

Witnessing the Uprooting of Adivasis

Migration Study of Badwani District, M.P.



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In English movies the cast and acknowledgements always come at the end.

If one has enjoyed the story one wants to know who was who in the film.

But in books, as in our culture, it is customary to acknowledge the help and support of humans and the Goddesses/Gods before we start.

But this is no ritual.

Acknowledgements are a way to keep the bond alive between everybody who travelled on this journey together

and for us to relive the moments we enjoyed with each of them.

So here we go...

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Due to their energetic presence we never felt we were doing a serious thing like 'study'.

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The study was conceptualised by and conducted under the leadership of Jayashree who was the main driving force for the whole team.

JAYASHREE – AMIT



INTRODUCTION

When Relku, a 16 year Bhilala adivasi girl living in a very very remote village in the Vindhyaachal mountains, told her Aaya and Baaba, Velki and Naansingh, that she was going to Gujarat with her Mama, maternal uncle, to work, they were shocked and vehemently opposed her proposal. How could she think of such a thing?! This was in the 1980's and 'Migrants' were not a thing as yet. Relku was one of the pioneers. But the next year and the next and year after that, Relku never had to fight with her parents to go to Gujarat in spite of the horrid stories of some people dying at the workplace or young girls getting pregnant. In fact, Naansingh started waiting eagerly for the day when his other children would be old enough to go with Relku. That was the first year when Naansingh and his family with six children did not have to worry about grain. With the earnings of Relku, they bought four bags of grain to make up for the shortfall from the farm. He proudly sat in the houses of his neighbours joking with a carefree laugh on his face.

The 2016 Economic Survey of India for the first time estimated that India has approximately 100 million or 10 crore interstate and intrastate circular migrants. Aajeevika Bureau, Gujarat, an organisation working for the rights of migrant and other workers in the informal sector estimates puts the figure at 140 million or 14 crore.

The national lockdown due to COVID 19 brought the life of migrants to the attention of the nation very sharply. The huge number of invisible migrant workers in cities suddenly became very conspicuous by their crowding at the railway/bus stations and walking the highways. Many lacunae in policies for migrants also came to the fore. No one even seemed to know the correct numbers of migrant workers.

Even though migration is as old a phenomenon as the human race itself, with our genes consisting of 50% - 60% DNA of ancient humans who migrated from Africa to this area about 60,000 years ago, for many of us migration seems like a bad word. Is it or is it not?

It also depends on who is talking about it. We remember an ironsmith's reaction in Sendhwa town of Badwani district when he heard that we were from Delhi – *paapi pet ke liye insaan ko kahan Kahan bhatakna padta hai*. (One is forced to travel far to unknown places to quell one's hunger). The fact that we were social activists was totally lost on him much to my chagrin!

The urban middle class is as usual confused and hypocritical. They don't know how to deal with this new form of slavery that exposes their desire to be progressive but not able to give up the benefits of this system. They tell with pride that their child has been posted in ABC.. city in the USA but the dark coloured migrants they see around them pulling rickshaws or on

construction sites are the butt of their casteist and xenophobic slurs and behaviour. The migrants are seen with repugnance creating chaos and filth near their planned and gated colonies.

The Adivasi farmers talk about 'going to Gujarat/Maharashtra' with mixed feelings depending on how the question is framed. Happy that they get money from there and resigned to the fate of having to live in difficult conditions. For them viewing migration also depends on what it is about? Most Barela Adivasis (descendants of the Bhilalas of Alirajpur) of Badwani district have migrated from Alirajpur or Dhar districts across the Narmada river and further to Chhatarpur, Burhanpur, Khandwa, Sehore and Bhopal districts in search of agricultural lands. But leaving the village for more land is not considered a bad thing as it has enhanced their livelihood opportunities. In listening to people's narratives one faces the dilemma of seeing migration as an aspirational decision or one taken in distress.

With erratic monsoons, small land holdings and lack of livelihood opportunities in rural areas it is becoming difficult for people to sustain themselves in villages. They are increasingly looking at migration to supplement their incomes. Urban life also holds an attraction for youngsters who look at cities as places where one has more opportunity to 'go ahead', whatever that may mean.

How we view migration has important ramifications for development policy and planning. International development agencies like the World Bank who decide the mainstream development discourse in India, would have us believe that migration is the best way to fight poverty. Hence the focus is to facilitate migration by providing them facilities in destination states. In this context, Universal Public Distribution System, health and education facilities for their children, voucher and cash flow schemes and accessing Government schemes outside their domicile state assume significance in development policy. In general, support at the destination sites is seen as crucial. These agencies view migration purely from the view point of fulfilling the demands of a skewed labour market.

Even though, in the real world, it is important to solve the problems faced by migrants at their workplace, the view of accepting migration as the most important tool for poverty alleviation takes away our gaze from the problems of lack of or alienation from land, forest, water resources, land reforms, the need to develop livelihood opportunities at the local level and other problems of the local economy, fair prices for agricultural produce, fair wages, education and health facilities etc. Should we just accept the fact that areas of low economic activity and poor social development indices are doomed to be labour suppliers to better off areas in the country.

Whatever view others might hold, the Adivasi youth with whom we interacted before this study felt strongly about doing something to improve the economic situation in their villages and not accept migration as a fait accompli. So it was decided to study the problem in detail to understand what can be done about it.



PURPOSE OF STUDY

The study was part of a Perspective Building Training for the youth of Badwani District. The main purpose of the training and undertaking the study was to engage Adivasi youth of the area with the real world problems their society is facing and initiate action wherever possible. One of the main problems they identified was – Seasonal Migration for Work. It was decided to do an in-depth study of this issue to -

Get clarity about the reasons, extent of interstate migration of Adivasis from Badwani District and see if any solutions could be found to mitigate these causes.

Understand the age and gender profiles of the migrant workers. This is important to decide on the group to be focused on for any intervention to be done.

Map the destinations and types of work the people of this area are going to. This was to help in planning for solving the problems faced by migrants at the destination sites of work and networking with relevant groups working in the area.

Get an idea of the wages, incomes and spending patterns to understand the economic impact of migration on the families of the migrants and the economy of the area in general.

Understand the problems faced by migrants at the destination sites.

Brainstorm solutions for the problems of migrants based on the understanding developed in the study.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

In the middle of a passionate discussion with workers of a development agency working in Badwani district, it struck us that if most households were migrating from the village, for whom are we working? This question sort of grew on us and we felt it is a very important issue and merits a detailed study.

As we dwelt on it we realised that it is important to know the extent of migration to understand the changing character of Adivasi society. People who once lived off the produce of the farms, forests and rivers and hence were able to live in a world of their own and maintain their minimalistic way of life and unique culture, were now struggling to survive in a cash economy against the inhuman market forces.

The question of who lives in the village and for how long is also crucial to the changing concept of 'village' and to understand the challenges to rural development schemes and developing rural economy.

If we want to devise strategies to strengthen the economic condition of the Adivasis of the area it is important to have an in-depth understanding of their condition. This study helps us to understand their condition.

Even though there are a lot of studies on migration patterns, it is important to do area specific studies to come up with area specific solutions.

The thrust of this exercise was to understand the nature and causes of migration and initiate action to mitigate the problems faced by migrants and also to see if local economies could be made more vibrant.

OUTLINE

A brief introduction of the area is followed by an outline of the scope of the study, methodology and the timeline of events for the period of study. The next section discusses the various findings of the study through graphs and tables, the age and gender profile of migrants, their land holding pattern, place and duration of work. The preferences of different age groups for various types of work are analyzed. Total incomes, expenditure and net remittances have also been calculated.

The reasons for migration have been discussed as found through various group discussions. The problems faced by migrants at the destination have been presented through some case studies documented by the youth involved in collecting information.

The Government schemes and laws related to migrant labour have also been listed. The document ends with some suggestions for the problems faced by the migrant workers and ways of reducing the extent of migration.



THE AREA

Barwani, is one of 52 districts of Madhya Pradesh tucked in the South West corner bordering Maharashtra. Rajpur is one of the seven Tehsils / Blocks (Community Development) of Barwani having 97 villages coming under 68 panchayats and 2 Nagar Panchayats. The two main market towns of the tehsil are Rajpur and Palsud. Rajpur is also the tehsil headquarter. The other Tehsils from where villages were surveyed are Sendhwa, Niwali and Varla.

TERRAIN

To reach Barwani either one has to descend from the Malwa Plateau crossing the Vindhya hills while coming from the Northeast via Indore or climb up the Satpuras from the Black Cotton plains of Khandesh, coming from the Mumbai side in the Southwest. The district is flanked on the North by the Narmada river which flows through the fertile lands of the Nimad region of Madhya Pradesh, a part of which lies in the District.

Generally, five types of soils are found in the district namely Kali-I, Kali-II, Kali-III, Halki Khadri and Bardi. The soils of Barwani district are classified as medium black cotton soils containing nearly 50% silt and clay together. Mostly the soils are lighter, open and drained. Alluvial type of soil is found on both the sides of the river Narmada and in some patches on the banks of its tributaries like Goi, Deb & Bour. This type of soil is deep fertile & well drained. The soils of the rest of the district are mostly shallow & poor in fertility.

The district is influenced by South-West Monsoon which extends from June to September. The mean annual rainfall is 738.64 mm. There is very little rainfall in the winter season. The monsoon rainfall accounts for 80% - 85% of the annual rainfall.

The 732 km² area of the Rajpur Tehsil is distinctly divided into two types of terrain. The Northern hilly area of the Tehsil comprising of 43% of the Tehsil and the plains.

As per the Ground Water Board's assessment the Rajpur Tehsil has been put in Semi Critical category as far as the Ground Water availability is concerned. The general pre-monsoon ground water level is between 5 to 10 meters below ground level.

POPULATION

Population	Rural	Urban	Total
Male	91,757	15,925	1,07,682
Female	90,399	15,135	1,05,534
Total Population	1,82,156	31,060	2,13,216
Dalits (SC)	9,100 (5%)	2,208 (7.11%)	11,308(5.3%)
Adivasis (ST)	1,44,373(79.26%)	6,929 (22.31%)	1,51,302(70.96%)
Households	32,943	5,692	38,635

Census 2011

According to the Census 2011, Rajpur has a population of 2,13,216. There are 38,635 households in the tehsil giving an average household size of 5.52 persons.

Of the total population of the tehsil 70.96% are Adivasis and 5.3% are Dalits. 80% of the rural population and 22.3% of the urban population of Rajpur Tehsil comprises of predominantly Barela and Naik Adivasis. The rural areas are predominantly Adivasi areas. We prefer to use the word Adivasis which is the collective name used for the many indigenous peoples of India. The term Adivasi derives from the Hindi word 'adi' which means of earliest times or from the beginning and 'vasi' meaning inhabitant or resident, and it was coined in the 1930s, largely a consequence of a political movement to forge a sense of identity among the various indigenous peoples of India. Officially Adivasis are termed 'scheduled tribes', but this is a legal and constitutional term, which differs from state to state and area to area, and therefore excludes some groups which might be considered indigenous. Similarly the word Dalit is used to signify the oppressed state of the people officially termed as Scheduled Castes

The gender ratio for rural areas of Rajpur Tehsil is 985 which is better than the district average of 982 or the Madhya Pradesh average of 931.

From the rural – urban breakup of population and households given above we see that this is a predominantly rural area.

The hilly areas of Rajpur Tehsil are inhabited almost entirely by the Barela, Bhil and Naik Adivasis whereas the plain part has a mixed population of Bhilala, Bhil, Naik Adivasis and non-tribal farmers like Sirvi, Paatidaar, Rajput, Jaats and others. The Barelans and other Adivasis in the hill areas have retained their separate social, cultural and linguistic identity as the rural areas are entirely populated by them. The non-advasis mainly shopkeepers, merchants, moneylenders and Govt. officials are concentrated in small market towns like Palsud. The Bhilala Adivasis of the plain area have imbibed the culture and language of the

dominant non-tribal farmers, as they live in the same villages as the non-tribals, to such an extent, that they do not want to identify with the other Adivasis and look down on them and consider themselves superior.

Previously the district was populated solely by the Bhil and Naik Adivasis but to increase the income from land revenue and quell the militant Adivasis of the area the British encouraged the Patidars and other farming communities to settle in this area in the late 19th century.

AGRICULTURE

The district falls in the Nimad Valley Agroclimatic Zone with an average rainfall of 773 mm. The main economic activity of the people in rural areas is agriculture. According to the Census 2011, 43% land holdings are marginal holdings i.e. less than 1 hectare. 31% of the total cropped area is irrigated according to KVK, Barwani.

The main Kharif crops are Jowar (Sorghum) and Macca (Maize) for grains, Arhar (Redgram), Urad (Blackgram) and Moong (Greengram) in pulses. Very few people sow groundnut for oil. Mainly Soyabean has taken its place. The cash crops are mainly Soyabean and Cotton. The Rabi crops are mainly Wheat, Chana (chickpea) and Cotton and some mustard sprinkled in the wheat. Some farmers with irrigation even take a third summer crop like Moong or groundnut.

Most farmers take crop loans from the Co-operative societies and private money lenders to meet the agricultural expenses. The interest rates of private lenders are as high as 50% for a season lasting 4 - 6 months. Most farmers are in debt.

The Rajpur Tehsil has two types of areas. The plain areas have more irrigation facilities and is into commercial farming in a big way. In the hill areas farmers still have some traditional seeds and in addition to the cash crops they still grow the traditional crops like Sorghum, Maize and some other local millets.

In spite of the low profitability of farming, the Adivasi farmers are able to make do as their whole family is engaged in the activity and they don't have to pay for wage labour.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

The Human Development Index (HDI) was created to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone. The HDI provides a single measure to capture three key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living.

The HDI utilizes four key metrics: life expectancy at birth – to assess a long and healthy life, expected years of schooling – to assess access to knowledge of the young generation average years of schooling – to assess access to knowledge of the older generation and gross national income (GNI) per capita – to assess the standard of living

According to the Current Composite Vulnerability Analysis for climate change done by the Madhya Pradesh Ministry of Environment and Forest in collaboration with UNDP and other agencies, Barwani is one of the eight districts marked as very highly vulnerable based on the study of 72 indicators under Social, Economic, Climatic, Water, Forest and Health

parameters. It is also one of the lowest ranking districts in human development index. This extreme vulnerability of Barwani district as regards to climate change has a direct impact on agriculture and migration.

The HDI indicators for Madhya Pradesh and Barwani district are as follows -

	HDI Rank	Health	Education	Standard of Living (Income Index)	HDI Values
Madhya Pradesh	4 th from bottom	0.6225	0.6440	0.459	0.5687
Barwani	184/261	0.5371	0.4662	0.4533	0.4842

It is clear from the table that all indicators of Barwani District are below the average indicators for Madhya Pradesh.

The Literacy Rate of Barwani district is 52%. The health of the people of Barwani is also in a pathetic state. According to the National Family Health Survey IV fact sheet of Barwani District published by Indian Institute of Population Studies, Mumbai based on data collected in 2015 -16, 45.2% women and 46.1% men in rural areas have below normal BMI. 66.2% women and 46.6% men between 15 and 49 years are anemic. It is shocking that 83.1% children between 6 and 59 months are anaemic.



THE STUDY

*"Philosophers HAVE hitherto only interpreted the world in VARIOUS WAYS;
the point is to change it." – KARL MARX*

SCOPE

The Study was conducted in 76 hamlets of 32 villages in 3 tehsils of Barwani District viz. Rajpur (14 villages), Niwali (6 villages) and Sendhwa (9 villages). One village of Varla Tehsil was also surveyed (Annexure 3). As the study was to be done by the participants of the shivirs it was decided to conduct the survey in their villages. Specifically, in their hamlets. Although the initial idea was to restrict the study to Rajpur Tehsil but due to the insistence of participants from outside the tehsil their villages were also included.

We also felt that the socio-cultural, demographic and geographical background of the villages outside of Rajpur tehsil were identical and so including them in the study wouldn't create any problem in the data.

In these 32 villages, 502 families who had migrated for work were surveyed comprising 2742 persons. Of these there were 1532 males and 1210 females. Information about persons going on daily wage work in the local area was also recorded. Even though this latter group is formally not considered as migrants, the participants felt that this was a major labour activity in the Rajpur Block and worth understanding. In a way it gives a broader understanding of the whole district.

Through the study we hoped to get an understanding of the situation of the migrant families - when and why they migrate, duration of migration, how much they earn, the work and places they go to. A simple questionnaire was drawn up as a group exercise to answer the above questions raised by the participants.

Most of the questions in the questionnaire relate to the conditions in their host village. The study also tried to understand the problems faced by the migrants at the workplace.

The last part of this exercise was to brainstorm about the solutions for the problems faced by the people during migration and see if anything could be done about it.

To conclude, the study seeks to understand the situation of the migrant workers at the host village, workplace and develop solutions with the participation of Adivasi youth and in the process develop their analytical and thinking skills, motivating them to take action wherever possible.

METHODOLOGY

In our life as activists and educators we have constantly challenged the power relations and hierarchy that is created by knowledge. The institutionalisation of knowledge creation by a coterie of people and its dissemination within the institution ensures that it remains within an elite circle of people. The people who gain this knowledge are held in high esteem and awe by others. The system of entrance to these institutions and growth within them also ensures that only a few have access to it, breeding elitism.

In the traditional development practice, like all other institutional activities, this hierarchy is very stark between the giver of welfare and the receiver or beneficiary or the one who is trying to remove poverty and the one who is poor. This hierarchy is further compounded in our situation by the fact that most givers belong to the educated, upper caste group.

In the work of organising people (as contrasted with development work) to take collective action for bettering their life situation through taking positive actions or fighting for rights or against exploitative practices and policy, we strove to challenge this power relation between us, the middle class or upper caste activists and the Adivasis with whom we were living and working. For this process to happen, the role of knowledge was crucial.

Even though many activists believe in this process they consider knowledge creation and dissemination as their main task. But knowledge creation and dissemination also establishes the power of the creator and disseminator over those to whom this knowledge is disseminated.

PARTICIPATORY NATURE OF THE STUDY

To break this we were naturally drawn towards the work of Paulo Freire who challenged this 'banking model of knowledge' and proposed the dialogical method which presupposes the equality of all participants who are actively engaged in the complete process of knowledge creation, from collecting information, observing reality and reflecting on it while questioning their own suppositions regarding the subject leading to a change in our thoughts and creation of new knowledge. The active participation of the Adivasi youth in all aspects of the study from designing, executing, reflecting on the results and thinking about taking corrective action has been the key concern for us in this study. As we see this knowledge creation as a process leading to action and not just as an academic exercise, we would have liked this report also to have been written by the group of youth but due to time constraint of the shivirs and the logistical constraints of getting the participants together again, this couldn't happen.

To discuss the issues around migration two three day shivirs were conducted with the participants. In this first shivir they analysed their experiences to understand the various issues related to migration. There were very vibrant discussions and debates regarding ways of stopping migration which ranged from organic farming, going back to

older times of an existence with minimal market interference or setting up factories. In the last shivir after data collection, activists from Mazoor Adhikar Manch, Gujarat talked to the participants about the various laws and schemes for the benefits of migrant workers.

The main tools of information gathering were the survey of migrant families, narratives of migrant labourers and discussions. The questionnaire (Annexure 3) in the form of the survey form was developed during the shivir discussions.

For the selection of the sample families it was felt that the village was a very large unit. It was decided to do the survey, discussions etc. at the hamlet level and it was best that the participants conducted the survey in their own hamlets. Most villages surveyed were from the hilly areas of the Rajpur Tehsil. The scope of the study was expanded as participants from other tehsils also wanted to take part in the survey.

The participants conducted discussions with small groups of people to get a general understanding of the migration story. They also visited the labour addas in Rajpur, Sendhwa and Palsud and made a night visit to the highway from where the migrants board buses for their interstate destinations.

The participants also documented case studies of migrants who faced problems at the workplaces in Gujarat and Maharashtra.

The conclusions have been drawn mainly by analysing the data collected and through discussions with migrants and participants of the study.

The conclusions and experience of the study was shared by the people of Rajpur Tehsil through a sammelan (conference) organised in Palsud about the Role of Youth in Mobilisation of Gram Sabhas, where the participants got a chance to go on stage and narrate their experiences and thoughts.

Right from the beginning it was clear to everyone that the study was being conducted to get an idea about solutions to some problems faced by migrants and mitigate the reasons of migration. After the study the participants put in a lot of effort to get labour cards issued to the migrant workers of their hamlets. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) works in at least two villages were initiated due to the intervention of the participants. Almost all participants took part in a campaign to motivate the people to attend the Gram Sabhas. The youth themselves took active part in Gram Sabha meetings resulting in minor altercations with the Panchayat secretaries and Sarpanches who didn't like the idea of youngsters keeping a tab on their nefarious activities.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS



1 Migrants waiting to board a bus at the roadside in the middle of the night in Nasik.

Two introductory Shivirs were held with school and college going Adivasi youth of Badwani district to discuss the issue of migration. Most of the youth belonged to families whose members migrate regularly so they were well aware of the situation. Many had first-hand experience of working as migrant labourers. They were aware of most problems but it was decided to do a survey to understand the problems in detail and also to validate or check out their understanding based on personal experience with experiences of a larger migrant population.

A questionnaire was designed during the shivir by the participants. (Annexure 3)

The questionnaire was printed as a form and was filled by the participants in their respective villages.

After the first round of survey, a one day meeting was conducted to discuss the problems encountered. The participants were filling such a form for the first time. It was a big achievement and learning experience for them. Many basic but practical difficulties were encountered. The definition of family was not clear as in many houses there were joint families, in some houses even though two or three couples were living in the same house, they were cooking separately. It was decided to treat the 'choolah' or hearth as the unit of household. The other problem was that many people were not able to recollect the duration of their stay or exact time of the year in which they went. Many people asked them - why the survey was being conducted? what will they get after the survey? Basic things like filling in the right column etc. were also discussed. We also talked about ways of doing conversations around the topic rather than interviewing just like a question answer session.

After the survey forms were filled the task of data entry was done.

A visit to the departure point on the highway outside Sendhwa was undertaken. The participants made short videos and interviewed the labourers before they boarded the buses.

The participants were asked to write case studies of migrants depicting any problem they encountered at the work place.

The outcomes of the survey were discussed with the participants and possible solutions to the problems were discussed. The participants made small skits depicting the plight of migrant workers.

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

In many months of the year, one can see people bundled amidst boxes, bags in fields near the roads going out from Palsud, Rajpur, Sendhwa. Men, women, boys, girls and children. The road is lined with colourful buses with LED lights. In the darkness of nights these colourful buses will take them to far off, unknown villages in Gujarat and Maharashtra. Thus begins the journey of the Adivasi migrant labourer. We are trying to find out why these people leave the comfort of their homes to go on such arduous journeys?

Bhaayla walked the ten kilometers from his village with his wife and brother. He carried the bags and bundles with him. When Bhaayala goes to board the bus to Aurangabaad, the conductor directs them to an agent. The agent gives him a slip and charges a commission. Bhaayla tries to argue but in vain as this is the system here. All buses are boarded only through an agent. The agents just made this system by force. As the buses are privately owned and from outside the state, maybe they too are plying illegally. Finally Bhaayla and others are shoved in the bus which is a sleeper coach. On berths meant for two people six-seven people are made to sit. After some time of people murmuring curses at the conductor amongst themselves the noise of murmuring subsides as nobody is listening. The voices are kept low so that the conductor doesn't hear them. One or two people brave enough to raise their voices get a reprimand from the conductor who tells them to get down and take another bus if they want comfort. This ends the argument.

A two day workshop with activists of Mazoor Adhikar Manch, Gujarat, was organised with the participants to understand laws and schemes of the Government for migrant labourers.

Helping migrant workers to get labour cards.

Intervention by participants to start MGNREGS work in their villages

A sammelan to highlight the problem of Migration and role of Gram Sabhas in generating work for people in villages was organised in Palsud.



FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

The findings of the survey are divided into three parts – Who are the people who migrate? Here we are trying to see the profile of the migrants – their land holdings, irrigation, age, sex, family size and other reasons for migrating. The next part is about the destination – where they go, duration of stay, type of work and the problems faced by them at the destination places. The third part deals with the economics of migration – what they earn and what they bring back.

THE CHANNEL

Before going into the details of these questions we should understand the process. We were intrigued as to how a person in a very remote Adivasi hamlet knows where to go in a far away, unfamiliar area where he has never gone earlier? We realised that there are three channels by which this transportation happens. They operate smoothly and have established themselves over the years. In the first channel there are labour contractors who belong to the village or source area. Mostly they too are Adivasis and know the labourers personally. These labour contractors are in touch with the land owners, factory labour recruiters or construction contractors in Maharashtra and Gujarat through their previous visits. The prospective employers contact these labour contractors about their need and they in turn spread the word in the villages and recruit labour. The labour contractors get a commission from the employer for each worker supplied. Sometimes these labour contractors also work with other labourers. It was seen that if all goes well, over time these labour contractors become economically better off than the workers of their villages. In case of any problems in payments they are supposed to mediate and many times get into arguments with the labourers which sours their relationships.

The second way is that while working, the workers build a rapport with the employers and they contact them directly on phone.

Thirdly they go with a relative or acquaintance who has gone previously. They rely on his rapport with the employer to get them work.

In all these cases there is no written record and no Government agency is involved at any stage. The panchayat also doesn't keep any record. There are no labour unions in the area who look into the migrant labour issue.

In many cases there is an 'advance' taken by the worker either directly from the employer or through the labour contractor. This is advantageous to the employer as it is supposed to ensure that his labour requirement at the needed time of the year will be met. It is advantageous to the worker as his need for cash is also met, which maybe to buy seeds, fertilizers etc. at the beginning of the agricultural season or for a marriage, illness, education or some sudden expense. The money is transferred to the bank account of the worker through online banking. This binds him to go and work for the lender to repay his loan and earn a newer one.

This network is a very strong and the employers also visit the source villages. The possibility of running away after a loan is almost zero. As the labour contractors are local people it is impossible to dodge them.

THE PUSH FACTORS

1. LAND HOLDING AND MIGRATION

The average land holding of 416 families that responded to this query is 4.7 acres. If we remove the families holding more than 25 acres then the average land holding comes to 3.63 acres.

1.1 LAND HOLDINGS

LAND HOLDING In Acres	No. OF FAMILIES	PERCENTAGE
<= 1	98	19.5
1 - 2.5	123	24.5
2.5 – 5	188	37.4
5 – 10	51	10.1
> 10	42	8.3
TOTAL	502	99.8

We can see that 44% households from where people have migrated have less than 2.5 acre/1 hectare land and 81.4% families have less than 5 acre/2 hectare land. The higher acreage values do not necessarily mean bigger land holdings. It might be due to the fact that the land has not been divided amongst the sons.

One can safely say that smaller land holdings are a reason for causing migration. This is a major cause as land is the main source of livelihood for Adivasis of this area. As fragmentation of land increases this trend is sure to increase.

1.2 TYPE OF LAND

TYPE OF LAND	No. OF FAMILIES	PERCENTAGE
IRRIGATED	110	21.91
NON-IRRIGATED	323	64.34
PARTIALLY IRRIGATED	69	13.75
TOTAL	502	100.00

It can clearly be seen that 64.3% of the migrating persons belong to families with non-irrigated land. If we add the families with partial irrigation then we can say that the bulk of the population – 78% - migrating to other state for work lack irrigation facilities at home. So lack of irrigation is a factor in forcing people to migrate for work.

2. AGE OF MIGRANT WORKFORCE

As can be seen from the graph and table above the bulk of the migrants are youth. If we consider the age group of youth as 15 – 29 years as defined by the National Youth Policy 2014 we see that almost 57.3% migrants fall in this category.

According to the UN definition of youth comprising of people in 15 – 24 years we see that 36.2% migrants come under this category.

Years	Total	Migrant	Percentage of Total Migrants	Percentage of Total Population
0 to 9	418	19	2.0%	4.5%
10 to 14	284	26	2.7%	9.2%
15 to 19	459	142	14.9%	30.9%
20 to 24	379	202	21.3%	53.3%
25 to 29	317	200	21.1%	63.1%
30 to 34	200	116	12.2%	58.0%
35 to 39	186	101	10.6%	54.3%
40 to 44	147	52	5.5%	35.4%
45 to 49	146	40	4.2%	27.4%
50 and above	206	52	5.5%	25.2%
	2742	950		34.6%

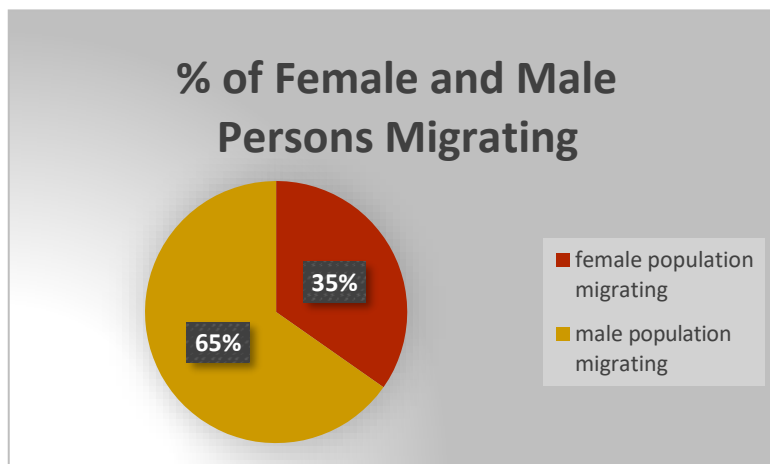
This brings out the reality of Adivasi life that high school and college going youngsters have to contribute towards their family income. We can well imagine the impact of this on their studies. In discussions with the youth this fact was brought out that in college the dream of getting a Government job, which is the main motivation of studying, starts eroding. At this point frustration also starts setting in and they have to lower their ambitions and go to earn money. When they fail in regular or competitive exams their families start pressurizing them to stop studying and go to earn something. Working and getting money is a means to get back their lost respect in the family.

22.8% of the migrants were in 30 – 39 year age group and 9.7% are in the age group of 40 – 49 years. The age wise population data of the district was not available to make a comparative evaluation.

App. 7.5% people are outside the working age group bracket of 15 – 49 years with 2% children and 5.5% above 50 years. The actual number of children working may be more as they work alongside their parents who go for agricultural labour work as a lot of this work is contractual. For e.g. a family may get a fixed price for plucking all the cotton from a particular field. Then the whole family starts work early and work till late as their aim is to finish the work as fast as they can. In such cases children also lend a hand but this was not reflected in the survey form.

3. GENDER BASED DISTRIBUTION OF MIGRANTS

In the 502 families there were 1780 adult population greater than 18 years 968 males and 812 females.



We see that almost two third of the migrant work force is male. Women and girls form one third of the migrants. Out of 950 migrants there were 335 females and 615 males or 35.26% and 64.73% respectively

3.1 GENDER - AGE RELATION

Years Range	She Total	She Migrant	Percentage	He Total	He Migrant	Percentage
0 to 9	190	10	5.26	224	9	4.02
10 to 14	104	11	10.58	176	15	8.52
15 to 19	190	61	32.11	265	81	30.57
20 to 24	196	83	32.35	219	119	54.34
25 to 29	144	66	45.83	169	134	79.29
30 to 49	312	95	30.45	351	214	60.97
50 and above	74	9	12.16	128	43	33.59
Total	1210	335	27.68	1532	615	40.14

We see that of the total female population in the surveyed population 27.68% are migrating as compared to 40.14% males. This means that girls and women are having to go out of their homes to earn a living in a big way. This is a big thing for a society where traditionally women were working on the farm only and their going out was limited to visiting relatives and market towns on specific days. Considering the abysmal living conditions at the destination places with lack of proper hygiene and sanitation this could also mean a lot of health complications for them. On the other hand one would like to believe that this gives them some financial independence and leverage in family decisions.

Another important fact is that almost 80% males between 25 to 29 years are migrating.

4 WORK DISTRIBUTION

4.1 Distribution of Migrants in Different Sectors

TYPE OF WORK	She	He	Total	Total %	She %	He %
AGRICULTURE	172	261	433	45.57	39.72	60.28
CONSTRUCTION	105	205	310	32.63	33.87	66.13
FACTORIES	51	83	134	14.10	38.06	61.94
MISCELLANEOUS *	7	66	73	7.68	9.59	90.41
TOTAL	335	615	950		35.26	64.73

* Miscellaneous work includes, working in shops, hotels, driver, on borewell machines, welding, flour mill etc.

The gender distribution in agriculture, construction and companies is also roughly the same with a little more preference shown by girls to go in agriculture and factory work over working in companies. Very few women/girls go for miscellaneous works

As is evident from the table the bulk of the population (78.2%) is working in the Agriculture and Construction work. The agriculture work is in diverse crops depending on the season and area of work. In this survey the respondents were working in Onion, garlic, ginger, sugarcane, cotton, wheat, maize, pomegranate, groundnut fields. All people working on farms were on job basis except one who was on an yearly contract. In the construction field most respondents were in labour work. A few were doing skilled work of shuttering and masonry.

4.2 AGE WORK RELATION

4.2.1 Distribution of Migrants of an Age Group in Different Sectors

	Agriculture	%	Factory	%	Construction	%	Miscellaneous	%	Total
0 to 10	13	92.9	1	7.1	0	-	0	-	14
10 to 15	19	73.1	1	3.8	5	19.2	1	3.8	26
15 to 20	69	48.6	16	11.3	46	32.4	11	7.7	142
20 to 25	69	34.2	33	16.3	89	44.1	11	5.4	202
25 to 29	83	41.5	32	16.0	68	34.0	17	8.5	200
30 to 34	63	54.3	15	12.9	27	23.3	11	9.5	116
35 to 39	49	48.5	15	14.9	30	29.7	7	6.9	101
40 to 44	25	48.1	5	9.6	15	28.8	7	13.5	52
45 to 49	17	42.5	8	20.0	13	32.5	2	5.0	40
50 and above	26	50.0	8	15.4	17	32.7	1	1.9	52
Totals	433	45.8	134	14.2	310	32.8	68	7.2	945*

*The reason for the total not being 950 is that 5 children are recorded as going with their parents but not worked.

We see from this table that most children (under 15 years) are working in agriculture. Only one child was found working in a factory. For the most part, the overall preference for agricultural work is reflected in each age group also as the largest number of migrants in each age group are going for agricultural work except in the 20 – 25 year group where 44% are going for construction and 34% have gone for agriculture work. This group also has the least number of people going to agriculture.

This also corroborates with the group discussion findings wherein youngsters said they are less inclined to work on farms. But this was mainly for college going youth. As the survey did not record the educational qualification this trend could not be ascertained.

4.2.2 Sectorwise Distribution of Migrants of Each Age Group in a Sector

	Agriculture	%	Factory	%	Constructi on	%	Miscellaneo us	%	Tota l	%
0 to 10	13	3.00%	1	0.7%	0		0		14	1.5%
10 to 15	19	4.39%	1	0.7%	5	1.6%	1	1.5%	26	2.7%
15 to 20	69	15.94%	16	11.9%	46	14.8%	11	16.2%	142	15.0%
20 to 25	69	15.94%	33	24.6%	89	28.7%	11	16.2%	202	21.3%
25 to 29	83	19.17%	32	23.9%	68	21.9%	17	25.0%	200	21.1%
30 to 34	63	14.55%	15	11.2%	27	8.7%	11	16.2%	116	12.2%
35 to 39	49	11.32%	15	11.2%	30	9.7%	7	10.3%	101	10.6%
40 to 44	25	5.77%	5	3.7%	15	4.8%	7	10.3%	52	5.5%
45 to 49	17	3.93%	8	6.0%	13	4.2%	2	2.9%	40	4.2%
50 and above	26	6.0%	8	6.0%	17	5.5%	1	1.5%	52	5.5%
Totals	433		134		310		68		945*	

*The reason for the total not being 950 is that 5 children are recorded as going with their parents but not worked.

We see that in all sectors the the percentage of migrants of a particular age group is almost the same as their percentage in the total migrants. So more or less we can say that they are evenly distributed in each sector. Only in the age group we see that there share in factory and construction work is 24% and 28% whereas there share in the total migrants is only 21%. Even though this is not a significant variance but seen along what we heard in the group discussions these numbers may indicate a trend of youth preferring factory and construction work over agriculture.

GROUP DISCUSSION

The following points came up during the group discussions

The school, college going youth go to factories in Madhya Pradesh and at least once everyone goes to Pithampur Industrial Area.

The illiterate youth go to chips factory, cement factory, agarbatti and soap factories.

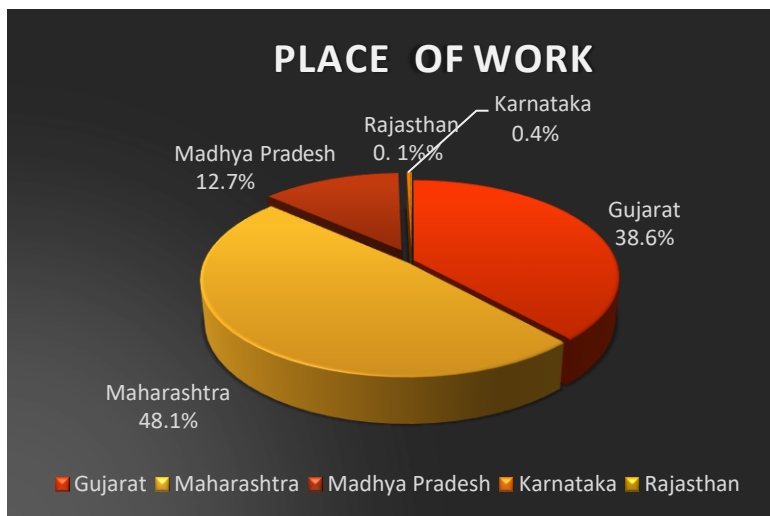
Illiterate youngsters also go for masonry work.

Elder people go for farm work. In Maharashtra and Gujarat most people get work in farms.

In Maharashtra they also take yearly contract on farms – saaldaar, whereas in Gujarat they take farms on sharecropping basis. Many young people and old children who don't want to go to Gujarat and Maharashtra go to work in the plain areas of Badwani and Khargone districts viz. Anjad, Davana, Thikri, Kasrawad and Khargone. From their villages they go to Rajpur town walking or on shared auto/jeep. From Rajpur the labour contractors or bigger farmers take them to the destinations and drop them back in the evening. This is a twelve hour day for the labourers. Rajpur is a big labour market of the district.



5. PLACE OF WORK



State	No. of Migrants	Percent
Gujarat	367	38.6%
Maharashtra	457	48.1%
Madhya Pradesh	121	12.7%
Karnataka	4	0.4%
Rajasthan	1	0.1%
	950	100%

The 18 hour Day

Reena wakes up at 2 am in the dead of night and starts cooking for the three members of her family who have to go to work.

To save fifteen rupees per head, Reena walks the ten kilometers to Rajpur with her two brothers and many other youngsters of her village. Some come to Rajpur on the pickups that reach their villages in the middle of the night.

By 4 – 4.30 am Rajpur is bustling with hundreds of labourers like Reena from the hill areas of Rajpur Tehsil.

Prospective employers for the day also reach Rajpur with their pickup vans in the early hours to take labourers for an assortment of works like picking cotton, picking chillies, bitter gourd or brinjal, spraying insecticide, staking tomatoes or gourd creepers.

They reach their work places (sometimes as far as 80 to 100 kms away in Khargone district) in speeding vans and are dropped back by 8 pm and reach home by 10 in the night by which time the children and others have gone to sleep.

Next day they will be out again before their children wake up and get to see them only on the off on Thursdays which is the market day and payday.

It is evident that the preferred destinations for the 935 respondents are the adjoining states of Maharashtra and Gujarat with 49% and 38% migrating there respectively.

The people here have a live connection with Maharashtra villages which are at the most 50 km from their residence. Many people have taken lands there and some family members have gone to live there. Of the 439 people migrating to Maharashtra 42% went to four districts – Aurangabad, Nashik, Pune and Jalgaon. The rest went to small places. Most respondents who went to Gujarat have not written the specific towns so it was not possible to know the districts.

The in-state migration is much less at 13% reflecting lesser work opportunities or wages. Of the 118 people looking for work in Madhya Pradesh only 17% went to Indore.

The rest found farm work within the district and some in the adjoining district of Khargone. Local migration on daily basis is also very popular amongst the younger people who don't migrate outside the state.

5 HOW LONG THEY STAYED AWAY FROM HOME

5.1 DURATION OF STAY

PERIOD OF STAY IN MONTHS	No. OF PERSONS	PERCENTAGE
<=1	128	14.17%
1 - 3	369	42.16%
3 - 6	198	22.42%
6 - 9	29	2.79%
9 - 12	124(116 for 12 months)	13.82%
12 - 24	16	0.81%
> 24	18	1.28%
For Lifetime	29	2.56%
TOTAL	911*	100.00

*Of the 950 migrants only 911 migrants responded to this question.

As can be seen from the table above 56.33% migrate for three or less months. 79% people migrate for six or less months and if we take the one year bracket then it is seen that 96.33% people migrate for less than an year. We can say that majority of the migration is seasonal. This means that most people are still attached to their village. They are doing farming on their lands and then going for work outside.

It is interesting that the 9 - 12 month group also has a significant number of migrants at 13.8%. When we disintegrated the data for this group it was found that 113 of the 119 persons of this group migrated for 12 months. Almost 45% of these people have gone for agriculture work and similar number in construction work. There is a trend of people going for agriculture on yearly contracts called saaldaari in Maharashtra and in Gujarat they are taking land on lease called Bhaagya. We feel this is the reason for the high number reported for 12 months. But the saaldari or leasing practice could not be confirmed by the data as most of the informants who went for 12 months did not report the kind of work they did.

6 MONTHS OF MIGRATION

Month	Migrants
July	7
August	21
September	39
October	42
November	51
December	45
January	109
February	98
March	171
April	183
May	44
June	54
total	864*

It is clear that the numbers increase in January as those who don't have to sow the rabi crop are free after the harvests of the monsoon crop.

Mostly the migrants come back in February for the annual Bhangoriya – Holi festival and go back in large numbers during the summer months of March and April. The money earned during summer helps them to finance the operations of the next agricultural season beginning in June. Summer is also the leanest season in terms of food availability and this also necessitates going out.

During the monsoon season, some people of the families with less land migrate as there is not much work on the farm after sowing.

This table gives us an idea as to which months are the best to contact people in the home villages and the destination places.

*Out of the 911 respondents 33 were gone for a lifetime or more than two years hence the month of departure was not relevant.

7 HOW MUCH THEY EARNED

The income column of the survey form is actually the amount of money that the migrants brought back. While asking questions it was realised that they are sure about the amount they bring back with them. While they are at work they take advance payments for living expenses or to send home. Some of them have taken advance payments before going to work. The amount they receive in final payment is what they get after cutting all the advances and it was difficult to get them to remember and calculate all the expenses and advances.

So the Income survey actually gives us a good picture of the total amount brought back and we can see in further results how it is used.

SECTORWISE AVERAGE NET INCOME AND TOTAL INCOME

	Type of Work	Average Net Income (Rs)	Max. (Rs)	Min. (Rs)	No. of Migrants Reporting Income	Total Income (Rs)
1	Agricultural work	23841	250000	1800	331	1,01,80,107
2	Construction Work	39980	373500	1200	243	1,21,53,920
2	Companies	38400	300000	900	103	49,15,200
4	Miscellaneous	34450	146000	600	64	23,77,050
					741*	2,96,26,277

* This column is named – No. of migrants reporting Income and the this number is significantly less than 950, the total number of migrants found in this study. The reason is that 53 people have reported combined incomes of migrants of a family, 147 migrants did not feel comfortable to report their incomes and 9 entries were deleted as they were extreme values.

We see that the average income is highest in construction work with income in factories a close second. The incomes from miscellaneous jobs are also higher than the average income from agriculture.

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME

For the above reason we have taken the unit of household for calculating average income. The 741 migrants who reported their incomes were spread over 458 households.

Total Households surveyed – 502

Total Households reporting incomes - 458

Average Income per Household = Total Income/458 households = Rs.64686/-

Average Income per Migrant = Total Income/ 741 migrants = App. Rs. 40,000/-

SECTORWISE NET INCOME DISTRIBUTION IN BRACKETS OF 20,000.00

	Rs 0- 20,000	Rs 20k - 40k	Rs 40k – 60k	Rs 60k - 80k	Rs 80k - 1L	Rs >1 L	Total
Agriculture	173	110	33	8	2	5	331
Construction Work	94	51	39	41	8	10	243
Company	36	35	8	8	12	4	103
Miscellaneous	17	34	5	2	1	5	64
	320	230	85	59	23	24	741

From this table showing income distribution we see that most people in agriculture work are earning less than 40,000. Placing the average incomes in the income distribution table we see that all averages fall in the second income bracket of 20,000 to 40,000 rupees which is on the lower side of the distribution table. In the construction work even though maximum persons are earning less than 20,000 but there are a lot more people earning 60,000 to 80,000 raising the average incomes in construction. The factory work is not very popular despite higher income as traditionally people have been going for agricultural and construction work as it involves manual labour for which people are adept. But the miscellaneous works like working in shops, hotels etc. are gaining ground with more educated youngsters. At the beginning of the survey we couldn't have guessed that a sizeable number is going in these types of work. As we did not record the educational qualification of the migrants we cannot draw any conclusion but the group discussions brought out the fact that college students are the ones taking up the bulk of these jobs.

ESTIMATING TOTAL EARNINGS OF DISTRICT

We see that on an average earnings of a migrant is approximately Rs 38,525/-.

There are no Badwani district studis which estimates the number of persons migrating seasonally, so there is no way to estimate the amount of money coming with the migrants. But we can make a reasonable guesstimate by considering that in this study out of the total population of 2742 persons, 950 migrated i.e. 34.6% population migrated.

The population of Barwani District as per 2019-20 estimates, is 1,549,899. If we assume that 34.6% of this population migrates then the number of migrants from Barwani district comes to 5,36,265.

Multiplying this by the average income per migrant (Rs. 38,525/-) we get a staggering amount of Rs. 20,65,96,11,205 or 20.66 Arab Rupees or it sounds better saying 20.66 billion rupees.

8 WAGES

AVERAGE WAGES IN DIFFERENT SECTORS

	Female		Male			
	Average Female Wage	Average Male Wage			Min	
Agriculture	202.20	225.70	350.00	100.00	400.00	70.00
Construction	230.70	319.00	450.00	150.00	1000.00	100.00
Companies	256.40	280.80	400.00	150.00	500.00	150.00
Miscellaneous	262.50	295.00	300.00	200.00	800.00	120.00
	237.95	280.12	375.00	150.00	675.00	110.00
Mason		475.00				

We see that the wages of women are lower than those of males in all sectors. In agriculture it is 10.41% less, in construction it is 27.68% less and in factories it is 8.71%. Maximum disparity is seen in construction work. This may be due to the fact that in construction many men are working as masons or assistant masons (though most have not specified in the form) and hence get higher wages than an ordinary labour or beldaar.

The incomes and wages would make us think that more number of people would be working in these sectors. But the maximum number of migrants are working in agriculture sector. The reason for this is mainly that being farmers themselves they are most comfortable doing this work. In the nineteen eighties and nineties, majority of migrant workers were going as agricultural labour to Gujarat and Maharashtra. Gradually the younger generation started going for construction labour work in the Nineteen nineties and learnt the masonry skills on the job. As masons or in assisting them they were able to earn more and at the same time upgrade their skills. In the earlier times there were hardly any college going Adivasi youth.

Now that educated youth are also becoming part of the migrant work force they are getting into factory work. One of the main reasons is that people laugh when they hear that a college boy is doing manual labour work as the whole purpose of getting into education was to get white collar jobs and not do work involving manual labour. So even though factory work is also labour intensive but it seems more respectable. They are also going to less labour intensive work like shop assistants, security guards etc. So the social factors and skill levels also play a role in choice of the type of work, not just the economic aspect of it.

9 USE OF INCOME – REASONS FOR MIGRATION

USE OF INCOME	No. OF PERSONS	PERCENTAGE	SUBTOTAL
Loan	93	20.39%	21.05%
Freeing Leased out Land	3	0.66%	
Agriculture Expense	90	19.74%	40.35%
Family Expense	94	20.61%	
Construction of House	34	7.46%	22.82%
Investment in Farm	49	10.75%	
Buying Silver	21	4.61%	
Education	17	3.73%	7.90%
Health	19	4.17%	
Marriage	5	1.10%	1.10%
Buying Vehicle	23	5.04%	6.80%
Buying Mobile	7	1.54%	
Business	1	0.22%	
TOTAL	456	100.00	99.92

For almost 60% people it is a compulsion to migrate to clear the backlog of loans/ freeing leased out land or to meet the daily expense or the expense of agriculture production of the year gone by.

Almost 30% people are using their earnings for covering expenses of which 9% migrants are using the money earned for education, health and expense on marriages.

So we see that, for 70% people, the money they earn is spent on paying up for expenses, servicing loans or freeing their leased out lands.

6.8% people are going to get money to buy vehicles or pay installments of vehicles bought on instalments. Of the 23 people who spent their money to buy a vehicle or pay its instalment, 5 reported that the vehicle was a car.

The encouraging fact seems to be that 22.8% used the money for investing in land, bought silver or constructed a house. The investment in farm is mainly on digging wells or tube wells. If we treat education as an investment then the total will be 26.5%.

Besides the above reasons tabulated from responses of the migrants, group discussions were held with youngsters about the reasons for which people migrate for work. As can be seen below the discussions brought out broader reasons due to which people are forced to migrate. The data from survey somehow gives the picture that Gujarat and Maharashtra are like ATMs - need cash to dig a well, let's go to Gujarat and get some cash... In this sense the discussions were fruitful to deepen our understanding. The reasons for migration are as follows -

1. Bad financial condition
2. Lack of irrigation facility so farm work lasts only one season
3. No livelihood/work opportunity in village
4. Good wages in the destination place
5. Some people are going to make a living.
6. Payments of MGNREGS works are very delayed so people don't wait for them. None of the participants knew the process of applying for work etc., even though all were high school or college going. They said that the villagers also don't know about these procedures.
7. They had never heard of people of their hamlet or village sitting down to think of ways of improving the conditions of the village.

The younger migrants have their own reasons to go –

1. College students go to get money to buy shoes, clothes, books, fees, mobile etc.
2. To be able to fulfill their desires of android phones, motorcycle, clothes.
3. After getting married the couple goes to earn. Many times they go to earn money spent by the boy's family to give the bride price.
4. As getting a Government job has become very difficult they want to try and get employment in factories on monthly basis.



PROBLEMS FACED AT DESTINATION

Life at the work sites in Gujarat and Maharashtra is not easy. Many problems are encountered by the migrant workers at the destination sites. It is not only the living conditions which the migrant workers just accept as fait accompli but sexual exploitation of women is also rampant. Many times people die at the work site and they are fleeced of the wages. More than the material loss what came out in the stories was the loss of self-respect at having to accept this exploitation and the frustration of not being able to do anything about it. It was tragic to hear such stories from youngsters who shout hoarse slogans in rallies celebrating Adivasi culture about the great Adivasi heroes.

Some of points that came out in the case studies are presented below briefly.

1. Death of a person from Revjya village due to electrocution while working on a borewell drilling machine in Gujarat. There was no Government inquiry or relief. The case was settled with the deceased person's relatives by payment of 2 lakh rupees. Some money has been deposited in the children's account. The wife is now a daily wager living with her parents.
2. The contractor lured the workers of Kolki village to Karnataka with promise of a good wage. On realising that the work was extremely labourious and being forced to work for 12 hours the people wanted to return. But the contractor refused payment and people had to come back foregoing about 15000 Rupees. The return fair was also not given.
3. Workers of Kukdiya village were duped of one month's wages by the labour contractor who took them to work in a company in Gujarat.
4. Badrilal of Kukdiya village was working in Maharashtra on a farm on an yearly contract after borrowing 25000 Rupees from the farm owner. As the owner was a merciless person Badrilal wanted to repay the loan and go back home. But the owner beat him up and didn't allow him to go back. He was forced to work for the full year against his will. He had to work very hard and remained in constant terror of being beaten or implicated in a false case.
5. The contractor took a young boy to work in a tile factory in Morbi, Gujarat. He was promised Rs. 15,000/month by the labour contractor who took him but after the month was over he was given only Rs 12,000. The labour contractor refused to accept that he had promised more.

6. A woman from Revjya village was raped by the contractor in Nasik. The woman kept quiet there as she was afraid that they will lose the work and the contractor will not give them their due money. She told her husband after coming back home.
7. While returning from wheat harvesting work in Maharashtra the vehicle overturned resulting in the death of 7 – 8 people from Budhgaon village including 3 girls from the same family. The case was settled by giving some cash. No case was registered on the owner of the vehicle or driver.
8. Forced to work 10 hours in the fields in Gujarat, payment not given on time, harsh treatment with constant reprimands and cuss words. The boys from Borali came back after a month of this ill treatment.
9. A girl from Danod village died under mysterious circumstances after being raped in Gujarat. When the family members tried to complain they too were given a death threat and they returned home.
10. Workers from Mogrikheda were stuffed on a berth meant for two people with eight others. One of them kept vomiting. The whole journey was sickening. They were promised Rs. 9000/month to work in the tile factory but were given Rs. 8000/month. They were not allowed to come back and were forced to work for three months. The extra money was kept by the labour contractor who belongs to a nearby village.
11. A group of 20 villagers from Rajmohli village went to Karnataka for work. The labour contractor gave them some advance once a week to buy weekly rations. After a month when they demanded the full wage the contractor kept lying and postponing the payment. After 3 months he just disappeared with everybody's 2 month wages.
12. A young boy of Rajmohli village went to work in a tile factory in Gujarat. He fell sick and had to return in the middle of the month. The factory owner refused to give money to the boy in the middle of the month. So he told his friend to collect the money when he comes. The friend told him that the owner had not given the money. When he contacted the owner he said I have given your money to your friend. This led to a fight between the two friends.
13. Some villagers of Revjya village had gone to Rajasthan to work in Water Supply works. They were forced to work overtime there. They worked for two months but at the time of returning they were given wages of one month only with a promise of a digital transfer in a day or two. But the money was not transferred. Once they had returned nothing could be done about it.
14. A boy from Kukdiya village worked in a factory in Gujarat for two months. One month's wage was not given by the labour contractor.
15. Sometimes the labour contractors also find themselves in a lurch. In one case of Ladkdiya village the labour contractor took money from the owner of a sugarcane

farm and distributed it to prospective migrant workers as advance with the assurance by the latter that they will go to work on the sugarcane farm at the time of cutting. When the cutting season came half the workers didn't go. To repay the money taken from the sugarcane owner, labour contractor had to go to work with his family. The owner kept the family in captivity till his loan amount was not compensated. The owner did not let them go even after the sudden death of their five year old daughter. When the villagers got to know of this they auctioned off his land for Rs. 2 lakh to give to the sugarcane owner and the family was able to return to the village with the body of the girl. Now with his land gone he is forced to survive only on daily wage.

16. No support at destination place in case of any problem with the employer.

17. Police looks at migrants with suspicion and workers are also wary of the police.



CONCLUSIONS

WHO MIGRATES

1. More than half the migrant workers are youngsters. Many children are also becoming a part of the labour force. This is negatively impacting their studies. The bad quality of education and failure to get into Government jobs also forces people to migrate. Thus, this becomes a vicious cycle. With low levels and quality of education the employment opportunities also become limited to the youth.
2. Women and girls constitute almost one third of the work force half of them being in the age group of 25 to 50 years. The 15 to 25 year age group also has 43% girls. This sizeable proportion in the work force and the adverse working conditions has a big negative impact on the health of women and the social relations at work place and home. It was seen that most women are found in agriculture and construction sectors. A detailed study of the impact of wage labour and migration on women was beyond the scope of this study and needs to be investigated further.

DRIVERS OF MIGRATION

3. Less land for farming, is a major factor contributing to migration. 80% migrants owned less than 5 acres of agricultural land.
4. Lack of irrigation is also a factor contributing to migration. 64.34% families whose members migrated did not have irrigation facilities. About 13.75% more had partial irrigation. So approximately 80% families who had to migrate had no or partial irrigation. Considering that in Barwani district only 31% land has irrigation facilities there is scope to improve the situation by increasing irrigation facilities. But this will have to be done using the watershed model using forest, soil and water conservation techniques rather than the borewell model currently being followed as the groundwater availability is also on the decline.

5. Many people who are migrating said the reason was to earn money to repay loans taken for the annual family expenses or at the commencement of the agricultural season. Indebtedness is a big factor for migration

WHERE THEY GO

6. Bulk of the migrant workers (78.5%) are doing farm work and construction work in Maharashtra and Gujarat. Of which 45% are in farm work and 33% in construction. Only 12% are working in factories most of whom are youngsters. The educated youth prefer to work in factories or in construction rather than in agriculture.
7. In Rajpur Tehsil there is a large group of people doing daily wage farm work in the plains villages on farms belonging mostly to non tribals. Although as percentage of the sample in this survey they are only 13% but the number is sizeable. As has been outlined in the findings section, the work day for these workers is very long and tiring. Many accidents of the speeding pickups take place routinely.
8. The most preferred destination is Maharashtra where almost 48% of the respondents went. The next popular destination is Gujarat with 38% people going there to seek work. The proximity of these states is the main factor for this. In Maharashtra most people are going to Aurangabad, Nashik, Pune and Jalgaon districts. It is surprising that workers from this area have ventured to faraway States like Karnataka or Rajasthan. This usually happens through some contractors with whom they are familiar.
9. Most migrants – 96.3% - are going for less than an year of which 56% go for less than 3 months. This clearly shows that people still have a strong bond to their village and have not lost hope in farming. They look at migration as an opportunity to get extra income and hence the migration is only seasonal or circular as it is called these days. This is important as this becomes the basis of the need to develop the local economy of the source area.
10. People start migrating in January after the sowing of the Rabi crop. It peaks in the summer months of March and April with the workers continuing to stay their till the next agricultural season starts in June-July.

IMPACT OF MIGRATION

11. A new group of people – Labour Contractors – is emerging in the villages who act as middlemen between the workers and the employers. They are key players in the already well established trend of getting the work done by footloose labour. They are a developing power center as gradually they become economically better off and they also usurp the power of the employer. The worker sees his/her employment as being in the hands of the labour contractor. Belonging to the same

social set they know the vulnerabilities of the workers' families, which helps them in negotiating with them on the employers' behalf. We see this as a trend leading to more fragmentation of the homogenous Adivasi society. Up till now most Adivasi middle men were mediating between the villagers and the Government departments but this new group of middle men mediating to facilitate the profits of ruthless employers will bring in all the lumpen activities associated with factory areas.

12. The focus on employment outside the local area will lead to a lack of interest in local development by Govt. agencies and a general attitude of hopelessness regarding them.
13. Women are facing sexual abuse at this scale for the first time. This has serious repercussions on their physical and psychological wellbeing.
14. The oppressive and exploitative conditions at the work place lead to a loss of self-esteem of the workers who have to face tormenting behaviour at the hands of employers and other urban or non-tribal elements they come across in this process. There is frustration and dumbing down of their minds due to not being able to do anything about the blatant exploitation, both physical and economic. A society that takes pride in its valiant history, vibrant culture, a stable and settled society living at its own pace is being pushed into the fast and crooked world of capitalism where they are seen as objects of exploitation rather than as human beings.

REMITTANCE AND BONDAGE

15. The average income that one family brings home in an year is app. Rs. 45,000/-. Considering that only 75% families have someone migrating we get a staggering figure of Rs. 1.3 Arab coming to Rajpur Taluka alone. This is a huge amount and the reason that instead of investing in developing local infrastructure and livelihoods the Govt. is more inclined to let this process go on and provide the migrants facilities at the destination place.
16. This money goes to the local market and through them all the way to multinational companies all over the world. We need to stop saying that Adivasis and farmers are just subsidy suckers and not contributing anything to the economy.
17. The fact that most of the migrant workers have taken advance payments from the employers or contractors to pay off their farm debts means that this work is akin to bonded labour. The interest rates in the area are as high as 25 to 50 percent for a six month period. So a lot of this hard earned money goes to repay these loans.



ACTIONS TAKEN

1. Distributing cards of Mazoor Adhikar Manch to workers going to Gujarat. About 1000 migrant workers belonging to 30 – 40 villages work given the cards of Mazoor Adhikar Manch(MAM). They were asked to contact the organisation if they had any problem at their workplaces in Gujarat. MAM is working for the welfare of workers in Gujarat and they have offices in some key cities where workers from the study area go. The MAM activists were called to take meetings in the study area and they explained that they could help if the workers contacted them on reaching their work destinations. A few cases of exploitation and help for migrants during the pandemic were shared with them.
2. Campaign to mobilise people to go to Gram Sabhas to start work under MGNREGS, make labour cards. There are four mandatory Gram Sabhas in an year.
3. Opening of MGNREGS works in villages of participants. Participants from two villages
4. Making songs in local language and tunes about migration
5. Follow up meetings with participants and Mazoor Adhikar Manch activists working in Gujarat and Maharashtra were organised.
6. Problem cases solved
7. Transportation of migrant workers stuck in Gujarat and Maharashtra was facilitated.
8. Food packets distributed to 1000 migrant worker families who returned in distress and daily wage workers.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. MGNREGS works which stipulate 100 days of work should be taken up between February and June.
2. The laws against illegal moneylending should be strictly implemented.
3. Credit should be made available to farmers at Government stipulated rates through Government agencies in a much bigger way than at present as they are grossly inadequate.
4. Registration of migrant workers at home place is very necessary to follow up in case of any problem. Labour cards need to be provided to everyone urgently. In the effort to get these cards made the participants realised that the Government has fixed a target number and they don't issue cards after this has been met. The process is mired in bureaucratic red tape and no one seems to be keen to register new names.
5. There is no place at the migration destination where people can go for redressal in case of a problem.
6. The employers need to be forced to enter the names of all labourers in their registers.
7. An organisation of migrant workers is needed urgently to take up their cases of atrocities and harassment.
8. Campaigns need to be conducted in the home villages to make the workers aware of their rights as migrant workers.

FURTHER STUDY

As the scope of this study was very limited a lot of issues were left out. Although we got an insight of the problems in the source area but the conditions at the place of work, challenges faced by the migrants, the social and cultural effect on the migrants, the effects on women, their attitudes, health, education of children and many other questions remained unresearched in this study.

We feel that we need to do further exploration about such topics to fully understand the journey of the migrants from their homes to the place of work in distant places. This will give us a clearer understanding about their problems and hence know what rights and demands to lobby for. As of now we can think of the following topics which we need to explore -

- a) Living conditions at site
- b) Transportation to workplace and to different sites.
- c) Health conditions
- d) Police harassment
- e) Harassment of women
- f) Types of contracts and arrangements under which they work.
- g) Problems encountered during this whole journey,
- h) Impact on – women, children’s education, family life, culture
- i) Impact of various Govt. schemes and laws regarding migrant workers.





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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE 1 – LIST OF VILLAGES OF RAJPUR TEHSIL

1. Agalgaon	26. Ghusgaon	51. Lingwa	76. Relwa Khurd
2. Atarsanbha	27. Golpura	52. Mandil	77. Rengaon Road
3. Awalya	28. Gondpura	53. Mandwadi	78. Revja
4. Baghdad	29. Haldad	54. Matli	79. Rojhani
5. Bajad	30. Indarpur	55. Matmur	80. Rui
6. Bakwadi	31. Jahoor	56. Mojali Buzurg	81. Sali
7. Balsamund	32. Jalgaon	57. Mojali Khurd	82. Salikalan
8. Bhagsur	33. Jalkheda	58. Morani	83. Salitanda
9. Bhami	34. Jodai	59. Morgun	84. Salkheda
10. Bhilkheda	35. Julwaniya Rd	60. Moyada	85. Sangaon
11. Bhorwada	36. Kadwi	61. Mundla	86. Sangwi
12. Bhulgaon	37. Kasel	62. Naded	87. Sawarda
13. Bilwani	38. Khadkal	63. Nagalwadi Buzurg	88. Sidadi
14. Bobalwadi	39. Khadki	64. Nagalwadi Khurd	89. Singun
15. Borali	40. Khadkya	65. Nandgaon	90. Siwai
16. Budra	41. Mhow	66. Narawala	91. Takli
17. Chautariya	42. Khajuri	67. Nihali	92. Temala Khurd
18. Chhotikhargaon	43. Khapar	68. Nilkanth	93. Temla
19. Chitawal	44. Kheda	69. Ozar	94. Temla Buzurg
20. Damdami	45. Kookdiya	70. Padala	95. Than
21. Danodroud	46. Kusmari	71. Panwa	96. Unchi
22. Deola	47. Lachchhi	72. Pipri Buzurg	97. Upla
23. Deonali	48. Lahadgaon	73. Raipura	98. Waswi
24. Ekalbara	49. Laphangaon	74. Rajpur	
25. Gawha	50. Limbai	75. Relva Buzurg	

ANNEXURE 2 – LIST OF VILLAGES SURVEYED

S.No.	Village Surveyed	Name of Hamlet	Tehsil
1.	Aujhar	Choudharypura	Niwali
2.	Bhurapani	Archantal, Patel, Bhagoriya,	Niwali
3.	Chatli	Kolipura, Vaartya, Daawriya	Niwali
4.	Mogri	Tarole, Sastya, School	Niwali
5.	Rajmali	Patel	Niwali
6.	Dongargaon	Parmaabya	Niwali
7.	Bagad	Baandaa	Rajpur
8.	Borali	Patel, Vaarti, Awaaya, Paachhla, Gaarda, Pujara, Bhanta	Rajpur
9.	Ekalwars	Daawriya, Jamra, Patel, Alaawe	Rajpur
10.	Jodai	Sawriya, Semliya, Patel	Rajpur
11.	Matli	Jhari, School, Patel	Rajpur
12.	Mojali	Patel, Kheda, Kundiya	Rajpur
13.	Palashpani	Patel	Rajpur
14.	Palsud	Achhaliya, Nargave,	Rajpur
15.	Rewja	Tapakala, Kaaldhawli, Nichla, Jamra, Anjanwara, Daawriya, Patel, Suliya	Rajpur
16.	Sagaimuhri	Patel	Rajpur
17.	Salitanda	Patelpura,	Rajpur
18.	Sawarda	School	Rajpur
19.	Sidri	Sastiya, Maali,	Rajpur
20.	Upla	Jamravia, Mota, Deri,	Rajpur
21.	Dhawri	Sampat, Tapia, Maahla	Sendhwa
22.	Jamli	Chaarani,	Sendhwa
23.	Jhopali	Ajnariya	Sendhwa
24.	Kolki	Sastiya, Amri, Patel, Lalkirai	Sendhwa
25.	Malwan	Daalya, Dawriya	Sendhwa
26.	Sangwi	Paawankhuti	Sendhwa
27.	Shibanyapani	Choughdiya, Patel	Sendhwa
28.	Surani	Daawriya	Sendhwa
29.	Chachria	Sulya, Nawad, Jaangu	Sendhwa
30.	Sildar	Kharte, Daawriya	
31.	Solwan	Lalkirai	
32.	Devli	Ravji Nagar, Navdia, Kheda	Sendhwa
			Varla

ANNEXURE 3 – QUESTIONNAIRE FORM

The following information was collected for each person surveyed through a form given out to fill to the participants.

1. Serial Number
2. Father/Mother's Name of respondent
3. Village
4. Hamlet
5. Block/Tehsil
6. Size of Land owned
7. Irrigated/Non Irrigated/estimate of acreage if partially irrigated
8. Names of all Family Members
9. Sex
10. Age
11. For what duration of Work in Months
12. Month in which they migrated
13. In which type of work were they engaged?
14. Daily wage
15. Total Income
16. Expenditure incurred during stay at site.
17. How did they use the money earned after coming back?
18. Name of interviewer was recorded on each form.