

# Centre for Labor Research and Action

## Researching and Organizing Seasonal Migrant Workers

Annual Report

2019-20



Image 1: Workers gathered at the concluding meeting of Awas Haq Abhiyan to demand dignified housing and provision of utilities for migrant workers in the city of Ahmedabad on February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

### *INTRODUCTION*

Centre for Labor Research and Action (CLRA) continues to work to promote workers' rights in the vast informal sector economy of India. It seeks to (i) organize workers into trade unions that can take up the struggle for decent wages and improved work conditions (ii) undertake policy advocacy with the state so that workers receive their due entitlements. Given that informal workers constituted up to 92 percent of the workforce in India in 2004-05 (NCEUS report 2004) making seasonal migration as the dominant mode of labor engagement in the informal sector in India. Workers, sometimes with their whole families, migrate from the relatively underdeveloped pockets to the developed areas for short term deployment, constituting what has been termed by a noted researcher as 'footloose labor' (Bremen 1996).

This workforce is not amenable to traditional organizing activity that focuses exclusively on work place. The work places are dispersed, deployment of workers is on a seasonal basis and migrant workers are dependent on the employers in many ways – debt, residence at the workplace, and lack of support at destination.

This report seeks to highlight the efforts and outcomes of the various collaboration that CLRA undertook with their funding partners in 2019-2020. The projects teams working across Gujarat have developed an alternative paradigm of organizing workers that has proved its effectiveness over the last decade. The strategy factors in the constant movement of workers, the critical role of middlemen, the nature of production process, and the socio-economic profile of workers. This report discusses the main elements of the organization strategy, the organizational experience so far, the challenges, and progress of various ongoing projects for the given year.

### **CLRA's Framework of Work:**

The organization and its members continue to work in the following framework which is discussed listed below:

**Research:** Field research is an integral component of CLRA's work. A principle reason is that there is no existing information about the informal workers that are the main target group. The very concept of informality arises from absence of record keeping. The large masses of seasonal migrant and informal workers CLRA works with are not recorded anywhere. Therefore, one of the first task that needs to be undertaken is to develop a data base of the target group of workers. Field research undertaken by CLRA comprises of (i) mapping and creating of data bases for different segments of workers (ii) in depth inquiry into working and living conditions (iii) value chain studies to understand the profile of the industry and different processes.

### **The Organizational Strategy**

**Migration Stream as the Unit of Intervention:** Seasonal migration is marked by constant movement that presents challenges to any organizational initiative. At any destination in a particular industrial cluster, workers come from a various of locations. Similarly from any source cluster, workers may go to many dispersed destinations. The concept of migration stream makes it possible to bring focus to this bewildering jigsaw puzzle. Over a period of time, the migration corridors get established. CLRA has focused on these migration streams as units of organizational activity like factory or shop floor in the formal sector.

**Undertake organizational activity over the whole cycle from source to destination:** The emergence of stable migration streams opens up the possibility of undertaking the organizational process in source areas. CLRA looks upon Labor Exchanges that would collectivize and institutionalize the supply of labor as the viable alternative to traditional trade unions in the formal sector. The project teams have tried this out successfully in some streams that offered favorable conditions. In other streams as well, it makes senses to

continue organizational activity in source areas. It is not easy to engage with workers in the destination as both the work place and the living space may be controlled by the employer. It is also helpful in gaining confidence of workers.

**Engaging the labor contractors:** The deployment of migrant workers at work is mediated through a vast array of labor contractors, that recruit workers from their homes and transport them to work place providing the linkage between work place and remote source clusters. Event though traditionally, the middlemen are looked upon as exploiters who charge exorbitant commissions. However, CLRA has from the very beginning adopted a more nuanced stand. CLRA understand that the middlemen are not a homogenous category. The approach of the workers collective towards middlemen is dictated by their class and caste character. In majority of the instances, middlemen are former workers who have graduated to the status of middlemen. In fact, becoming a middleman is the only career advancement opportunity for majority of the workers in the informal sector. Therefore there exists a natural affinity between the workers and the middlemen. In most instances, the middlemen provide the leadership to the workers' movement. It also becomes necessary to engage with the middlemen for tactical reasons. They are the gate keepers. It is not possible to interact with workers in many instances before establishing an equation with the middlemen. The lesson from organizational experience of more than a decade has been that middlemen are bound to figure prominently in any workers movement.

**Tackling bondage and trafficking – focus on human rights:** Issues of workers in the informal sector are qualitatively different from those in the formal sector. The laws that regulate workers in the formal sector – Industrial Disputes Act and Industrial Employment Standing Order Act - are not applicable to informal workers. While there does exist minimal labor legislation for the informal sector – MW Act, Payment of Wages Act, WC Act – the enforcement is nonexistent. The issues that affect the migrant workers are bondage, trafficking, sexual harassment at work place, and non-payment of wages. These often fall in the realm of human rights. In fact one of the most powerful legislation for workers is the Bonded Labor Act. National Human Rights Commission has played a pioneering role in highlighting bondage in brick kilns.

**Public Service Linkage:** The migrant workers lose out on the public services like education, health, and ICDS in destination areas. As there are no effective statutory procedures to register migrating workers at source or at destination, and the entitlements of source are not portable, most migrating families already among the more vulnerable, lose out on several entitlements both at source and at destination. Most significant of these relate to women and children. School age children migrating for 6-8 months and those not able to stay back inevitably drop-out and become child and adolescent labour. Little children, pregnant and lactating mothers as well as adolescent girls lose out on nutritional supplements, and sustained reproductive and child health coverage. The Government health facilities seem alien and migrant workers at the destination as most facilities do not do effective outreach, and workers seek private professional as well as non-professional health care.

CLRA's approach has been to fill critical gaps, mainly related to lack of data on the extent and the work conditions of migrant workers; lack of specific orders by the Governments to the lower functionaries and lack of even an implementation policy, plan, procedures and mechanisms and most of all no proper monitoring of services even when they are provided. Also the implementation is haphazard as attempts to institutionalize services at least in Gujarat, have not been effective and is very personnel specific. Unfortunately, Government's own successful attempts earlier say with sugarcane workers in South Gujarat or the alternate schools on brick-kilns in Bhilwara, Rajasthan fails to become institutionalized, as there is either lackadaisical attitude or when concerned officials change.

#### *CLRA's work for 2019-2020*

### **Project Title: Facilitating and Documenting Social Protection of Seasonal Migrant Workers in India**

#### **Funding Partner: Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung**

CLRA has been working with RLS since 2017 with teams located in Surat and Kadi. The project team in Surat engages with the seasonal migrant workers in the factory workers, construction and building industry and agricultural sector (sugarcane harvesters) to ensure their rights and entitlements. The objective of the activities are focused particularly on documenting the living and working conditions of the migrant workers and their families – so that this data so generated can help in facilitating and ensuring social protection for the migrant workers. As discussed above the very informal nature of the employment of the workers entails that workers remain undocumented and hence receive no social protection. Thus, the team efforts were focused towards the same.

Following are activities undertaken in the year 2019-2020:

**Mapping:** Labour and migration mapping carried out by the CLRA project team in Surat generated information on source and destination of workers and other basic information like number of workers in family, wage rates prevalent, and recruiting agent in a one line format. Three schedules have been developed to contact the construction workers at different spaces and time. Separate schedules have been developed for the morning naka, the basti/ settlement of workers, and the work site. During the year the team was able to map :

- a) 689 individual workers (579 male and 110 female workers) across 11 labour stands in Surat
- b) The team undertook mapping of 476 mukaddams of sugarcane harvesters who have 1032 teams working for 12 sugarcane factories across south Gujarat
- c) Additionally, as part of the source visits, the project team covered 29 villages in Kushalgarh block of Banswara district, Rajasthan. Many labourers migrate from Kushalgarh to Surat to work in the city's construction and building sector
- d) The project team has started to digitize its labour mapping exercise and is using tablets for canvassing the workers at Labour stands and sugarcane fields

- e) Additionally, the team collected data for 150 men and women along with the team from IIT Mumbai for the time motion study of sugarcane harvesters.

Image 2: IIT-Bombay measuring the workers while they harvest sugarcanes



The data base created through the labour mapping by the project team during the year was shared with Government functionaries – Gayatriben Jariwala, Assistant Commissioner, UCD, SMC and Rupalben Shah – Corporator, SMC and Chairman for WC. For instance, the data collected on worker settlements was shared with Surat Municipality Corporation on the ICDS, education, health services.

- This has led to regular health check ups across all nakas in the city of Surat
- A mobile dispensary visits each naka at least once a month

The first ever ergonomic study was carried out for the sugarcane harvesters in South Gujarat, the first ever ergonomic study of sugarcane harvesting workers was undertaken in collaboration with IIT- Mumbai in Surat organized in CSS, Surat in 30 November 2019. Following which the data collected of 150 workers will help inform the basis for minimum wage fixation for sugarcane harvesters.

**Capacity Building Trainings and Workshops:** The project team members have been working with the migrant workers of the building and construction industry of Surat and the sugarcane harvesters of south Gujarat, in their source of origin as well as destination of the migration. As part of this initiative the members of the project team travelled extensively and visited various blocks to organize capacity building workshops in Madhya Pradesh,

Maharashtra, Rajasthan as well as the tribal rural areas of Gujarat . The objective of organizing these workshops was to build upon the capacities of the workers and motivate them to assume leadership roles and ensure access to rights and entitlements of their and their fellow workers in the destination of migration.

During the year the project team organized 9 capacity building workshops where 646 workers (618 male and 28 women) were trained. Due to the capacity building workshops organized across various source and destination areas, the project team received a total of 92 cases concerning non-payment of wages including 2 cases were related to Workmen's Compensation Act. The team was able to resolve 51 cases, with a total financial benefit of Rs. 15,44,810 accruing 166 male and 90 female workers. 735 workers (603 were male and 132 were females) became members of the workers' collective.



Image 3: Project team engaging with Sugarcane Harvesters in their source i.e. Dang, Gujarat

**Shelter for migrant construction workers:** The project team in Surat is continuing its collaboration with SMC since May 2018 at Sahara Darwaja to manage the Home for Urban Migrant Construction workers. This collaboration is a result of long standing efforts and advocacy by the team with various state functionaries such as the SMC and Urban Development Corporation. The beneficiaries comprised of migrant construction workers and their families who were earlier living on the footpath or out in the open. Against the vagaries

of the seasons, the shelter can be seen as a big improvement in the living conditions of the workers since majority of the homeless are seasonal workers who migrate with their families. The residents receive the benefit of free health check-up through monthly medical camps and also participate in cultural programmes organized by the SMC. The Shelter for Urban Homeless (being managed by the project team), has become a role model on which other family based shelters are being designed and constructed across the city of Surat by SMC.

Throughout the year, on an average 120 beneficiaries have been living on the premises. Particularly in the months of the summer and monsoons, the occupancy has gone up to 170 individuals.

### **Research Publications:**

- i. **Anatomy of Drudgery: Work Conditions in industries and around Kadi**  
The study presents the condition of industrial labour that undertaken in two industrial areas in Gujarat. One was in Kadi Taluka in Mehsana district and the other in Kalol Taluka in Gandhinagar district (close to the traditional industrial city of Ahmedabad). The data for this study comprised of secondary research of government and industry data and primary research through case studies and a questionnaire survey. The study established that labour laws were not being implemented in the study areas and there was immense scope for organization of the work force that would help them demand their rights.

<http://clra.in/files/documents/0b4ccc37-c48c-4441-b5de-9b6c54c1143b.pdf>

- ii. **Here Hope has no Address: Proceedings for workshop on housing for migrant workers**  
In December 2019, a national consultation was organized on theme to discuss the housing for migrant circular workers across India; an issue that has long been of a critical concern to the migrant workers and the organizations that work with them – the issue of housing or rather lack of it for migrants workers; which has also emerged as a pivotal reason leading to mass exodus of the workers as witnessed during the period of lockdown. An issue that has remained in discussions for decades in both in the circles of the civil society and the state functionaries, yet the issue has been addressed only perfunctorily.

<http://clra.in/files/documents/e4c02ebb-bfe0-4102-b9f3-0acdba7c0d7c.pdf>

- iii. **Ergonomic Study of Sugarcane Harvesting Workers in Gujarat**  
A first ever ergonomic study was undertaken for the sugarcane harvesters. The study undertaken in collaboration with IIT-Bombay, with the objective that the findings from the scientific analysis of time motion and energy expended could become basis for advocacy to demand higher wages for the sugarcane harvesters.

**Project Title: Ensuring Decent Housing and Living Conditions for Seasonally Migrant Construction Workers in Cities of Gujarat**

**Funding Partner: Paul Hamlyn Foundation**



Image 4: Lakshmi Vanjara, Geeta Vanjara, and Hanseben Valmiki led the women of Arjun Ashram to make representations to various government departments to demand basic facilities and access public services such as ICDS in October 2019

CLRA has been critically engaged with the issue of housing for the seasonal migrant workers of the construction and building industry in the two important cities of Gujarat – Ahmedabad and Surat. While the organization has been working in Ahmedabad for over a decade, the engagement in Surat has been of shorter duration with gaps. The seasonal migrants play a critical role in the economy by providing a host of services in the relatively developed parts of the country such as the metropolitan cities of Ahmedabad and Surat. The migration of tribal construction workers to cities is semi-permanent in nature. There are families who have been living in the city for over a decade. However, they continue to live in the open. A special feature of homelessness in urban Gujarat is that majority of the homeless are families.



It is not just a matter of workers sleeping on the pavements at night, but families eking out an existence in the open for years on end.

The interventions made by the project team can be divided into two broad typologies– those seeking to ensure tenure security of the settlements and those seeking to link the inhabitants with various public services. The section below describes the major interventions undertaken and what have been the outputs and outcomes of these interventions.

**Enumeration of residents of settlements:** One of the first interventions undertaken was to advocate with the municipal authorities to enumerate the residents of the settlements. CLRA conducted a census wherein the project team undertook mapping of squatter settlements, one liner profile of families in these squatters was obtained over time in 2015 (for 27 bastis) and 2017 (for 17 bastis). Furthermore, data was generated (in 2016 for 10 bastis and again in 2018 for two bastis) relating to school going and little children, which was compiled twice for specific demands for ICDS and education services for these bastis. In 2019, the work was focussed in 10 bastis, detailed household survey for nearly 800 families was undertaken.

**Eviction -Visits to the site at the time of eviction:** CLRA team gets SOS calls when ever eviction information reaches the basti or when the eviction squads arrive without prior notice . The team rushes to the spot and the first task is to get the bulldozers to stop. A number of tactics are deployed by the team. This range from seeking eviction notices that need to be issued to the residents before the eviction can begin by the concerned authorities, organizing meetings and discussions with the concerned state authorities. The eviction notices help in documenting the proof of prior residence and create ground for legal intervention. An innovative feature introduced by CLRA team in these fire fighting measure has been to call the police helpline 100 which has proved effective in some cases. CLRA team has intervened in over 12 cases of eviction so far.

In one instance of eviction action, MAM wrote to NHRC, wherein the NHRC sought the district Collector’s report on the issue, and the Collector’s office contacted MAM in order to record community’s statement. Another significant outcome for this line of action was witnessed when the Railway authorities issued notices prior to eviction of settlements of the Arjun Nagar and Umiya Hall in Ahmedabad for the first time in the year 2019.

**Legal recourse/ filing PILs:** In cases re eviction, where the team feels there is scope of legal intervention, CLRA has facilitated filing of Public Interest Litigation (PIL) at the High Court.

**Table 1: Details of PIL filed (status as on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020)**

Sr. No	Date of filing	Basti affected	No. of families	Outcome	Status
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1	16/3/2015	Sundervan	125	Stay obtained	PIL disposed
2	3/9/2015	Sundervan	125	Stay obtained on 17/9/2015	Pending LPA/1203/2015
3	30/10/2015	Gyaspur	56	43 got house (two rooms with kitchen with attached toilets)  13 families still await rehabilitation	Pending PIL/243/2015
4	21/3/2019	1-Arjun Ashram  2-Umiya Hall	314	Returnable notice issued by Court	Pending PIL/42/2019

**Case Work:** The short and long circular migrants of these squatters are mainly daily wagers in construction and casual work or petty vendors or craftsmen. MAM 's main connection with them started as labourers who were prone to exploitation in the terms of their work. However, as the living conditions of this labour community were deplorable and sub-human, CLRA was compelled to intervene. Yet, the work to address issues of labour rights violations, union based legal support is a critical intervention. Thus case work is undertaken. The basti labourers are members of the labour union, MAM, which gives them a strong sense of identity, and confidence to face law and order authorities.

MAM received 16 cases, of which 14 were solved with a financial benefit of Rs. 4,14,400 benefiting 67 male workers and 8 female workers.



Image 5: Lakshmi Vanjara, Geeta Vanjara, and Hanseben Valmiki led the women of Arjun Ashram to visit various government departments to demand basic facilities such as clean drinking water, sanitation facilities, and ICDS in October 2019

**Encouraging residents to develop local identities:** Team has facilitated the residents who are permanent migrants<sup>1</sup> to file applications that helps establish individual identity like Voter Card (8 beneficiaries), Pan card (4 beneficiaries), Aadhar Card, Mamta Card etc, as well as those IDs that help identify them as households, such as ration card, LPG, getting electricity meters etc.

**Ensuring access to services:** CLRA has sought to link these settlements with the services by making representations to the concerned officers in charge and mobilising the community members and their leaders to place demand on the system. 67 women supported were linked to RCH (Mamta Cards) and 202 persons benefitted at 2 Health camps till March 2020.

**Project Review :** The project was reviewed in a three tiered exercise by a group of experts, peers and the community members. As observed by the external reviewer that, *'The way in which CLRA has been able to prevent evictions sheerly through the mobilisation and activation of intercommunity response is admirable. There are only 4 legal battles while other claims are*

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to the migrant/ semi permanent tribal construction workers, the settlements house families who have been living in such settlements for generations belonging from NT/ DNT communities.

*being made with the strength of the collective and through negotiations. While the risk of evictions is ever-present, each of these efforts at staying put is itself a step towards strengthened claim making’.*



Image 6: On 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020, more than 700 people gathered for a public meeting as a culmination of Awas Haq Abhiyan to demand dignified housing and provision of utilities for migrant workers in the city of Ahmedabad.

## **Project Title: Ensuring Rights of Migrant Children at Brick Kilns in Rajasthan and Gujarat**

### **Funding Partner: ING Foundation**

CLRA teams has been working intensively in Rajasthan and Gujarat so as to ensure that the rights of migrant children in the brick kilns. The activities undertaken by the project teams under the aegis of the project are listed below:

**Mapping of children:** A brief schedules (Gujarat and Rajasthan) were designed for mapping of total number of children (age between 0-14years) at different brick-kilns, for understanding education status of children, ICDS facility for children below 5years, health facility for pregnant women, lactating mother etc. the objective of this mapping was : a)to know the current number of children who have come with their parents at the brick-kilns, b)to get an idea of about children current educational status present in the brickkilns.

Since the project cycle is October 2019 to September 2020, the outputs are reported accordingly: The mapping has covered 2125 children of age between 0-14 years. Based on the facts of the survey, details of the children were shared with the concerned department.

**Advocacy with state education departments to open on site schools, provide supplementary nutrition to children, and immunization for children:** In order to link children with public services in education, early childhood care, and health, the survey findings were submitted to the responsible officials of the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) department and requested through letters to provide education structure to the children soon so they can study further. Women and child development department was also informed about the situation and requested for the arrangements for vaccination and nutrition for children between 0 to 5 years.



Image 7: Team members in Rajasthan sharing the findings of the survey with the officers in Department of Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in Ajmer

Departmental coordination achievements in Rajasthan:

- The Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) started a good beginning with accountability for the children coming to the brick kilns. The Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) issued departmental help at 6 education centres in Ajmer.
- All the Anganwadi workers of the Mandal block were made accountable by the Women and Child Development Department for vaccination of children of brick kilns and connecting them to Anganwadi.
- Through Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), migration hostels were able to provide special structure for non-residential training.

Departmental coordination achievements in Gujarat:

- State Project Director, Samagra Shiksha (SSA), Gandhinagar has written letter to the District Primary Education Program, District Project Co-ordinator and District Education Committee to setup tent school at brick-kilns, to make arrangement of mid-day meal. The department has given reference of the CLRA letter.
- Commissionerate (Commissioner and Mission Director) of Health, Rural Health Branch, Gandhinagar had written a letter to all RPC, CDHO, MOH, RDD, CPC and DPC of the state in reference to CLRA letter.

**Supplementary education program at select sites (Education Centers):** During the survey, it was found that many children had left their schools with their parents or there are children who have never been to school. In the situation of no structure of education on the kiln, children are forced to become laborers. So, education centers were opened by CLRA at Ajmer and Bhilwara brick-kilns.

- Enrolment of children in the centres of Ajmer district: Nine centres were opened in Ajmer, out of which 1 centre was requested by the Panchayat Primary Education Officer Bubani to CLRA that they would run the centre in their own area with accountability. Therefore, that centre was handed over to them. 119 girls and 101 boys were enrolled in these open learning centres.
- Enrolment of children at education centres in Bhilwara district: After opening of the centre in Mandal block of Bhilwara, Joganiya brick-kiln owner expressed his desire that he will run both centres on his own. Therefore two centres were handed over to them. 118 girls and 116 boys were enrolled in 8 education centres in Bhilwara

**Enrolling children in Government schools: Baal Mela (Children Fair):** The purpose of organising 'baalmela' is to connect children to schools. At the JMD brick kiln, Ladpura, there are 70 children, in which 50 children were not attending school at all. To initiate a conversation on the importance of education and to make children understand, 'baalmela' has been seen as one of the important forum. On 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2019 at JMD brick kiln one day 'baalmela' programme was organised wherein 45 children – 26 boys and 19 girls participated. This resulted in 56 children have been enrolled to the school by persuading parents and hard-work of colleagues. Almost all the children are connected with primary level education.

**Training in Life skills for Adolescent Girls: Kishori Jeevan Kaushal:** Two-day Kishori Jeevan Kaushal workshops were organized, in Mandal area of Bhilwara and in Ajmer area in which 100 adolescent girls and parents participated.

Many adolescent girls often accompany their parents to brick kilns, where these sites are often unsafe and lack hygiene facilities for menstruation at the kilns and lack of awareness about sexual harassment of adolescents, of scientific and correct information related to reproductive health. So it was very important to prepare adolescents for safe menstrual

practices and also learn the changes in adolescence age, to make sanitary-pad for menstruation cycle. Hence a two-day *Kishori* workshop was organized.

**Formation of baal panchayat (Children parliament):** Baal Panchayats were formed to give children an active platform for expression skills, creativity, reasoning and imagination where children can get a platform to do their wish, for their rights, for their dreams, where they can also find solutions to their problems. Also, children who leave school to go to brick kilns if that can be stopped in school itself. A total 6 baal panchayat have been formed in 2019-2020.

**Project Title: Facilitating development of Strong workers' organization of**

- i. **Construction, agriculture, and brick kilns in Dahod and Ahmedabad in Gujarat**
- ii. **Brik kiln worker in Ajmer and Bhilwara in Rajasthan**

**Funding Partner: Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiative**

APPI has been supporting CLRA in its objective to develop strong workers' organization and collective strength since October 2019 in four locations across two states : Gujarat (Dahod and Ahmedabad) and Rajasthan (Ajmer and Bhilwara). A brief detail of activities undertaken by the project teams are listed below:



Image 8: Public meeting organized on February 18<sup>th</sup> 2020 to demand a rise in wages in the brick kilns of Ajmer

**Mapping of workers, worker collectives and labor contractors:** Mapping of workers are done at Ajmer, Bhilwara and Jaipur district of Rajasthan and Dahod district of Gujarat in the last 9 months.

**Rajasthan:** Starting with October – November, all brick-kilns workers arrived by January, 2020. So, mapping was started in the Ajmer and Bhilwara districts in the beginning of January. Project team has done mapping at 9 different brick-kilns of Ajmer and Bhilwara district and 372 and 95 families were mapped respectively

**Dahod:** The mapping work was done through various village level meetings and nakas visits. During the project timing of 9 months project team has visited 9 blocks of Dahod district to map the migrant labours; 396 families were mapped in Dahod, while 64 families of workers were mapped in Ahmedabad.

**Meetings at Villages and Nakas (source area Dahod):** There are two important points where meetings have been possible are nakas and villages. Project team meets workers at nakas in the morning where they stand for finding employment and also meet at the village. Due to high percentage of migration from the district, the village meetings generally happen with family members and other peoples, who did not migrate for work. A total of 37 meetings were organized during this project time period.

A total 1019 workers participated in the extensive meetings at nakas, villages and blocks level of Dahod district.

**Meetings at Brick-kilns (Ajmer, Bhilwara and Jaipur):** The workers were contacted by the project team at different brick-kilns. The discussions were focused on organization, labor laws, prevailing wages, demand charter, education of children etc. The purpose of the meetings was also to familiarized workers with their Rights and work related laws. Through constant support by team, few workers leaders came forward to work responsibly in the interest of the workers. A total of 8 meetings were organized in Ajmer and Bhilwara district of Rajasthan during the reporting period. A total of 405 workers participated in these meetings.

**Capacity Building Training of Workers:** A two day training to build the capacity of the worker leaders was organized on 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> January, 2020 in Dahod where 41 cadres from 9 different blocks along with 4 team members and a resource person from Dahod came together to discuss the issues of the workers, high percentage of migration from the district and the planning for future events under the MAM's banner. The meetings and workshops resulted in

- i. Planning for the conference that had been fixed 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2020.
- ii. Planning to prepare a demand charter for campaign and conference.
- iii. Planning to undertake public campaign for membership of workers.



**Capacity Building Workshop in Rajasthan:** A worker group participated in a rally organized on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at Jantar-Mantar, New-Delhi in support of the national demand charter of brick-kiln workers. With workers participated in the programme a capacity building workshop was supposed to held in March, but due COVID-19 situation workshop got cancelled.

**Public Campaign for membership of workers:** On March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 a public meetings/Sammelan in Dahod was organized with the objective to spread awareness about Rights and entitlements of the workers through the platform of MAM and expand membership base of organization. 46<sup>th</sup> March Sammelan was the culmination point of 5 months of long work. The main campaign for the Sammelan was started from 26<sup>th</sup> February through bike rallies to cover 264 villages of 9 blocks in Dahod district of Gujarat. The Sammelan took different turn on March 6<sup>th</sup>, as team faced the permission issues in organizing the program on particular time from the collector. The Sammelan was not permitted because of exam schedule during that time. Although at the end of it approximately 250 workers along with CLRA team came and submitted a memorandum to district collector.

During 15 days of small public campaigns approx. 560 people participated in the campaign. A demand charter was submitted to Dahod district collector.



Image 9: Sammelan in Santrampur on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020, wherein a demand charter was submitted to the District Collector, Dahod, Gujarat.

**Public meeting at Rajasthan:** A meeting of the workers was organized on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020 under the banner of Rajasthan Pradesh Int Bhatta Majdur Union. 50 Workers along with union members and project team discussed the demand charter

for the brick-kiln workers of Ajmer region. Following decisions were taken in the public meeting for the upcoming year:

- i. Planning of a general meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> February, 2020.
- ii. Planning of strike after general meeting.
- iii. Planning to meet the Joint Labor Commissioner Ajmer and submit a memorandum.

**Legal Cases:** The project team received 32 cases concerning non-payment wages and 3 cases of bondage.

- i. **Rajasthan team:** During the project period, twenty cases were registered with the union, out of which seventeen cases were towards wage labor payment and three cases were bonded labor. The project team has solved eighteen case of wage labour payment through negotiations. The bonded labour cases were registered to the District Collector and it has helped to rescue 42 workers and their family members from brick-kiln and they received a financial benefit of Rs. 5,40,000.
- ii. **Dahod team:** During the project, 15 cases were registered with the MAM, which has benefited 172 workers in total with a financial benefit of Rs. 33, 19, 000, and all of the cases were of non-payment wages.

**Linkage of Services:** The team worked on ensuring linkages to services such as schools and health. The team has done advocacy with departments to ensure the children will get linked to school and health departments.

- i. **Children Linkages to Education:** During the period total nine hundred thirteen children of brick-kilns migrant workers families have been linked to school in the project area of Rajasthan.
- ii. **Advocacy for services:** In order to link children with public services in education, early childhood care, and health were submitted to the responsible officials of the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) department and requested through letters to provide education structure to the children soon. Women and child development department was also informed about the situation and requested for the arrangement for vaccination and nutrition for children between 0 to 5 years.

The above results were possible due to repeated representations and memorandums shared with the concerned state departments, details of which are attached below:

- i. Six Memorandums were submitted to education department for enrolment of migrant children under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Scheme.
- ii. Eight memorandums were submitted to the Health Department for migrant women and children under the Mamta scheme.

- iii. Memorandum was given to the administration in Ajmer and Bhilwara district to connect the migrant laborers with necessary public services in brick kilns, to connect their children with education.

**Advocacy with Labour departments:** The workers organizations collaborated to form a National Struggle Committee for brick-kiln workers with initiative of Rajasthan Pradesh Int Bhatta Majdur Union.

- i. A demonstration was organised by this committee to implement the national demand charter of brick-kiln workers at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019. During this period, the union gave a memorandum to the labor department to implement the revised wage demand letter in Ajmer and Bhilwara.
- ii. On 13 January 2020, a memorandum demanding the migrant brick kiln workers was given to the District Collector Bhilwara.
- iii. On February 20, 2020, a memorandum was given by the union to the Deputy Labor Commissioner, Bhilwara, regarding the minimum wages for brick kiln workers of Bhilwara district.
- iv. 8 construction workers were registered under the Construction Workers Welfare Board during this project time.

**Legal and Advocacy support to prevent evictions:** Workers living in Motera Basti in Ahmedabad were given notice to vacate the place. Workers approached MAM for the case. Project team of Ahmedabad given legal and advocacy support to prevent evictions. The eviction was stopped and workers continue to live at the site.