the labour market and the income of the wage employee. The other important information in this section is regarding the employee's job satisfaction and skill and training aspects of his job.

The section on self-Employed again has information regarding the sex, age, marital status, literacy and education of the self-employed individuals. It has information as to when the business was started, the main activity of the individual which has about 61 categories and the goods or services produced. There is information regarding the ownership of the business, the location of the business enterprise, and its total value. It also has information about the market linkages such as the purchase of raw materials and the sector to which the produced goods are supplied. This is followed by information regarding the state of borrowings of the individual, the possible expansion of the business in the past and the importance of training and possession of particular skills for the business.

In the case of unemployed there is information regarding their age, sex, literacy and education. It has information regarding the individual's previous job, reason for not looking for a job (if applicable), duration of unemployment and his willingness to start a business, the line of activity of the business and assistance required for him this business. This is followed by information regarding the expected monthly income and the necessity felt by them for the learning of any particular skill.

In the section of unpaid workers there is again information regarding the sex, age, marital status, literacy and education. There is information regarding as to whether they are working for their own family and reasons as to why they are working as unpaid labourers, and the nature of occupation. It also has information about the individual's preference for a job or starting his own business and the amount of assistance required for doing so. This is followed by the kind of training which might be required for the business and the expected monthly income from it.



Finally, in the case of housewives there is information regarding their age, literacy, education, their willingness to take up a job, the place of work preferred, reason for not working at the moment and the minimum monthly income expected.

Table No.1

DISTRIBUTION OF WAGE EMPLOYEES ACCORDING TO  
THE TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME

Rupees	Slum				Total
	Dharavi	Cheetah Camp	Jogeshwari	Wadala	
(1-50)	8	12	5	6	31
(51-100)	37	38	18	9	102
(101-150)	38	61	52	15	166
(151-200)	84	75	102	23	284
(201-300)	132	169	146	74	521
(301-500)	252	162	234	129	776
(501-1000)	41	36	61	28	166
(1001-2000)	1	2	5	0	8
(2001 +)	1	0	0	0	1
N.R.	9	5	3	1	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>2073</b>

Table No. 2  
DISTRIBUTION OF SELF EMPLOYED BY THE  
MONTHLY NET INCOME

Rupees .	Slum				Total
	Dharavi	Cheeta Camp	Jogeshwari	Wadala	
(1-50)	7	37	2	0	46
(51-100)	13	4	5		
(101-150)	24	5		1	
(151-200)	17	5	4	1	27
(201-300)	41	32	35	3	111
(301-500)	35	16	27	2	80
(501-1000)	27	25	20	2	74
(1001-2000)	11	2	12	0	25
(2001+)	1	1	2	0	4
N. R.	16	21	20	3	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>488</b>

Table No.3

Unemployed: Preferred Line of Business Activity(Agewise)

Age	Provision shop	Vegetable+ Fruit shop	Vegetable+ Fruit Vendor	Pan+Tob-acco shop	Oth-ers	Total
14-19	6	9	1	3	8	27
20-24	10	3	2	3	13	31
24-29	4	2	2	3	5	16
30-34	1	0	1	0	3	5
35-39	2	2	0	0	1	5
40-44	1	3	1	2	2	9
45-49	0	0	1	1	3	5
50-59	1	3	2	1	2	9
Others	2	5	-	1	1	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>116</b>

Table No.4Reasons for Working as an Unpaid Worker

Nature of Occupation	Reason for working as unpaid worker				Total
	Job available	Unable to start Business	Not interested in paid employment	In order to learn skill	
Tailors, Cutters & Furreirs	6	0	0	3	9
Shoe makers, shoe repairers	0	0	0	8	8
Jair work	2	0	6	3	11
Salesman, Shop Asst.	8	1	4	6	19
Mechanic	0	0	0	5	5
Others	6	1	1	8	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>68</b>

Table No. 5  
Housewives: Reasons for not working (age in years)

Age in Years.	Reason not to work				Total
	Job not available	Ill health	Children	Other domestic responsibilities	
14-19	30	21	52	0	103
20-24	64	79	109	0	252
25-29	100	108	154	1	363
30-34	68	90	136	0	294
35-39	63	69	136	1	269
40-44	31	30	89	0	150
45-49	19	25	64	0	108
50-59	12	6	48	0	66
60-80	1	3	8	0	12
80 + above	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1618</b>

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LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

NAME OF THE PUBLICATION	PRICE	AIR-MAIL POSTAGE	SEA-MAIL POSTAGE
	US\$	US\$	US\$
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3. Child in India - co-edited by Mr. S.D.Gokhale & Mrs. N.K.Sehoni	9.50	4.50	1.10
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