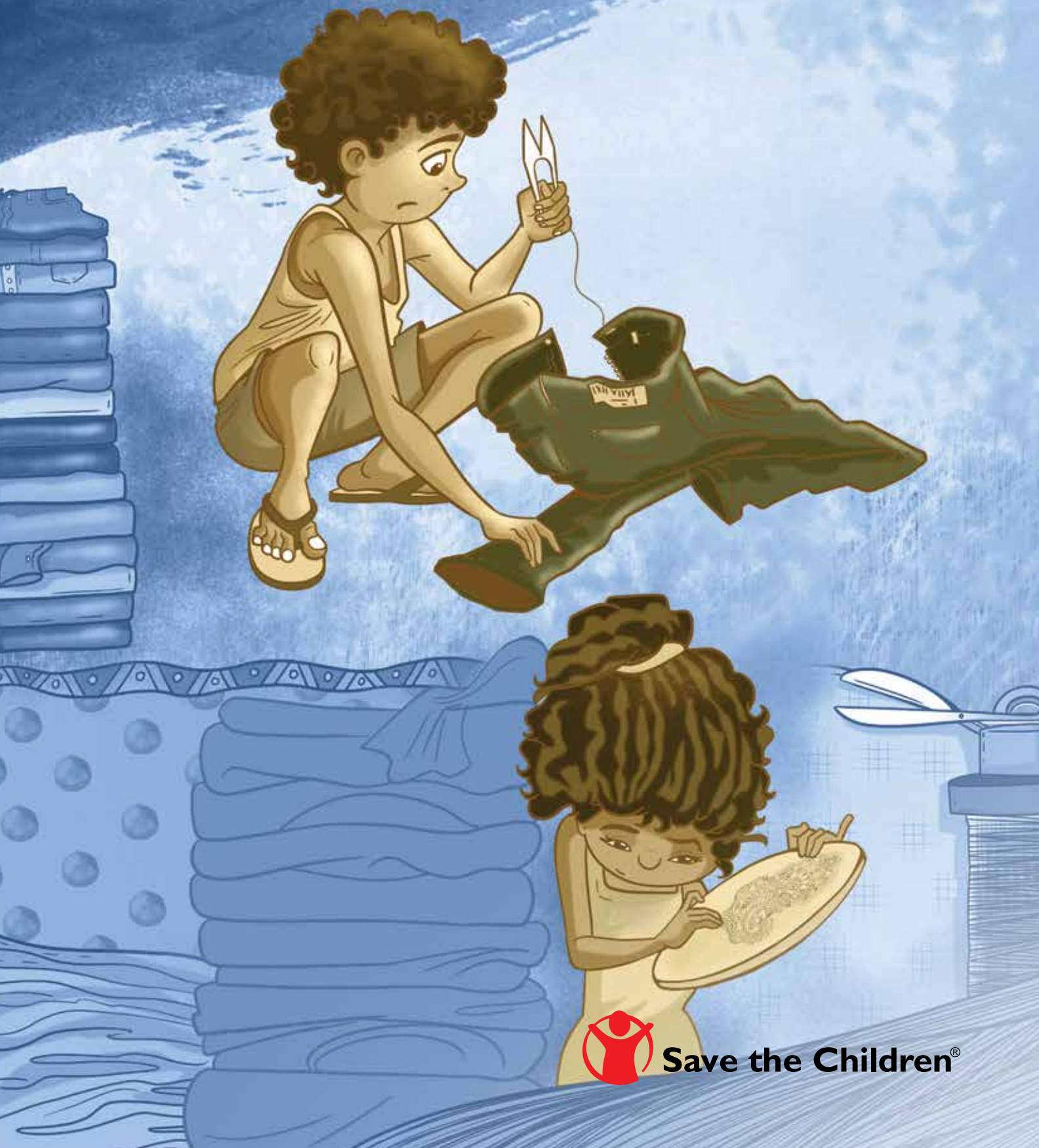


The Hidden Workforce

A Study on Child Labour in the
Garment Industry in Delhi



Save the Children®

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Save the Children works for children's rights. We deliver immediate and lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide.

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Foreword



The Constitution of India entitles every child in this country the right to protection and development. India has also ratified The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to recognise the equal and inalienable rights of all children. The Convention binds the state parties to undertake all appropriate legislative and administrative measures for the implementation of these rights. Article 39, subsection (e) and (f) of the Constitution of India states: *The State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing (e) that the health and strength of workers, men and women, and the tender age of children are not abused and that the citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength; (f) that the children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that the childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.*

In line with the constitutional entitlements, the Government of India and the Ministry of Women and Child Development has taken legislative and policy initiatives to protect children from harmful work with Child Labour (Protection and Regulation) Act 1986 (CLPRA) and its flagship scheme called Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) that came into effect in 2009-10. The Department of Women and Child Development, Government of NCT of Delhi, upholding the responsibility of care and protection to children in difficult circumstances in Delhi, has adopted a multifold approach to provide services and infrastructure for vulnerable children including child labourers.

Despite these steps taken by the government, child labour in India, especially in the capital city of Delhi, continues to pose critical challenges for a large number of children in Delhi in fully realising their right to protection and development. Owing to economic constraints and lack of access to quality education, millions of children are still compelled to drop-out from school at an early age and grow up to join the unskilled workforce.

Although the CLPRA and its amendments have, to some extent, tried to curb the stigma of child labour, there is still a large number of children working as THE HIDDEN WORKFORCE. Across the country, children are involved in informal forms of labour. One such sector that involves informal child labour is the garment industry. This study, *The Hidden Workforce: A Study on Child Labour in the Garment Industry in Delhi*, undertaken by Save the Children illustrates a small but significant extent of home based work taken up by children in the garment industry. As the findings from the report show, children along with their family members spend long hours pasting stones, cutting threads and embroidering on pieces of garments. The cost of children's engagement in informal labour is paid by the rising rate of school drop-outs and participation in the informal economy of the garment industry. It is of extreme importance to recognise the issue of home based child labour. Lack of information and data on state specific child labour, especially home based labour has also acted as an obstacle in undertaking adequate measures to control it.

The Department of Women and Child Development, GNCTD, congratulates Save the Children for successfully undertaking this study and contributing to the knowledge base on child labour in the state of Delhi. This report plays an instrumental role in highlighting the needs of home based child labourers working in the garment industry to all stakeholders, including the garment industry and society at large. It also presents strong evidence on the challenging working conditions of the children, despite being in the family set-up. The Government is committed to take the recommendations from the study into consideration for designing strong interventions on home based child labour and to strengthen policies and legislations on child labour.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandeep Kumar".

Sandeep Kumar
Minister of Women and Child Development
Government of NCT of Delhi

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Abbreviations

AEPC	Apparel Export Promotion Council
CLPRA	Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CWC	Child Welfare Committee
EFRAH	Empowerment for Rehabilitation, Academic and Health
FGD	Focused Group Discussions
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IHD	Institute of Human Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
NCR	National Capital Region
NCTD	National Capital Territory of Delhi
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organisation
PPS	Probability Proportionate to Size
RtE	Right to Free and Compulsory Education, 2009
SBT	Salaam Baalak Trust
SC	Save the Children
SSA	Sarva Siksha Abhiyan
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Right of Children
WFCL	Worst Form of Child Labour
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

Over 168 million children across the world are trapped in the vicious cycle of child labour. Deprived of their basic right to survival, protection, development and participation, these children, between the age group of 5 to 17 years, account for 11% of the world's total child population (International Labour Organisation – International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, 2013).

Despite the decrease in child labour at a global level, Asia and the Pacific region continue to top the chart with 77.7 million child labourers, of which 34 million are reported to be engaged in hazardous occupations (ILO-IPEC, 2013).

India is home to the largest number of child labourers in the world. The Census of India Survey 2011, Government of India (GoI) estimated 11.7 million children aged 5-14 years (4.5% of total children in this age group) to be working under hazardous occupations and processes as main and marginal workers (Census Survey of India, Government of India).

The census data reflects 7% reduction in child labour in India from 2001 to 2011. Similarly, the total number of child labourers in Delhi has also fallen by 7%, from 42,000 in 2001 to 39,000 in 2011. However, it is important to note the simultaneous rise in the work force of the unorganised sector from a mere 8413 in 2001 to 12,466 in 2011. The decadal rise in the number of marginal workers aged 5-14 years in Delhi is almost seven times the decrease in the overall number of child labourers. (Census Survey of India, Government of India, 2011). Despite the reduction in child labour over the past decade, it is difficult to discount the comparative growth of the child labour in the informal sector.

Child Labour in Garment Industry in India

Garment industry is one of the largest employers in the country, generating 1/5th of the total export earnings and contributing to 4% of the country's total GDP. The Economic Survey of India, 2013-14 noted an overall increase of 4,19,000 people in employment from 2012 to 2013 with the highest increase recorded in textiles (including the apparels sector) at the increase of 2,90,000 people.

This study adopts the five tier structure of the garment industry illustrated by a previous study on the garment industry in Delhi undertaken by University of Manchester and Institute of Human Development (IHD) (Phillips, Bhaskaran, Nathan, & Upendranadh, 2011). Amongst the five tier structure, Tier 1, 2 and 3 units comprise the factory units and organised sector of the garment industry. While Tier 1 units cater exclusively to the international market, Tier 2 units cater to both the international and the domestic market. Tier 3 units usually cater to Indian brands and Tier 1 and 2 units. Tier 3 units are usually found in locations adjacent to major export clusters. Tier 4 and 5 units comprise the non-factory and unorganised sector of the garment industry. Tier 4 and 5 units are micro-enterprises and owner operating units, usually unregistered and focusing on a particular outsourced activity such as printing, dyeing, embellishment, tailoring, machine embroidery and button stitching and button hole making.

Child labour in the garment industry is mostly found in the last two tiers, 4 and 5 where children are engaged in primarily two broad categories of work:

1. **Embroidery and embellishment:** Intricate embroidery on handlooms undertaken in *Addas* and home based embellishment work of pasting stones on pieces of readymade garments.
2. **Finishing:** Finishing tasks of a readymade garment before it is shelved in a showroom or clothes shop, like cutting threads from a pair of jeans, children's readymade garments, etc.

Save the Children’s Study on Child labour in the Garment Industry

Child labour in the garment industry is one of the rapidly growing unorganised workforces in cities such as the National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD), also known as the hub of garment export industry in India. Save the Children’s experience of working on child labour in the garment industry has shed light on the emerging phenomenon of informalisation under manufacturing garments units,¹ owing to sub-contracting and outsourcing of work. In addition, poor regulatory framework of the outsourced work has led to children being employed for many economic activities (Watson & Olsen, 2011). Thus, as part of Save the Children’s on-going intervention on protecting the rights of children working in the garment industry in Delhi, this research study has been undertaken. The core objectives of the study have been specified as under.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this research study was to:

- Estimate the number of children working in the garment industry in Delhi
- Understand the working and living conditions of children in the garment industry in Delhi
- Understand the nature of garment industry and its supply chain in Delhi and also to analyse the reasons of child labour perpetuating in the supply chain of the industry
- Suggest a remedial model for withdrawing children from labour in garment industry

Geographical Coverage of the Study

Using a mix of quantitative and qualitative research methods, a study has been conducted across 5 districts and 14 locations in Delhi.

S.No.	14 Locations	5 Districts
1	Gandhi Nagar	East Delhi
2	Geeta Colony	
3	Kailash Nagar	
4	Usmanpur/Seelampur	North-East Delhi
5	Chandni Chowk	Central Delhi
6	Pratapnagar	
7	Chandni Mahal	
8	Khirki	South Delhi
9	Shahpur Jat	
10	Batla House	South-East Delhi
11	Tuglaqabad Extension	
12	Okhla	
13	Sangam Vihar	
14	Madanpur Khadar	

¹ See Olsen, Wendy, et. al., “Informality and Institutional Change in Child Labour: An Indian Case Study”; University of Manchester, 2011.

Study Approach

The study adopted a mixed method approach involving both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection.

1. Quantitative Household Survey
2. Focused Group Discussions
3. Key Informant Interviews
4. Participant Observation
5. Desk Review

Study Sample

Quantitative data collection: A two stage sampling process was followed for quantitative data collection, listing of households and in-depth interviews with child labourers and their parents/guardians. The initial target of quantitative study was 7 children from 30 clusters across the state, i.e., 210 child labourers. In the absence of any existing house listing or household data, the sampling technique was modified and the targeted was revised to 170 child labourers across 14 locations in 5 districts mentioned above.

Modification for quantitative study sample: The census enumeration blocks from the census sample frame were listed. 5% sample from the total number of census enumeration blocks (918) was chosen and the samples were distributed across locations based on the Probability Proportionate to Size to arrive at the total number of sample blocks. In each of these blocks (sampling unit), house listing of all households ranging from 100 to 150 was undertaken. Amongst these blocks, those areas were identified through field visits and support from local NGOs where garment industry work was practically non-existent to be excluded from the sample.

Qualitative data collection: A purposive sampling process was followed for qualitative data collection including 9 focused group discussions with children and parents, 17 key informant interviews with owners of garment units and 25 discussions with key stakeholders such as Childline, Child Welfare Committees, civil society representatives and academicians working on child labour.

Key Findings

Some of the key findings from the study are as follows:

- **Number of children working in the garment industry in Delhi**
 - It is estimated that a total of **8044** children are engaged in garment related activities, spread over five districts

Okhla Ward, South-East District	1922	Highest number of children
Tuglaqabad Ward	241	Least number of children
Chandni Chowk, Chandni Mahal and Pratapnagar in Central Delhi district	0	Units from these locations have been moved out

- **Profile of Child Labour in Garment Industry**
 - Child labour in the garment industry is found in two locales in the unorganised sector (Tier 4 and 5) of the garment industry:

- **Households** – Unskilled work is undertaken by children along with women and other family members to supplement the family income (e.g., thread cutting).
- **Addas** – Small household based units, where a group of workers, children and adults unrelated to each other worked together (e.g., embellishment, embroidery etc.)
- A significantly higher number of children seem to be engaged in household level work with 87% children working in households while 13% working in *Addas*.
- 64% children stated to have lived in the city since birth. However, their families were noted to have earlier migrated to Delhi from states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal. 36 percent children reported to have migrated from these four states.

Children in Delhi since birth	64%	Families migrated from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal
Migrant children	36%	Children migrated from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal

- Within the household level, 69% children working with their family members were girls.
- 92% of children, who worked in their families, were presently enrolled in formal and/or non-formal education; and 45% of those working in small units had attended school at some point in their lives.
- **Reasons for child labour perpetuating in the supply chain of the garment industry**
 - Supplementing the household income was the major reason for their engagement in child labour in this sector. 61% of children working at home and 50% of those working at *Addas* stated economic factors.
 - While children mostly denied being forced to work, the financial circumstances prevailing in the family seemed to passively exert pressure on them to contribute in the family.
 - Lack of interest in education was another reason for children to work. 50% of those working at *Addas* and 22% of those working at home reported working due to lack of interest in education; 82% said that given an opportunity, they would not like to attend school.
- **Working and living conditions of children in the garment industry in Delhi**
 - Almost all children live and work in poor conditions in terms of exposure to risks and hazards like loud noise, poor lighting, poor ventilation and sharp tools.
 - Some children complained of back pain, having to work long hours, poor posture and deteriorating eye sight were a few health problems faced during work. Very few reported issues of abuse; just 11% of the respondents said that they ‘rarely’ faced verbal or physical abuse.
 - Most of the children were poorly paid and received no benefits; 36% of those working at home were not paid at all. Of the 64% who were paid, 36% were paid less than Rs. 100 a month. For those working at *Addas*, the monthly income varied from Rs. 1000 to 5000.
 - 80% of the respondents reported that they themselves decided to undertake work, given the poor economic conditions of the family; just one reported to be forced into work. In fact 92% respondents reported that they were ‘happy’ about the work they were doing.
 - Awareness on issues of child labour and Right to Education (RtE) was high among all respondents; with more than 78% respondents being aware of the Right to Education and that it is illegal for children below the age of 14 years to be employed.

Recommendations

Based on the study, a **five pronged remedial model** is recommended to address issues of children in the garment industry:

1. Addressing Knowledge and Skills of Children

- 1.1 Learning centers for child labourers
- 1.2 Diversification of income generating opportunities towards decent work through vocational training and skill building
- 1.3 Knowledge on child rights, life skills and legal entitlements
- 1.4 Enhancing quality of education in elementary school

2. Community based approach

- 2.1 Creating women and youth groups
- 2.2 Large scale awareness campaign
- 2.3 Establishing contact/nodal points in hot-spots

3. Addressing issues of child labour

- 3.1 Rehabilitation, tacking and monitoring of children in source locations
- 3.2 Convergent approach towards child labour

4. Advocacy

- 4.1 With National and state governments towards better implementation of child labour legislations, livelihood schemes and skill development programmes in rural areas to curb child labour
- 4.2 With Corporate sector and key stakeholders in garment industry towards zero tolerance on child rights violation in the garment industry supply chain and adherence to child rights and business principles

5. Addressing the larger environment leading towards child labour

- 5.1 Establishment of women self help groups
- 5.2 Systems for child protection
- 5.3 Avenues for urban employment
- 5.4 Linking families to schemes for social entitlements

1.1 Global and National Estimates of Child Labour

There are 168 million child labourers worldwide between the age group 5 to 17 years accounting for 11% of the world's child population (International Labour Organization – International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, 2013). International Labour Organization's global report on child labour in 2013, *Marking Progress Against Child Labour: Global Estimates and Trends 2000-2012*, notes downward trend in the global figure of the total number of child labourers.

This trend can be attributed to stringent implementation of child labour legislation across the world and increasing awareness among employers on the prohibition of employing children for economic purposes. Nonetheless, Asia and the Pacific region continue to be top rankers in the number of child labourers at 77.7 million, of which 34 million are reported to be engaged in hazardous occupations.

The global downward trend in child labour is also reflected in Government of India's Census Survey, 2011.¹ India has been disreputed to be the home to the largest number of child labourers in the world. The Census of India Survey 2011, Government of India (GoI) estimates 11.7 million children aged 5-14 years (4.5% of total children in this age group) to be working under hazardous occupations and processes as main and marginal workers (Census Survey of India, Government of India).

There has been 7% reduction in the official number of child labour from 2001 to 2011. While the government's statistics record a conservative estimate on the number of working children in the nation, unofficial figures depict a strikingly different portrait, marking it up to anywhere between 40 to 60 million. Further, a report by National Commission for Enterprises in Unorganised Sector in 2007 estimates potential child labour to be around 45 million (18% of total child population in 2004-05), accounting for the out of school children in India (National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector, 2009).

Ministry of Human Resource Development report in 2011-12 quotes 193 million children enrolled in elementary education, 40 million short of the total number of children aged 6-14 years (Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, 2012). Child labour is often labeled as a complex issue for development workers as well as statisticians. One of the explanations for varying number of child labour in various reports whether official or unofficial is the accepted definition of child labour.

The official estimates consider working children as only those children who contribute towards the national product based on the economic accounting model; this number is thus a limited figure and the actual number of children engaged in labour is certainly much higher. National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) 66th round survey's (2009-2010) claim on declaring Delhi to be a 'girl child labour free' state is a case in point. Despite the official under-estimation of India's working children, it is pertinent to note the changing dynamics of child labour within the current scenario.

¹ From 12.6 million child labourers in 2001, India is reported to now have witnessed a 7% decrease in the number of child labourers according to the latest Census Survey, 2011.



Although there has been 7.5% drop in the official reported number of child labourers from 2001 to 2011, there has been an equally proportionate rise in the number of marginal child labourers since 2001 (7%). This inverted relationship between main and marginal workers only magnifies when the focus is shifted to the National Capital Territory of Delhi.

The total number of child labourers in Delhi is recorded to be 39,000 based on the latest census data. The decadal rise in the number of marginal workers aged 5-14 years is almost seven times the decrease in the overall number of child labourers. While the total number of child labourers in Delhi is reported to have reduced from 42,000 in 2001 to 39,000 in 2011, the number of marginal child labourers has increased from 8413 to 12,466 (Census Survey of India, Government of India).

Delhi's Human Development Report 2013 also notes that 'most of the employment generation (around 85% of the total, which includes self-employed) in Delhi has taken place in the unorganised informal sector' (Institute of Human Development, 2013). Undoubtedly, such an analysis underscores the escalating number of children moving to the informal economy. Under reporting in the Government data can also be a result of a large number of children working in the unorganised sector as *hidden workforce*, beyond the purview of the Census of India.

1.2 Hidden Workforce: Child Labour in the Garment Industry

Child labour in the garment industry is one of the unorganised workforces rapidly growing in cities like National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi, also known as the hub of garment export industry in the country. Save the Children's experience of working on child labour in the garment industry has shed light on the emerging phenomenon of informalisation under manufacturing garments units² owing to sub-contracting and outsourcing work.

In addition, poor regulatory framework of the outsourced work has led to children being employed in many economic activities. IHD's working paper no. 42 on child labour in Zardosi industry quotes the Labour Commission Report of the Government of India, 2001 acknowledging the engagement of child labour in informal sector. *In recent years much of the paid work that used to be outside the home has now been transferred to home-based work. There has been a tremendous rise in home-based work in the last few decades and many activities like carpet-weaving, match-making and glass works which used to be done in factories and sheds are now done by children within their homes*' (Mehta & Sherry, 2009).

While the law does prohibit the use of child labour in certain occupations and processes, it also states in reference to Section 3 of Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 that '*nothing in this section shall apply to any workshop wherein any process is carried on by the occupier with the aid of his family...*' In other words, prohibition of child labour is not applicable at the household level. This, as the report later unfolds, has significant implications on children in the context of the garment industry.

1.3 Defining Child Labour

UNCRC Article 32 seeks agreement from State Parties '*to recognise the right of the child³ to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development*' (CRC, United Nations Human Rights, 1989). International Labour Organization's (ILO) definition of child labour includes

² See Olsen, Wendy; et. al., "Informality and Institutional Change in Child Labour: An Indian Case Study"; University of Manchester, 2011.

³ Where child is defined as all persons under the age of 18 years.



those in worst forms of child labour (WFCL)⁴ and children in employment below the minimum age, excluding children in permissible light work, if applicable. Child labour forms a part of a wider concept of child work, where children engage in any economic activity for at least one hour during the reference period.⁵



Hazardous work by children is any activity or occupation that, by its nature or type, has or leads to adverse

effects on the child's safety, health (physical or mental) and moral development. (ILO - International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, 2013 (For further information, refer to Convention 182 and Recommendation 190 on Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment). For developing countries, the bar for minimum age of employing children is reduced to 14 years. The convention allows children to do light work between 13 to 15 years as long as it does not affect their health and safety. This is close to the Indian legal position on child labour. However, most western countries subscribe to the notion of children as below 18 years of age. Many garment units, which rely almost entirely on the export market, display a board indicating that persons below 18 years are not employed. In other words, many of these units are bound by the rules of the markets to which they export.

According to the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, amended in 2012, employment of children under the age of 14 years in all forms of labour and employment of adolescents (those who have completed the age of 14 but yet not attained the age of 18 years) in hazardous occupations and processes has been banned. The Amendment bill, 2012 puts a blanket ban on employment of children in 18 listed hazardous occupations and 65 processes. Those above the age of 14 years can be employed only in non-hazardous occupations and processes. The Factories Act bars children below 14 from working in factories. However, these aforementioned laws allow the leeway for children to be engaged at the household level. *The amendment of section 3 of the said Act to prohibit employment of children in all occupations and processes except where the child helps his family after his school hours or helps his family in fields, home-based work, forest gathering or attends technical institutions during vacations for the purpose of learning, but does not include any help or attending technical institutions where there is subordinate relationship of labour or work which are outsourced and carried out in home'* (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2013).

Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 makes education a fundamental right for children between the ages of 6 and 14 years. A child between the ages of 15 to 18 years can be engaged

⁴ Worst Form of Child Labour is taken as proxy to hazardous work by ILO. Hazards could also derive from excessive workload, physical conditions of work, and/or work intensity in terms of the duration or hours of work even where the activity or occupation is known to be non-hazardous or "safe".

⁵ It includes forms of work in both the formal and informal economy; inside and outside family settings; work for pay or profit (in cash or in kind, part-time or full-time), or as a domestic worker outside the child's own household for an employer (with or without pay).



DISHA – Ensuring Compliance to Western Standards

Several western countries like the USA have raised concerns regarding the usage of child labour in production houses in developing countries. The US and the European Union together account for 80% of India's total apparel exports. Therefore, an initiative "DISHA" - Driving Industry Towards Sustainable Human Capital Advancement has been launched by Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) for the qualitative assessment of Indian garment manufacturers. The initiative will encourage Indian manufacturers to follow better social practices, which will give them a competitive edge in the global market.

With DISHA in progress, India is well placed to emerge as one of the most compliant sourcing destinations among the developing nations and will be able to meet all the compliance challenges. Under the programme, the units would be encouraged to adopt improved production systems and worker's productivity. The important focus of DISHA is to issue certification which states that the industry has complied with all social compliances as per international standards. Some of the compliances in the industry are:

- Prohibition of child/forced labour
- Non-discrimination
- Proper working environment
- Proper wages and working hours

Source: <http://indian-garment-industry.tumblr.com/> (June 26, 2014)

in labour but is subject to restrictions. In 2012, the state of Rajasthan passed a historic legislation establishing a legal minimum working age of 18 years.⁶

1.4 Save the Children's Definition of Child Labour

Save the Children understands child work as a continuum, ranging from harmful to decent work.⁷ This has led the organisation to identify three broad categories of work requiring different responses to protect the rights of children. These categories include:

- Work where harm is extreme and the violation of rights is impossible to prevent which requires the urgent removal of children from work and the provision of assistance to children and their families so that they can transition to sustainable alternatives or urgent harm reduction measures where immediate removal is not possible.
- Work where rights are violated but the prevention of these violations is possible which may require an improvement in working conditions or the provision of assistance to children and their families so as to help them transition to sustainable alternatives.
- Work where rights are not violated and may contribute to the fulfillment of rights which requires the provision of support to children engaged in decent work.

(Save the Children's Position Statement, The Protection of Children from Harmful Work, 2013)

Save the Children's definitions of child work range on the continuum of harmful work to decent work as per the above mentioned categories. Many child protection audiences, including donors and other stakeholders, are more familiar with the internationally recognised International Labor Organization

⁶ The Rajasthan Government taking the Juvenile Justice Act which defines any one below the age of 18 years as a child, has promulgated the law and has also formulated a SOP to address the issue in the state, See Times of India, August 26, 2012.

⁷ Decent work involves opportunities for work that are productive and deliver a fair income. Decent work should provide security in the workplace and social protection for families, rights at work, social dialogue, and better prospects for personal development and social integration.



(ILO) categories, including the Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) (first bullet), hazardous child labour (second bullet), and child work (third bullet).

Based on Save the Children's position statement and National legislative context around child labour in India, child labour in the context of this research study is defined as "any work undertaken by children below or of the age of 14 years where harm is extreme and the violation of rights is impossible to prevent and any work undertaken by children in the age group of 15 to 18 years where rights are violated but the prevention of these violations is possible by either improving working conditions or providing assistance to children and families."

1.5 Study Objectives

Save the Children has been working on the issue of child protection worldwide and in India for many decades. Save the Children's Theory of Change guides the organisation's work to create impact for children by:

1. Being their voice
2. Being innovators in the field
3. Achieving results at scale through building partnerships with children, civil society organisations, government and communities

In line with the Theory of Change, the organisation adopts an approach of gradual withdrawal of child labour deploying preventive and curative measures.

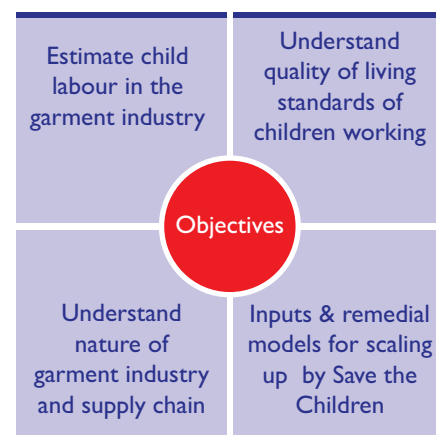
Under the approach of gradual withdrawal, child labourers aged 6-14 years are encouraged to enhance their learning skills, life skills before enrolling into formal education system. Adolescents in the age group of 15 to 18 years are equipped with marketable vocational skills aiming towards decent work. To ensure a protective environment for these children, key stakeholders like their parents, immediate community, employers, and police are empowered to better help the children in accessing their rights. To amplify children's voices for attaining child rights, the organisation advocates and campaigns for better policies and practices in favour of the rights of children.

In Delhi, under the thematic focus area of child protection, Save the Children has been working on the issue of street children (children on the move) and child labour prevalent in two forms: Child Labour in Garment Industry and Child Domestic Workers. Since 2011, Save the Children has been implementing a project on Child Labour in Garment Industry in four intervention areas in East and South-East district. The purpose of the intervention is to identify and gradually withdraw children from labour in the garment industry in Delhi and to ensure that key stakeholders such as the government institutions, industry, employers and community better understand the issue and address it.

As part of this intervention, Save the Children has undertaken this research study to enumerate the number of children currently working in the garment industry in Delhi. This study follows Save the Children's seminal study on estimating Delhi's street children in 2012, *Surviving the Streets*, wherein it was found that 87% of street children are working children.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To estimate the number of child labourers working in the garment industry in the state of Delhi.
2. To study the quality of living standards of child labour in the garment industry and their families.





3. To understand the nature of garment industry and its supply chain in Delhi to analyse the reasons of child labour perpetuating in the supply chain of the industry.
4. To suggest what are the medial model for withdrawing children from labour in the garment industry.

This study report consists of the following sections:

- a. Study methodology and data collection.
- b. The overall context of child labour, specifically in the garment industry in Delhi, various policies and provisions to address child labour.
- c. The supply chain and extent of the garment industry in Delhi.
- d. Study findings – estimate of child labour in Delhi, their living and working conditions; issues and reasons for persistence of child labour in the garment industry, perspectives of stakeholders on the issue.
- e. Efforts of several organisations in addressing the issue.
- f. Suggestions and recommendations.

Data Collection – Methods and Issues

Based on the objectives of the study as described in the introductory chapter, a mixed method approach involving both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection was used for the study. The various study methods are as detailed in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Methods of data collection used for the study

S.No.	Study Tools	Category of Respondent	Type of Research Methodology
1.	Quantitative Household Survey	Child Labour in garment industry and their parents/guardians	Quantitative
2.	Focussed Group Discussions (FGDs)	Community members	Qualitative
3.	Key Informant Interviews	Garment Industry Stakeholders: Factory owners, Household and Small Unit Heads	Qualitative
		CSOs, CWCs, District Task Force members, Childline	Qualitative
4.	Participant Observation	Household Units	Qualitative
5.	Desk Review		Quantitative+Qualitative

2.1 Study Area

Discussions were held with various civil society organisations, Childline and other key stakeholders to determine the hot spots for child labour in Delhi; based on which and in consultation with Save the Children, the study locations were finalised.

14 locations spread over five districts of Delhi were finalised for the study so as to ensure that a district level estimate of child labour could be generated.

The quantitative survey, as well as qualitative data collection was conducted across the listed 14 locations (as given in Table 2.2). However, based on interactions during initial visits and while initiating quantitative data collection, it was observed that there is practically no garment manufacturing related work being done by children in Chandni Chowk and Chandni Mahal areas;¹ majority of the work has been shifted out to other locations. This has been a result of several raids by Child Labour Task Force in this area (known to Save the Children based on its experience of working there). Based on information from local informants and civil society representatives and field visits, some qualitative interactions were also conducted in the Nabi Karim area near New Delhi railway station. However, it was found extremely challenging to navigate the area and to identify the locations and units where children are engaged. Hence, the location was excluded from the survey.

¹ They are now restricted to being just market areas; details provided in section 3.3.

**Table 2.2: Study locations²**

District	Location
East	1. Gandhi Nagar 2. Geeta Colony 3. Kailash Nagar
North-East Delhi	4. Usmanpur/Seelampur
Central	5. Chandni Chowk 6. Pratapnagar 7. Chandni Mahal
South	8. Khirki 9. Shahpurjat
South-East Delhi	10. Batla House 11. Tughalqabad Extension 12. Okhla 13. Sangam Vihar 14. Madanpur Khadar

2.2 Study Sample

A two-stage sampling process was followed for *quantitative data collection*:

1. Listing of households
2. In-depth Interviews with child labourers and their parents/guardians

Based on the WHO 30*7 sampling technique, the initial sampling process proposed was to identify 30 clusters from across the state, and identify 7 children in each cluster, i.e., 210 children, which would form the study sample. However, in the absence of any house-listing and household data in any of the locations, this sampling technique was modified and the following arrangement was decided.

Modified sampling technique and process used for identification of child labour:

- In the absence of an available household listing for each location, the census sample frame for each of these locations was obtained and census enumeration blocks as given in the sample-frame were listed.
- Initial field visits were conducted in all the key locations and with the help of local NGOs and community members, those smaller localities within each of these locations were identified where garment-related activities are undertaken. For example, in Sangam Vihar, with the help of local NGO, the locality where the garment related activities are undertaken was identified.
- From the listing of the census enumeration blocks, based on interactions with local NGOs and community members, as described above, localities such as DDA colonies (where more economically stable population reside and the likelihood of children engaging in work is practically non-existent) and market areas were excluded from the survey. The remaining census enumeration blocks from the listing formed the sampling frame in each of the locations (Table 2.3).
- The total number of census enumeration blocks listed across all locations was 918; from which 5%³ sample was chosen and the samples were distributed across locations based on the Probability Proportionate to Size (PPS) to arrive at the total number of sample blocks.

² Classification based on Delhi Government classification of districts and locations – data obtained from ‘official – deputy commissioners websites for each district’ – North, North-West, West, South-West, East, North-East, Central and New Delhi districts.

³ Minimum required for a representative and statistically significant sample.



- In each of these blocks (sampling unit), there were about 100 to 150 households; all of these households in each block were listed.
- A starting point was identified in each of these blocks; effort was made to identify local landmarks such as temples, community centers, shops etc. Based on the right hand thumb rule, all households in the block were listed, starting at the identified points.
- For the interviews with child labourers and their parents/guardians; the number of children undertaking garment related work, as identified from the listing process, were proportionately distributed across all locations. A total of 170 such children were identified across the 14 locations.

A purposive sampling process was followed for qualitative data collection. Table 2.4 presented below provides an overview of the qualitative interactions conducted.

In addition, visits were made to each of the locations, during which, observations of small home based and other garment units were conducted; work undertaken at a household level were observed, and informal interactions were conducted with women and children undertaking garment related work.

The thumb rule for qualitative data collection, i.e., ‘saturation’, when responses begin to repeat; was used as the basis to conduct qualitative interactions. Although formal and informal interactions were conducted with several stakeholders – women, children, workers and owners in garment units, Childline, civil society representatives, members of Child Welfare Committees etc.; the study team limited the interactions once it was felt that the responses had saturated.

Table 2.3: Sample – No. of sampling units/blocks chosen

Districts	Area	No. of Census Units	No. of Sample Units chosen
East	Geeta Colony	82	4
East	Gandhi Nagar	41	2
East	Kailash Nagar	27	1
North East	Usmanpur	22	1
Central Delhi	Chandni Chowk	33	1
Central Delhi	Chandni Mahal	5	1
Central Delhi	Pratap Nagar	14	1
South Delhi	Khirkhi Extension	35	2
South Delhi	Shahpur Jat	22	1
South East	Tughlaqabad Extension	89	5
South East	Batla House	35	2
South East	Okhla Village	11	1
South East	Madanpur Khadar	53	3
South East	Sangam Vihar	449	22
Total		918	47

Table 2.4: Sample – Qualitative data collection

Method	Number of interactions
Focus group discussions	9
Key Informant Interviews with owners/workers of garment units	17
Interactions with key stakeholders	
Child line	3
Child Welfare Committees	3
Civil society representatives	16
Academicians working on child labour	3
Total	51



2.3 Study Tools

This section specifies the study tools used while developing the report (Table 2.5).

Table 2.5: Study Tools

Study tool	Category of Respondent/s	Key issues/aspects of interaction
Schedule – Rapid house-listing	Any household member	Basic household details to determine number of children and if and how many children are engaged in garment related activities
Schedule – Rapid listing – for household based units	Any member of small/ household based units	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Details on activities undertaken as a part of the unit 2. Children below the age of 18 years and their involvement in various garment related activities
Survey schedule	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Child labourers 2. Parents/guardians of child labourer 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engagement – place of work and activities undertaken by children in the garment industry 2. Work conditions, risks and hazards and benefits 3. Education 4. Introduction to; and perspectives on work and satisfaction
Focus group discussion guideline	Community members/women	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aspects of supply chain and garment related work across locations in Delhi 2. Involvement of women, household members, children in garment related activities 3. Work and living conditions 4. Perspectives on child labourers
Key Informant Interview guideline	Owners/workers in garment units	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supply chain and organisation of the garment industry and garment related work 2. Involvement of children, households in garment related work 3. Child labour in the garment industry
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Child Welfare Committee/ Child lines 2. Civil society representatives 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issue of child labour in Delhi and specifically in the garment industry 2. Role of various stakeholders in addressing some of these issues 3. Policies and programs to protect/ address issues of child labour 4. Perspectives on children engaged in labour

2.4 Issues and Challenges During Data Collection

Undertaking research on child labour has always been demanding and challenging (Mehta & Sherry, 2009), but this has been exacerbated with increasing surveillance and work by civil society organisations. The community, contractors and owners of small units who engage children in work are often hostile. Further, all child labourers are trained to respond to inquiries regarding their age by stating that they are older than 14 years.

Several issues and challenges were faced by the study team while undertaking both qualitative and quantitative data collection. Some of the key issues faced during the data collection have been mentioned below.

1. **Unavailability of household level data:** The unavailability of any appropriate information on the number of households or house-listing in the study locations meant that there was no sample frame for selecting the sample of the study. To overcome this, locations where the garment industry is



located were identified based on the initial field visits. Further, census enumeration blocks for these locations were listed. Given the number of blocks for each location, sample blocks were drawn based on the PPS. In each of these blocks, the houses were listed and children working in the garment activities were identified.

2. ***Resistance from respondents to discuss child labour:*** Severe resistance was faced in most locations, especially as no one wanted to reveal the details of working children on record. With increasing awareness of general community on the legal repercussions of employing child labour, respondents did not feel comfortable to discuss the issue with the field team. For instance, in some locations, women respondents for Focused Group Discussions initially said that they do not work in garment related activity. On further probing during the discussion, their responses were elicited. In informal household units, the owners were not ready to have the children interviewed.

Further, possibility of police raids, sealing and arrests, the issue of children in labour is hidden in secrecy. Since the study locations were informal household units and households of immediate families/guardians of child labourers, the resistance to acknowledge the presence of working children let alone openly talk about it was a huge challenge faced by the team. During field visits, in several locations children were made to hide in order to prove absence of child labour in a given unit. The team also witnessed children running away to hide on seeing the study team approaching the site. During interactions at the household units and households, the issue had to be approached indirectly and with appropriate sensitivity so as to avoid respondents turning hostile to the team.

Some of these issues were overcome by repeated visits, during different stages of data collection of the study locations. Initial visits were made to understand the location and activities undertaken in each of the locations. The support of the local NGOs, where available, was taken to approach households. At times unannounced and surprise visits were conducted in some of the study locations to observe small units and households, so that the investigators could directly observe; on the spot informal interactions were also conducted with women and children, this helped triangulate findings from interviews and interactions. In addition, care was taken to train and sensitise the field team on the issue; only experienced investigators were deployed to conduct the detailed interactions with children and their parents/caregivers. All qualitative interactions with owners of garment units, observations etc., were conducted by technical experts and members of the core-team of the research assignment.

Thus, several challenges faced by the team while conducting the data collection for the study were overcome using alternative methods and techniques. Efforts taken by the team to approach the issue during several visits and local contacts helped inform the larger picture and gain perspectives on the issue of hidden workforce of child labour.

2.5 Limitations of the study

Some of the limitations of the study are described as follows:

- Absence of household listing data constrained the process of drawing a representative sample.
- Secrecy of the issue, hostility of respondents and lack of an open environment to discuss the issue of child labour with the children, limited the understanding of inner nuances and issues of child labour, especially in the context of a small unit. For instance, it was practically impossible to interview a child working in a small unit in an unsupervised environment.
- The informal nature of child labour in garment industry resulted in scant responses from government duty-bearers and NGOs. Hence, in the absence of larger civil society engagement on the issue, assessing the efficacy of any intervention was acutely limited.

Garment Industry in Delhi

3.1 Economic and Traditional Resource: Garment Industry in Delhi

Garment industry is one of the largest employer in the country generating one fifth of the total export earnings and contributing to 4% of the total GDP. It is the largest industrial sector of the country (Ministry of Textiles, 2005) (Chandra, 2005). The Economic Survey of India, 2013-14 notes an overall increase of 4,19,000 in employment in December 2013 over December 2012 with the highest increase recorded in textiles including the apparels sector (2,90,000). The National capital of the country, Delhi, is considered as one of five garment production hubs in India, along with Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai and Tirupur/Coimbatore. Each city is renowned for its specialisation in unique varieties of garment production. Delhi is one of the 'industrial clusters' of the garment industry because of the export concentration in the capital city.

The economic significance of the industry is linked to the traditional artisanal skill of tailoring prevalent in Delhi since the Mughal reign. It nearly vanished during the colonial rule as a consequence of the surge in imports of fabric during the same time. The garment industry regained its popularity after the 1980s with the establishment of the Multi Fiber Agreement in 1974, mainly to flourish garment exports.

In Delhi, the garment industry is predominantly export driven catering primarily to the international market and some local markets within the country. The state contributes to 60% of all India garment exports (Ribhu & Agrawal, 2010-11). A study on the garment industry in Delhi undertaken by University of Manchester and Institute of Human Development (IHD) quoted Barrientos et al., 2010¹ while stating that Delhi accounts for around a third of national garments production (registered and unregistered production combined) and 18% of garments enterprises in India in 1990 (Phillips, Bhaskaran, Nathan, & Upendranadh, 2011).

This chapter provides an overview of the organisation and supply-chain of the garment industry in Delhi. This builds up the context to understand the larger issue of involvement of children in the unorganised workforce, location, work conditions, and remuneration.

3.2 Organisation of Garment Industry in Delhi

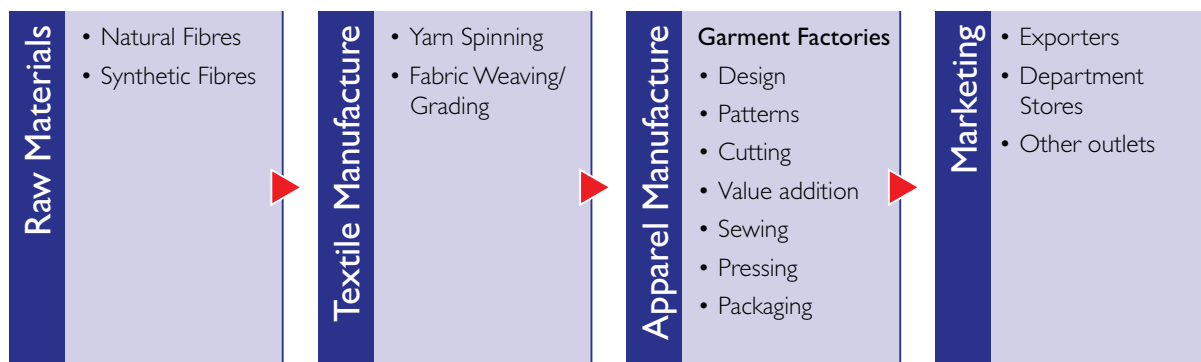
In order to contextualise and understand the garment industry and its organisation in Delhi, it is useful to understand the overall value chain of the industry. The entire process of garment manufacturing can be categorised under four levels illustrated in Figure 3.1.

Amongst the four levels of the value chain, Delhi specialises in apparel manufacture. Under apparel manufacturing, in addition to the processes of cutting and stitching, it has value addition through embellishment and/or embroidery work.

¹ *Capturing the Gain*, 'Economic and Social Upgrading in Global Production Networks: Developing a Framework for Analysis.' By Stephanie Barrientos, Gary Gereffi, and Arianna Rossi, July 2013. Pub by University of Manchester, Duke University and ILO.



Figure 3.1: The process of garment manufacturing



In terms of geographical spread of the industry, Delhi's garment industry is fragmented and multi-layered. It is spread across the entire National Capital Region (NCR), as far as Faridabad on one side to Gurgaon on the other.

The supply chain in Delhi forms a pyramid. At the top of the chain is the exporter/merchant who is directly linked to the international buyer or to the large garment companies in the country. The exporters can be both manufactures and merchants. The latter does not own any production facilities but sub contracts the work to many smaller producers, while a manufacturer has a production facility. It is also likely that the exporter may straddle both the manufacturing and mercantile roles; in other words, having own production facility and in addition sub contracting manufacturing to the various smaller producers. The non-mechanised household units and the households which do specific tasks come at the bottom of the pyramid. This is described in detail later in the study.

3.3 Organised and Unorganised Sector of Garment Industry

The garment industry in Delhi has both the organised and unorganised sectors. The organised sector comprises of registered units and manufacturers governed by the regulatory mechanisms. The unorganised sector is just as huge and active as the organised sector thriving on the phenomenon of sub-contracting and outsourcing within the value chain. At the level of apparel manufacturing, not all the processes listed in Figure 3.1 form a part of the organised sector of the garment industry. As mentioned above, embellishment and embroidery work form a significant part of the manufacturing process. Following sections will explore the types of work undertaken by the informal labour.

3.3.1 Sub-contracting and/or Outsourcing

Sub-contracting parts of apparel manufacturing process is a characteristic feature in the garment industry. Since most of Delhi's garments are exported to foreign markets, there is a boost in the demand during peak season. Delhi being the manufacturer of cotton garments has seasonal significance in the international market. Therefore, when manufacturing factories face an overload of orders, the work is outsourced to meet the given delivery time. Small manufacturing units do not decline the order from larger domestic manufacturing firms but resort to further outsourcing a part of the order to households, owing to limitation of their production capacity. Further, in absence of available production facilities in the case of garment merchants, in receiving an order, the work is outsourced. Outsourcing work involves sub-contracting the order to a smaller manufacturing unit or local contractor. Both of these can be a source of getting work for labourers who operate within their homes or as part of a small household unit, where a group of workers, not related by family, work on different tasks in manufacturing apparels.

Phillips et al., 2011 elucidate in their study on the concept of 'adverse incorporation' in the employment in garment industry with a resulting feature of intergeneration cycle of poverty. Adverse incorporation



in employment under garment industry refers to those incidents of employment of a set of labourers in an industry, where their employment does not give them economic prosperity but confines them to a cycle of intergenerational poverty (Phillips, Bhaskaran, Nathan, & Upendranadh, 2011). Outsourcing to informal household units and families engaged in garment industry results in their life long service to the informal sector, without earning enough to exit this form of labour. This adverse incorporation of unskilled labour results in engagement of child labour in the garment industry. The following section unfolds prevalence of child labour in specific tiers of the garment manufacturing industry.

3.4 Five Tier Structure of Garment Manufacturing Industry

The IHD and University of Manchester study has also provides a five tier structure of the garment manufacturing units/firms in Delhi. This study adopts the five tier structure illustrated in Table 3.1.²

As can be seen from the framework, Type 1, 2 and 3 units comprise of the factory units and organised sector of the garment industry. The largest, Type 1 units and medium sized Type 2 units are found predominantly in Okhla in Delhi; however, given high rental costs in Delhi, many of these units are now moving out to Noida, Faridabad and Gurgaon. While, Type 1 units cater exclusively to the international market, Type 2 units cater to both the international and the domestic market. Such units employ large number of workers, managerial staff, with written contracts, HR benefits and good wages; depending on the workload they may also hire workers on a fixed-term seasonal contract or on daily wage. These units have the capacity to undertake all activities from design to delivery and maintain high quality standards; only in-case of orders beyond the capacity of the unit, are some activities such as stitching, printing, dyeing, washing/ironing etc., outsourced to other factory units.

Therefore, Type 1 and 2 units operate in a child-labour free zone and do not employ anyone under the age of 18 years in their factory premises. Catering to an international market, they adhere to the

Table 3.1: The five tier structure of garment manufacturing industry

Unit Type	Details
Type 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factories with state of the art facilities in industrial estates • Catering to global brands and the international market • Undertake complete range of activities from design to shipment/delivery • Outsource activities such as embellishment, thread cutting etc., to the unorganised sector
Type 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factories with state of the art facilities in industrial estates • Catering to global and high end Indian brands and the Indian and international market • Undertake complete range of activities from design to shipment/delivery • Outsource activities such as embellishment, thread cutting etc., to the unorganised sector
Type 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factories with state of the art facilities in industrial estates • Catering to Type 1 and 2 units, Indian brands; primarily in the Indian market and indirectly catering to international markets • For Indian brands such units undertake all activities from production to delivery; and specific activities on sub-contract from type 1 and 2 units • Outsource activities such as embellishment, thread cutting, buttons, cuffs, collars etc., to Type 4 and 5
Type 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small un-registered production units located in notified and un-notified colonies • Cater to low end Indian brands and the unbranded Indian market • Undertake all activities from design to production for the wholesale market
Type 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own account and owner operated household units • Cater to both the Indian and International market and all kinds of brands

² Child labour in global production networks: poverty, vulnerability and ‘adverse incorporation’ in the Delhi garments sector – Nicola Phillips, Resmi Bhaskaran, Dev Nathan, C. Upendranath.



required quality measures and international regulatory framework which bars any child under the age of 18 years to work under their system. They are also in compliance with health, environment and work condition regulations within their own factories.

Type 3 units usually cater to Indian brands and to Type 1 and 2 units, that are usually found in locations adjacent to major export clusters. These units may be registered or un-registered and are part of a competitive market based on low production costs; in such units, the workers are paid on a piece rate basis with no benefits. Majority of the workers in such units are men. During peak season, at times workers may reside within the unit to maximise work time. Such units though aware of ethical compliances, to ensure price competitiveness, usually do not strictly follow the ethical compliance. Such units, while not employing children under the age of 14 years, may employ children who are above the age of 14 years for unskilled work.

The above mentioned unit types, while having entirely integrated systems for the production of apparels, mainly outsource specific activities, either in case of urgent requirement of order in short turnaround time or work overload. They also out-source non-mechanised value addition/finishing activities such as embroidery, embellishment and thread cutting etc., to the unorganised sector. Such outsourcing is usually done through intermediaries or contractors commonly known as *Thekedars* who take the work from these large units to smaller household based units in the unorganised sector or to family households directly.

Type 4 and 5 units comprise of the non-factory and unorganised sector of the garment industry. Type 4 units are micro-enterprises, usually unregistered and focusing on a particular outsourced activity such as printing, dyeing, embellishment, tailoring, machine embroidery and button stitching and button hole making. Such units are scattered in notified and un-notified colonies; usually in locations with low rental cost.

The operation of such units sustain on word of mouth. The owners of the units are responsible for ensuring work/contracts from larger units; there are, in most cases, tie-ups with 1 or 2 such large units, who are a constant source of work during urgent orders and overloading of work during peak season. The owners usually hire workers without any formal/written contract; and who hail from their own villages or are known to him/his employees or referred by a contractor (*thekedar*). The unorganised sector in the garment industry too, is mechanised to a significant extent. The units that engage in stitching jackets and trousers, embroidering monograms and logos, stitching buttons and making button holes for bigger apparel manufacturers have also been mechanised. Each unit specialises in one task and given that they are mechanised, most tend to engage adult workers with experience in operating machines. However, working under these mechanised units are the households. They are related to the garment production either using their own household labour (family members) or by engaging outside labour. The ones which engaged labour are commonly referred to as *Addas*.

The word *Adda* is used to refer to a cot on which a large piece of handloom is laid out for embroidery. This type of work is traditional in the region of Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh (Mezzadri, 2008). Several workers collectively work on an *Adda* to ensure quick completion of work. Colloquially, the entire room/premises having one or more '*Adda*' are referred to as an '*Adda*'.

3.5 Supply Chain in the Garment Industry

To reiterate, the large apparel manufactures – the Type 1, 2 and 3, who usually produce for the international markets and for major Indian brands, are entirely integrated. They can manage the end to end production of apparels. However, they may outsource, certain processes, in case there is a large volume of orders or to cut costs. They usually outsource to Type 4 and 5 most of which are also mechanised. As mentioned above, the stitching of trousers, jackets, button stitching and button



hole making are all mechanised. The mechanisation has also become inevitable given the need for quick turnaround time for orders. There are however, specific tasks that can be done by hand alone. These are the intricate embroidery and the pasting and patching work; and cutting of threads to ensure finishing of the apparel. While embroidery is done in the *Addas*, thread cutting is done in the households. It is at this level that children are predominantly engaged.

Children working in *Addas* are usually migrants, brought from villages in UP, Bihar and West Bengal by the *Adda* owners to work for them. Families of these children are usually given a fixed sum by the *Adda* owner, and in return, the child is sent to work at the *Adda* in Delhi, for a fixed period of time. Children in the households, are also, often migrants but stay with their families and supplement the garment related work done in the households.

Large mechanised units of exporters/Manufacturers – Type 1 & 2 units – all processes mechanised and conform to standards set by the buyers – do not engage children. Likely to outsource certain processes.

Smaller, formal or informal units, which either do end-to-end production of garments or a particular process, say tailoring trousers/jeans, or stitching buttons or machine embroidery. Most mechanised and do not appear to use children below 14 years.

Addas – which only do embellishment work – hand embroidery – children engaged in the process, often children who are brought from other states

Households, which undertake the following:

1. Pasting of stone
2. Thread cutting
3. Embroidery / Aari / Zari works
4. Razai Stitching

Children are extensively engaged in this

3.6 Geographical Spread of the Garment Industry

The organised units of the garment industry, Type 1, 2 and 3 are located in the industrial hubs of Delhi, Okhla and Faridabad in Delhi NCR. The unorganised sector is situated either around these units or elsewhere. The area list below provides an overview of the spread of the garment industry in Delhi and the various activities undertaken in different locations. The top three locations in the following list are the main domestic markets for sale of garments with some exports as well.

1. Chandni Chowk
2. Amar Colony (Lajpat Nagar)
3. Gandhi Nagar
4. Okhla – a hub for international exports, having large factories/units
5. Geeta Colony



6. Kailash Nagar
7. Seelampur/Usmanpur
8. Khirki
9. Shahpurjat
10. Tuqlakabad extension
11. Batla House
12. Madanpur Khadar
13. Sangam Vihar

As evident from the above list, most of these locations where activities related to the garment industry are undertaken have the following common characteristics:

1. Proximity to large or small garment manufacturing units
2. Residential spaces with low cost rentals
3. High concentration of migrant population

Residential locations are preferred by owners of many small units as they can be easily converted into hidden spaces for informal cheap labour outside the purview of the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation), Act, 1986 (CLPRA). As established earlier, the CLPRA limits to the formal factory setting and does not apply to children working with their family/family members. Therefore, these residential locations are top choices for owners of small manufacturing units to establish an informal garment industry hotspot. Both *Addas* and home based work can be found here.

Thus, in the lower rung of the garment sector are the small household units and houses where the entire family is engaged in work. These small units are found close to each other as the embroidery work done in the *Adda* is often passed on to the household for embellishment. For instance, these two activities can be found coterminous in Madanpur Khadar and Batla House, where *Addas* are also found. Certain type of work is also associated to a specific migrant community. The embroidery and embellishment work is dominant in Muslim migrant communities, owing to their traditional embroidery skills. The houses that engage in cutting threads are found primarily in other migrant communities residing in Gandhi Nagar and Geeta Colony.

In most of these locations, the population comprises predominantly of migrants from Eastern UP and Bihar, who came to Delhi in search of work, and continue to live here. Men skilled in stitching, embroidery etc., are employed as a part of the units in the organised and unorganised sectors, while those in the organised sectors may or may not reside with their families. Workers in the unorganised sector tend to live within the premises of the unit/*Adda* or in small rooms near the work place. In families where the male member is working outside of the garment industry (labourers like rickshaws and cart pullers, fruits and vegetables sellers); the women and children engage in value addition activities to supplement the household income.

In locations such as Okhla, Gandhi Nagar etc., where Type 1, 2 and 3 units in the organised sector are available in close proximity, some women also tend to work as a part of factory processes such as packaging, checking or may even engage in value addition/finishing activities such as thread cutting, stone pasting etc., within the factory. This ensures them better pay for the same work and fixed working hours. However, many women often stay at home considering the cultural and social restrictions; for them, working at the household level itself provides an avenue to supplement their household income; even if that means working in poor and exploitative conditions.



Table 3.2: Locations where garment related activities are undertaken in Delhi

Study Locations											
	Geeta Colony	Kailash Nagar	Gandhi Nagar	Seelampur/Usmanpur	Shahpurjat & Khirki	Okhla	Madanpur Khadar	Batla House	Tuqlaqabad Extn.	Sangam Vihar	Chandni Chowk & Chandni Mahal
Organised sector		Type 3 units	Type 3 and 4 units	Outlets/showrooms of several apparel designers	Type 1, 2 and 3 units	Type 4 & 5 units	Type 4 & 5 units	Type 4 & 5 units	Type 3 units	Type 4 & 5 units	One of the largest markets of garments and clothes in Delhi; stocks textile and supplies
Unorganised sector		Type 4 units	Type 4 units	Type 5 units	Work undertaken by women and children in households	Work undertaken by women and children in households	• Work undertaken by women and children in households • Embroidery work done in <i>Addas</i>	• Work undertaken by women and children in households • Embroidery work done in <i>Addas</i>	Work undertaken by women and children in few <i>Addas</i>	Some stone pasting work undertaken at the household level, however not much	
Activities undertaken	Thread-cutting (mainly for jeans & pants)	Thread-cutting (jeans, pants, slacks and top)	Thread cutting, Embroidery, Packaging	Thread cutting, Stone pasting/embellishment	Thread cutting, Embroidery & Stone pasting/embellishment	Thread cutting, Embroidery & Stone pasting/embellishment	Embroidery & Stone pasting/embellishment	Embroidery & Stone pasting/embellishment	Embroidery & Stone pasting/embellishment	Embroidery Stone pasting/embellishment & Razai stitching	Earlier a hub for garment activities, however, work has now been shifted to Loni and Nabi Karim areas ³
Reasons for it being a hot-spot for garment work in Delhi	Proximity to Gandhi Nagar and Seelampur readymade garment manufacturing units and market	Residential locality with lesser rent to establish type 4 & 5 units/ <i>Addas</i> for preparing designer clothes	Proximity to large number of readymade garment manufacturing units in Okhla	Localities/colonies with lesser rent making it easy to rent places for type 4 & 5 units/ <i>Addas</i> ; and for accommodation for workers; high concentration of muslim migrant community.							

³ Once a hub of all garment activities – given frequent raids and rescue operations and once a huge fire in the place where all work was done, garment activities have been moved out to other locations and Chandni Chowk now essentially remains a market area

Child Labour in Garment Industry in Delhi

4.1 Child Labour in Delhi

Absence of reliable estimates of child labour has been echoed as a serious concern under the Action Plan for the Abolition of Child Labour in Delhi by National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) in 2010. The report equates out of school children with child labour (whether existing or potential) and expresses the difficulty in estimating the number of out of school children in Delhi by the national body owing mainly to the lack of available statistics.

As enumerated by the Census Survey of India 2011, in Delhi, out of the total work-force, children aged 5-14 years were approximately 39,000 (Census 2011). The figures show a decrease of 7% as compared to 2001. It has been established in the introductory chapter (Chapter 1) that there has been a downward trend in the number of child labourers. It may be observed from Table 4.1 that there has been a decrease of 21% in the number of main workers in the age group of 5-14 years; however, there has been a tremendous increase in the proportion of marginal workers (nearly 48%). Although these figures can be contested by different civil society organisations for under reporting, it is important to note that the rise of marginal workers in the informal sector (as iterated in Chapter 1). Further, if we consider the number of children seeking/available for work amongst non-workers in the same age group, there is potential child labour of an additional 22,245 children. It is interesting to note that among the marginal workers; around 70% of them are students (Census Survey of India, Government of India, 2011). This highlights the informal form of labour amongst children where they may be enrolled in school, but work for a given number of hours to generate some income.

In Delhi, child labour is concentrated predominantly in unorganised manufacturing and informal service sectors. A street children enumeration study undertaken by Save the Children in 2010 found that one out of every five street children in Delhi is a rag picker. 15% of the total street children were identified as street vendors, 15% as beggars, 12% as workers in repair shops and 7% as working in roadside dhabas, hotels and manufacturing units.

Table 4.1: Child Labour in Delhi, Census Survey of India 1991, 2001 and 2011

% age change of work force aged 5-14 years by their work status in 2011 as compared to 2001 and 1991			
Year	Main Workers	Marginal Workers	Total Workers
1991	26670	681	27351
2001	33486	8413	41899
Change in 10 years	25.56%	1135.39%	53.19%
2011	26,473	12,466	38,939
Change in 10 years (2001-11)	-21%	48% increase	-7%



4.2 Child Labour in Garment Industry in Delhi

Prevalence of child labour in garment industry is directly associated with the segmentation of garment industry. Contractual obligation and mechanised operations of Tier 1, 2 and 3 manufacturing units results in strong curtailment of child labour in these tiers and makes it inadvertent in the lower tiers (Tier 4 and 5). The organised garment industry comprising of Tier 1, 2 and 3, does not directly engage children since their contractual obligation to overseas garment buyers bind them to ensure responsible sourcing. One of the Apparel Manufacturer and former President of the Apparel Export Promotion Council shared that the buyers from the international markets make regular visits to the factories either to place orders or finalise new designs. They also undertake audits to check ethical and environmental compliance. Therefore, Tier 1 and 2 factories cannot afford to lose a contract with international buyers to save on a small portion of money by employing child labour.

In addition to compliance, the organised sector is highly mechanised. Mechanisation of the sector is entirely demand driven. From bulk fabric cutting, button sewing and button hole making to sewing and embroidering monograms and regular patterns has all been mechanised. With high level of mechanisation in these factories, there is less scope for employment of unskilled workers, let alone children. As part of their compliance measures, these factories often put up display boards stating no child under the age of 18 years is employed in the factory. Mechanisation has also seeped in Type 4 and 5 enterprises. Most mechanised units do not employ children. However, they may be employing skilled adolescents above the age of 14 years.

In a highly segmented garment industry it is at the level of outsourcing where child labour surfaces. Since Tier 4 and 5 enterprises mostly receive outsourced work, the compliance measures are relaxed to include unskilled labour including adolescents and children. The owners of the formal garment units, for most part, turn a blind eye to the children engaged in unskilled work because it has been outsourced. The most common reason cited for such lack of supervision by the factory owners is their limitation in monitoring every aspect of the outsourced work. Many times manufacturing units do not directly contact Type 4 and 5 household units or families, but prefer to go through a local contractor, commonly known as the *thekedar*. Therefore, the informal workspace where children are actually engaged is completely outside the circle of the formal manufacturing units whose point of contact remains the local contractor. In one of the small units that stitch pants for a high end apparel manufacturer in Tuglaqabad shared that in locations with dominant Muslim community, the owners of manufacturing units are mandated to submit employee identification documents to the Police Station. Although this is a mandatory protocol for internal security, this in effect, curbs the possibility of employing child labour.

While there is a likelihood of adolescents (14-18 years) and young adults (18-21 years) being engaged in the organised mechanised units, they are more likely to be engaged in work that requires some technical skills. Inversely, children under the age of 14 years are likely to be engaged in tasks that do not require technical skills.

Chapter 3 categorises the work undertaken in different tiers of the garment industry. Table 3.2 segregates different type of unskilled work undertaken by women and children in the unorganised sectors of the garment industry. Children are engaged in two broad categories in the value chain of the apparel manufacturing in Delhi.

1. **Embroidery and embellishment:** Intricate embroidery on handlooms undertaken in *Addas* and home based embellishment work of pasting stones on pieces of readymade garments
2. **Finishing:** Finishing tasks of a readymade garment before it is shelved in a showroom or clothes shop, like cutting threads from a pair of jeans, children's readymade garments, etc.



4.3 Estimate of Child Labour in the Garment Industry

Several reasons have resulted in lack of adequate data on the number of child labourers in Delhi. Varying definitions of child labour and related terminology, its hidden proliference in the unorganised sector and fluid presence owing to migration are some of the causes that make it challenging for statisticians to quantify this phenomenon. Previous studies that have attempted to estimate street or working children in Delhi have at best been able to provide broad approximations. It is in this context that the study has been aimed at estimating the number of children working in the garment industry.

While describing the sampling methodology adopted for the study in Chapter 2, it has been noted that there were no house listing and no apriori information available for the sampling frame. Based on the field visits, specific locations in Delhi that were found to have children working in the garment industry were identified. Using the census enumeration blocks, house listing was conducted and households in which the children are engaged in garment related activities were identified.

Based on the proportion of children found to be engaged in the garment manufacturing processes, the probability of finding child labour in garment industry was arrived. For instance, in Geeta colony, 11 children were found to be engaged in garment manufacturing out of 387 randomly listed houses. Therefore, the probability of finding child labour in this locality is 0.028. This probability value has been extrapolated to the total number of households in Geeta Colony to arrive at an approximate number of children engaged in garment manufacturing in this location.

Children engaged in the garment manufacturing process are found in certain locations in Delhi, like Sangam Vihar, Geeta colony, Madanpur Khadar and such. Within each of these locations, there are multiple slums segregated based on different types of occupation of the migrant community and other factors. For instance, children engaged in garment industry in Madanpur Khadar are found in Kachi Basti, a local name given to a sub-set of slum households found in Madanpur Khadar. JJ Colony is a slum adjacent to Kachi Basti where children are found to be working as domestic servants and rag pickers and not in garment industry. For the purpose of the research survey, based on Save the Children and other local NGOs' experience of working in some of these locations and initial field assessment, households were chosen based on the census enumeration blocks. It is in these locations that the house listing was undertaken.

Although the initial objective of the study was to establish a district wise estimate of the number of child labour in the garment industry, this was later reduced to ward level estimate. Given the localised presence of children in a state that is highly urbanised, extrapolating for a district based on the probability calculation would not have yielded correct estimates. Hence, for the purpose of the study, the estimation has been done for wards, as they are the lowest geographical/administrative units for which household details are available.

Based on the ward level estimation, it has been found that there are 8044 children working in the Garment Industry in eight wards, i.e., Gandhi Nagar/Kailash Nagar, Geeta Colony, Sangam Vihar, Madanpur Khadar, Okhla, Tughlaqabad, Khirki/Shahputjat and Batla House (Table 4.2). This is about 0.3% of the total children in the age group of 6-18 years. In Save the Children's earlier study on street children, it was found that 1% of the total children in the age group 6-18 years are street and working children. Considering that estimate and given the ward based estimation of children working in garment industry, this appears to be a reasonable estimate, as the children are confined to few wards in the entire Delhi.

It is clear from the above table that children engaged in the garment industry are found only in three districts East Delhi, South Delhi and South East. No children were found to be working in garment manufacturing in Central Delhi (locations Chandni Chowk, Chandni Mahal and Pratap Nagar and in North East Delhi (Usmanpur) (Refer to Table 2.2). Children have been engaged primarily in two

**Table 4.2: Estimated number of children in the garment industry in each locality**

Wards	Districts	Estimated Number of Children in Garment Sector in the Wards
Gandhi Nagar & Kailash Nagar	East Delhi	674
Geeta Colony	East Delhi	740
Sangam Vihar	South East Delhi	1169
Madanpur	South East Delhi	1233
Okhla	South East Delhi	1922
Tughlaqabad	South East Delhi	241
Khirki & Shahpur Jat	South Delhi	926
Batla House	South Delhi	1138
Total		8044

processes under garment manufacturing, embroidery and embellishment work and finishing work. Few instances of child labour engaged in Razai stitching and moti pasting/sticking were also found; however, this was not widespread. It was found that *Addas* are not very prominent in Delhi. Given that these two processes are limited to few locations in Delhi, the presence of children engaged in garment industry is also limited to few locations in Delhi and not others.

4.4 Living and Working Conditions of Children in the Garment Industry

This section has been developed on the findings from both quantitative and qualitative data to elucidate the living and working conditions of children in the garment industry.

4.4.1 The Profile of Respondents

In total, 4735 households and 22 *Addas* were listed during the house listing process. Out of which, 148 child labourers working in households and 22 in *Addas* were identified. Detailed interviews were conducted with these 170 children to better understand the issue of child labour in the garment industry.

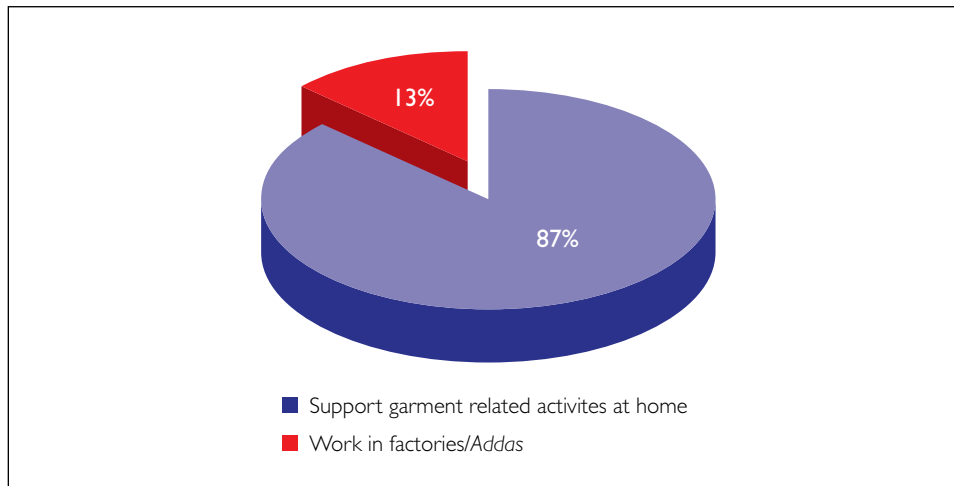
It was found that children are engaged in mainly two systems – within family and *Addas*. Some children, in addition to working in the factories, also supported garment related work at home. The profile of the children is given as follows:

- Of the 170 children engaged in garment related activities, 148 supported garment related work at home and 22 worked in small factories/*Addas* (Figure 4.1). Of those working at home, 102 (69%) respondents were girls and 46 (39%) were boys. All 22 respondents working in small factories/*Addas* were found to be boys (Table 2 – Annexure A).
- Of the total children engaged in garment related activities within their homes, maximum were found in Sangam Vihar; with 37.2% (55 of 148) of total children working in households identified in this location. Of all the locations surveyed, Sangam Vihar was largest in terms of the number of households which resulted in more number of households getting listed in that area. This is followed by





Figure 4.1: Children engaged in garment related activities



Madanpur Khadar in South Delhi and Kailash Nagar in East Delhi, each representing 10% of total children engaged at work within their homes (Table 1 – Annexure A). No children were found to be engaged at the household level in Chandni Chowk, Chandni Mahal, Batla house, Usmanpur and Pratap Nagar. One of the reasons for this is the fact that in Chandni Chowk, Chandni Mahal and Pratap Nagar, garment related activities that once took place have been moved out to other locations in Delhi such as Loni. In Batla house, children were primarily engaged in *Addas*.

- *Addas*/small household units were found predominantly in Batla House and Shahpur Jat, followed by Tuglaqabad Extension and Madanpur Khadar with few in Sangam Vihar. A total of 22 children (13 %) were found to be engaged in garment related work in *Addas* in Batla House and Shahpur Jat.

The quantitative survey followed the process of random sampling and several of the localities having *Addas* were not drawn as a part of the sample. These localities were covered as a part of the qualitative study.

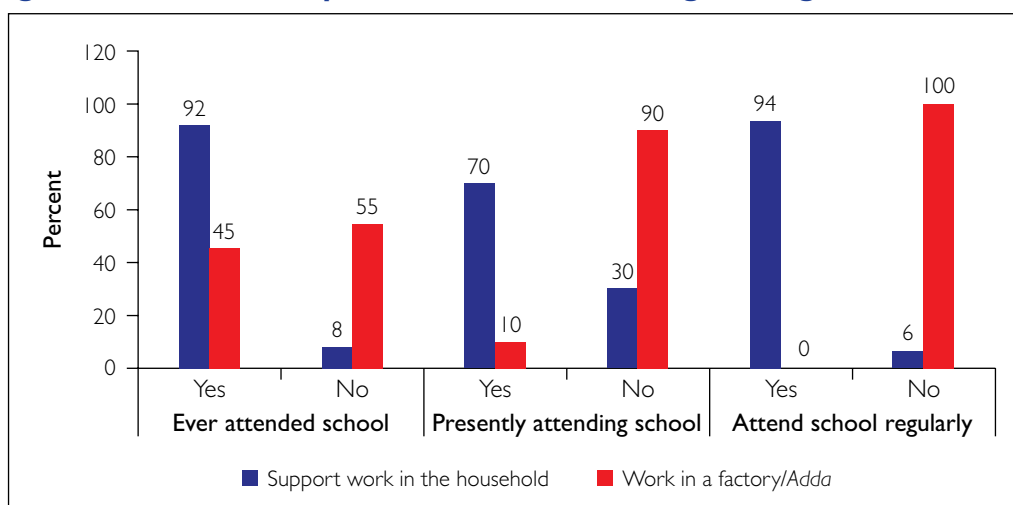
- 52% of the respondents were Hindus while 48% were Muslims; most respondents belonged predominantly to reserved and backward classes with 36%, 29% and 32% belonging to Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribes and Other Backward Classes (Table 3 – Annexure A).
- 92% children in households engaging in garment related activities reported to have enrolled in formal and/or non-formal education; however, there were some children who were enrolled in neither. Of those working in *Addas*, only 45% had ever attended school.¹

It may be observed from Figure 4.2 that out of those children engaged in work at the household level, in garment activity, 92% had attended school. Of them, 70% were still continuing school. Out of the currently enrolled children, 94% reported to attend school regularly, where 20 days per month was considered as regular attendance. On the contrary, out of those children who worked in *Addas*, only 45% had attended schools. Even from that 45%, only 10% had continued their school education. However, none of the children who have continued their education reported to attend school regularly. In other words, almost all the children who worked in *Addas* were school drop-outs and most of the children working within their houses attended schools.

¹ Ever attended school – Those children who have been enrolled in and attended classes in school at any point in their life; even if not presently enrolled in or attending school. Attend school regularly – Those children who go to attend classes for more than 20 days a month.



Figure 4.2: Educational profile of children working in the garment industry



- Household profile** – Children engaged in home based labour belonged to households where the head² of the family, mostly the male earning member, worked as an unskilled labour or daily wage earner. 40% respondents mentioned that the household head worked in factory/shops or restaurants; 35% shared that the household head worked either as a casual labourer or rickshaw puller. Only a few (1%) mentioned that their household head worked in a garment manufacturing unit. 20% respondents were unable to mention the occupation (Table 4 Annexure A). Women in such households were usually restricted to household work and did not engage in any employment; some women reported to undertake garment related activities within their houses to supplement the household income. Thus, children who engaged in garment related work belonged to those households where the bread winner was an unskilled/daily wage labourer.
- Migration** – 64% children mentioned that they had been living in the city since birth; they did not know if their parents had migrated from elsewhere. Almost all of those who had been living in the city since birth lived with their families and supported the household income by doing garment related activities. Of the 36% who said that they had migrated from outside Delhi, most (77%) of them worked in small factories and *Addas* (see Table 4.4).

49% of the migrated families have been living in Delhi for more than 10 years. During qualitative interactions too, women from surveyed households shared that they have been living in the city

Table 4.4: Migration profile of respondents

Children in Garment Industry in Delhi	Total	Living in Delhi since birth		Migrants living in Delhi (years) (n = 44 for HH and 17 for Addas)			Migrated from (n = 44 for HH and 17 for Addas)			
		Yes	No	For more than 10 years	For the last 5 to 10 years	Less than 5 years	UP	Bihar/ Jharkhand	West Bengal	Other
Support work within the family	148	70% (104)	30% (44)	61%	30%	9%	39%	50%	7%	5%
Work in a factory/Adda	22	23% (5)	77% (17)	18%	29%	53%	18%	76%	6%	0
Total	170	64% (109)	36% (61)	49%	30%	21%	33%	57%	7%	3%
As % age of the total respondents				18%	11%	8%	12%	21%	2%	1%

² Household head is defined as the main earning member of the family with whom the decision making power also rests.



since their marriage or soon after that, for over 20-25 years, and their children were usually born in the city. Of the total child respondents, 21% reported to have migrated from Bihar or Jharkhand, followed by 12% from UP and others (3%) from West Bengal and other states (Table 4.4). 91% of the respondents mentioned that they lived with their parents and family; 8% lived with employers and one with family relative (Table 5 – Annexure A).

4.4.2 Introduction to Work and Activities Undertaken

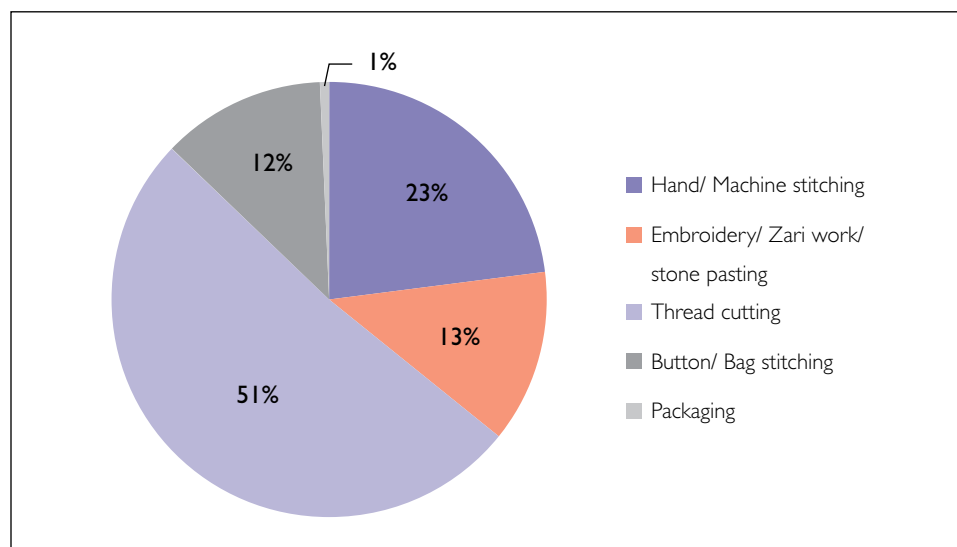
Within the family, a child's initiation into garment related work happens while observing his/her mother and other women in their neighbourhood doing embellishment and finishing work. Activities such as thread cutting and stone pasting often do not require technical skills. Children are quick to learn this work and join their household members undertaking this work. More skilled and specialised activities such as embroidery are not that prevalent within households. Embroidery is mostly undertaken by women belonging to Eastern UP. Embroidery is believed to be a traditional occupation/‘*Khandanipesha*’ in the Eastern UP belt, with all households members equipped with this traditional skill. Women belonging to such households, tend to teach and pass on the skill to their children, who learn by assisting their mothers and eventually begin to undertake independent work.

Bulk of the respondents were found to be involved in thread cutting (51%) followed by machine and hand stitching (23%), embroidery/zari work³ and stone pasting (13%), button and bag stitching (12%) and just one respondent involved with packaging (see Figure 4.3).

To understand the gender relations within home based child labour, it was found that a higher percentage of girls (69%) were involved in home based work as compared to boys (31%) (Refer to Figure 4.4). Across various tasks too, such as thread cutting or stitching, except for packaging (only one respondent), more number of girls were engaged in this work than boys.

Table 4.5 clearly states that 61% of the child migrants reported to have migrated with their families while 11% report to have followed their parents to the city. These are the children who stay with their families. The study also surveyed those migrated children who do not stay with their family.

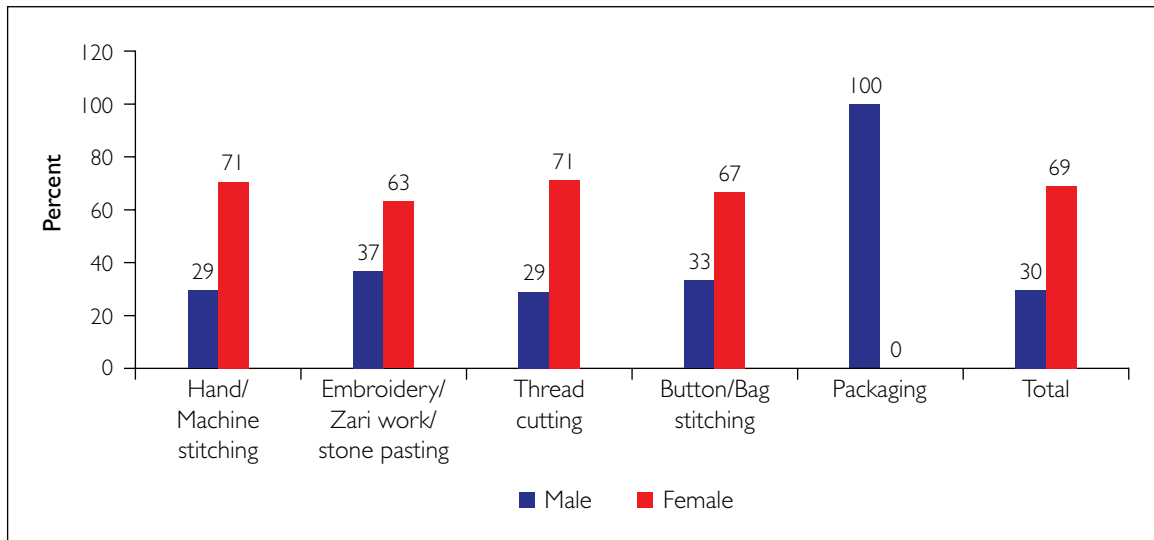
Figure 4.3: Garment related activities undertaken at households



³ Zari refers to distinguished traditional style of Indian embroidery where the embroidery thread is made of flat silver wire electroplated with gold. This type of embroidery is famous for its work on ceremonial sarees, richly embroidered apparel and furnishings, etc. (Source: <http://www.jhingansahu.com/zari.htm>)



Figure 4.4: Gender breakdown of home based child labour in garment industry



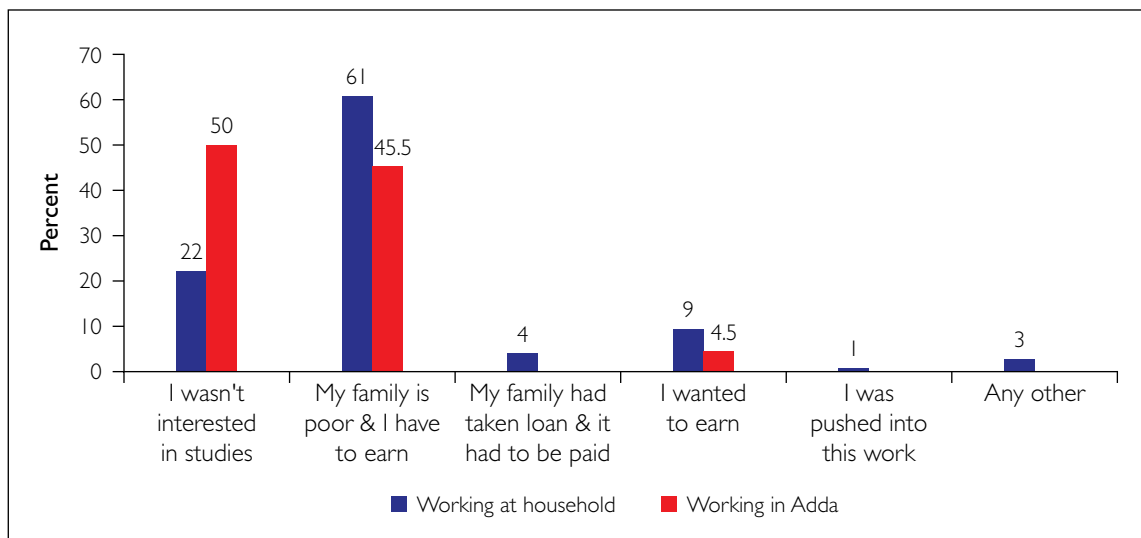
Highest percentage of these children (15%) reported to be staying with the employer, followed by friends (7%), family/relatives (3%) and lastly, parents and agents (2% respectively). It was found that in *Addas*, children were brought by owners, who promised or paid a sum of money to their parents in the village and brought the child for a fixed period of time to work. Alternately, children came with friends, relatives or other known persons from the village in search of employment and opportunity, to supplement the income of the households in the villages (See Table 4.5).

All 22 children working in *Addas* reported to be engaged in embroidery/embellishment work. Children reported to begin their work in *Addas* through an apprenticeship which would last from a period of

Table 4.5: Mode of migration

Living with family		Living away from family – came to Delhi with				
Migrated with families	Migrated later	Employer	Relatives	Parents	Agents	Friends
61%	11%	15%	3%	2%	2%	7%

Figure 4.5: Reasons cited for working in the garment industry





two to six months depending on how quickly the child is able to learn the skill. During this time, in addition to learning the work, children may assist senior workers and undertake stone pasting.

With regard to the main reasons of working in the garment industry, 61% of child labourers engaged in home based work and 46% of child labourers working in *Addas* shared that their families were poor and they had to earn to support the household income (Refer to Figure 4.5). 50% of the children working in *Addas* said that they joined this work because they were not interested in studies. There did not seem to be any stark difference between the reasons of working for children engaged in home based work and those working at *Addas*. Predominantly, children reported to work to support their household income, and repay debts. Those not interested in studies found few other alternatives and inevitably ended up working in the garment industry as it was one of the available income generating opportunities.

4.4.3 Age Distribution of Child Labour in Garment Industry

Children from the age group of 4 to 18 years engaged in various garment related activities. Children as young as 4 to 5 years begin to observe their household members doing the work and pick up various skills by assisting their family.

“Chote-chote, 4 saal ke bacche dhage kaat lete hai, piece bana lete hai”

(“Young children aged 4 years cut threads and assist in ‘piece’ making”)

— Centre coordinator, EFRAH, Madanpur Khadar

Table 4.6 presents the age distribution of children engaged in the garment industry. Nearly 65% of the children belonged to the age group of 15-18 years and 34% of the children belonged to the age group of 6-14 years. Of the total respondents, there were very few children below the age of 6 years (1.2%). Percentage of children in the age group 15-18 years working in *Addas* was found to be much higher (95) than children in the same age group working within their houses (60).

Some work at home can be enjoyable

Interestingly, only one child mentioned that he/she was pushed into this work (Figure 4.5). On being asked ‘who made the decision for them to be involved in garment related work’, 80% of the child respondents reported that they themselves decided to undertake this work (Table 6 – Annexure A).

Informal interactions with children also revealed that most children do not mind doing some work during the evenings – it kept them occupied and was found to be interesting, some in fact enjoyed doing this work. There is a sense of pride amongst children that they can undertake such work. Young children enthusiastically explained how it took them just 10 minutes to finish pasting stones on an entire ‘neck-piece’; many at times compared notes with other children and siblings on how many pieces each have completed during the day!

It is only when the work becomes a burden that they do not like to do it. This work becomes a burden on children when they are physically or mentally tired and want to do other things. Their studies and sleep starts getting affected, when they’re bored but cannot take a break, if they have to do it continuously for hours and their hands and eyes hurt.

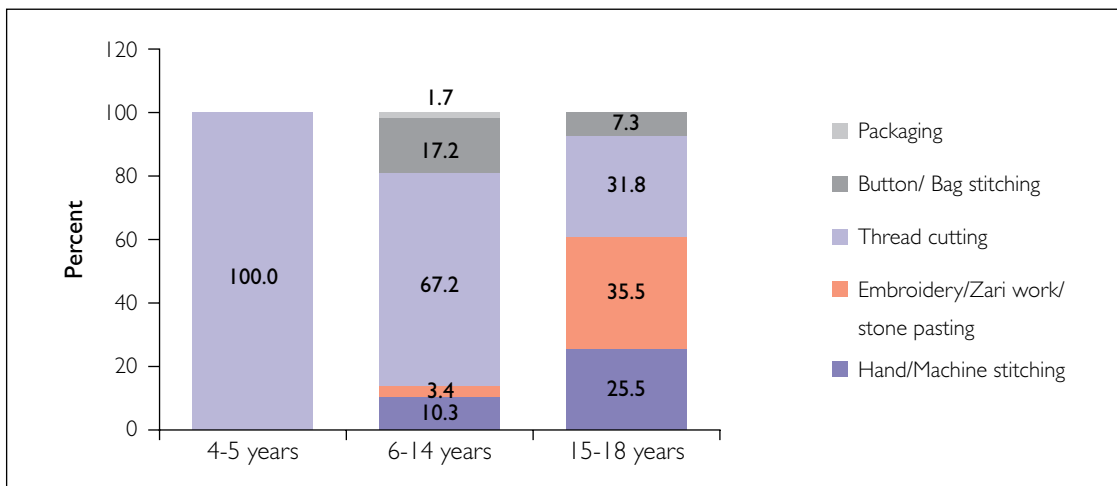
Since 87% respondents worked at home and predominantly supported in thread cutting, there was no significant pattern noticeable between age and different garment related activities undertaken by these children. However, 35.5% of children in the age group of 15 to 18 years reportedly engaged in embroidery/zari and stone pasting work mostly happening in the *Addas*. This was followed by thread cutting (32%) hand/machine stitching (25.5%) and button/bag stitching (7.3%) (Refer to Figure 4.6).



Table 4.6: Age distribution of children working in the garment industry

Age group	Place of work		
	Home Based	Work in a factory/Adda	Total
0 - 3 years	0	0	0.0%
4 - 5 years	1%	0	1.2%
6 - 14 years	39%	5%	34.1%
15 - 18 years	60%	95%	64.7%
N	148	22	170

Figure 4.6: Age distribution of children engaged in different types of work under garment industry



4.4.4 Work-time

In a household, there were no fixed hours of work and as shared by most of the children they were not forced to work. 70% of the respondents in the household, who support in a garment related activity, also attended schools and some of them even went to day-care centers run by NGOs.

These children dedicated around 2 to 4 hours per day for garment related work. For children who went to school, it would be a long day as they devoted time to garment related work either early in the morning or late during the evening till night. Those children who did not go to school spent between 4 to 10 hours on garment related work. Those who worked at *Addas* spent 6 to 10 hours per day (Refer to Figure 4.7).

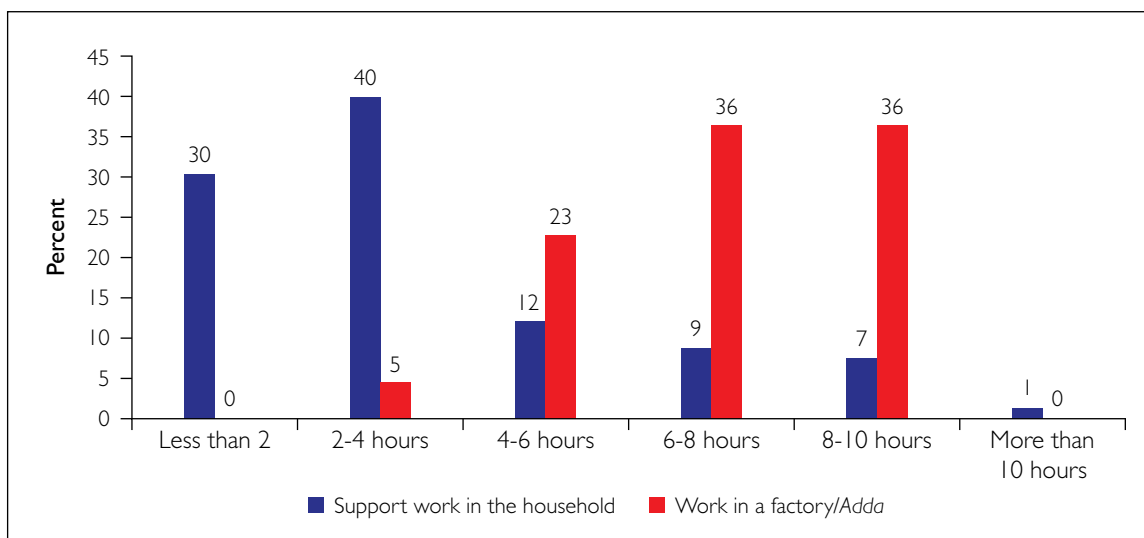
While most children did mention that they were not forced to work, they also mentioned that supporting the household income and repaying debt was the reason for working. Hence, a direct relation can be drawn between child labour in garment industry and poor economic condition of the household. Mothers often asked children to help, by emphasising on how the money earned by the work would be used for their school and food; ultimately the child’s benefit.

As mentioned in the previous section, most children, under given circumstances, decided themselves to undertake work; nearly 96% (142 of 148) also added that they could leave this work if they wished to (Table 7 – Annexure A).





Figure 4.7: Work time (Hours of work)



“Bol dete hai ki kuch piece bana loge toh kam se kam tumhara raat ka khana toh nikal jaega”

(“We tell them (children) that if they help with making a few pieces, we would be able to ensure at least their meal for the night”)

— Mother of one of the child labourers in Gandhi Nagar, East Delhi

Most parents expressed that they would want their children to study and not struggle like them. This is the main motivation for all parents to enroll their children in schools. However, they felt that if children needed to contribute to cover costs of education and food, then there was no harm in them doing so. The parents saw it as the child’s struggle to have a better future.

In some households, mothers motivated children to work by offering some money.

“If you help cut these pieces, I would give you 2 rupees”

— Mother of two, Kailash Nagar, East Delhi

This happened more in situations where there were urgent orders and the work had to be delivered in a short time-frame. In such cases, mothers would also tend to force their children to work, citing the urgency of completion of the work. However, such situations did not appear to be very common, as only seven children working in the households reported that their parents forced them to work on urgent orders for money was needed (Table 8 – Annexure A).

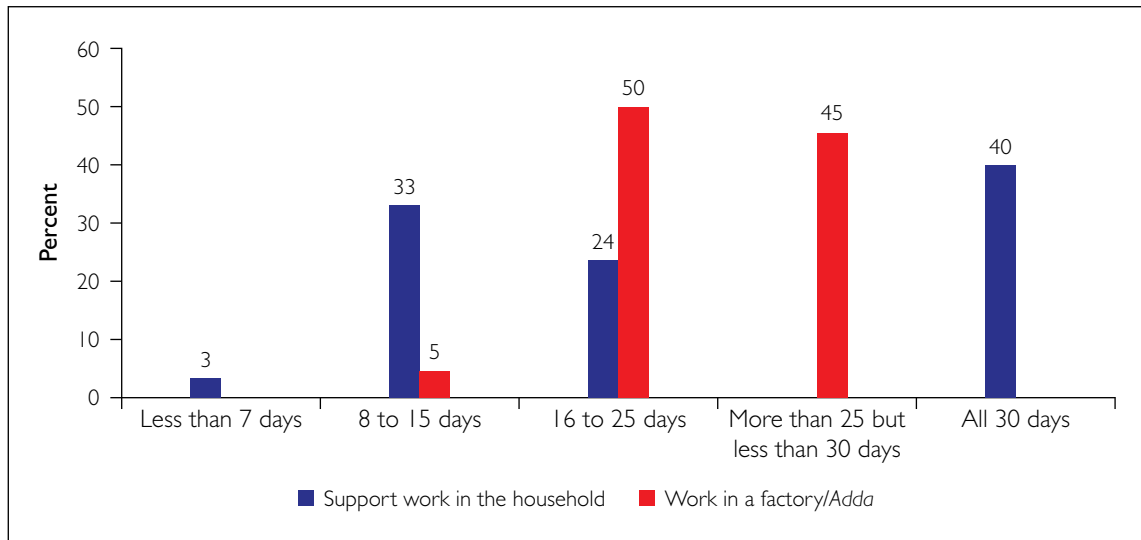
“ab kabhi urgent meh order aate hai toh kaam karna padta hai; hum kabhi mummy ko bolte bhi hai ki urgent ka kaam mat liya karo, hum nahi karenge, par maanti nahi, aur mann nahi bhi hota toh kaam karna padta hai”

(“When there are urgent orders to be delivered, we have to work; we tell our mother not to take such time-bound work, that we would not help, but she doesn’t listen; and even if we don’t feel like, we have to work”)

— Young girl, 16 years of age, complaining about her mother forcing her to work, Kailash Nagar, East Delhi



Figure 4.8: Days of work in a month



While children in households do lesser hours of work than their counterparts in the *Addas*, 40% of them said that they work on almost all 30 days. 24% children worked for 16-25 days while 33% worked for just 8 to 15 days a month. Therefore, most children working in their own houses spent about two to four hours every day (Refer to Figure 4.8).

In *Addas*, children worked with the aim of earning money and not supporting their family. Hence, the work hours followed a similar pattern to a formal work set-up with fixed number of hours. Children reported to work at 8 am till 10 pm with work stretching till midnight at times. Since the children stayed and worked in the same *Addas* their work hours could be stretched as per the requirement of work. It can be inferred from Figure 4.6 that nearly 72% of the children working in *Addas* spent between 6 to 10 hours working.⁴ Children being young in the *Addas* that were managed by adult *adda* owners, were often bullied into doing other odd jobs like fetching and/or making tea and meals for *Adda* workers and owners.



These children had either one weekly off or none depending on the *Adda* owner. Out of the 22 children working in the *Addas*, 11 reported to work for 25 days per month and 10 reported to work anywhere between 26 to 29 days (Refer to Figure 4.8). Thus in an *Adda* system, unlike the home based system there was less flexibility for children to work. They worked long hours with little or no break in a month. Most children visited their family once in six months or a year, often depending on the permission from the *Adda* owner.

⁴ This may be a conservative estimate, as most children working in *Addas* were restrictive and resistant to answering questions



4.4.5 Pay for work

Children working at a household level were not paid any fixed remuneration; their work contributed to the overall household income. The rate at which the families were paid was very low and often did not enable them to pay the children separately. Table 4.7 highlights some of the rates paid for various kinds of garment related activities. During the Focused Group Discussions (FGD) with women who undertook this work shared that due to increasing number of persons getting engaged in this sector, the rates kept falling every year and many said that it no longer seemed viable to undertake such work. Nearly 46% of the households get less than Rs. 1000 every month from garment work (Table 4.8A).

Table 4.7: Rates paid for garment related work at households and Addas/small units⁵

	Work/Activity	Rate paid
Household	Stone pasting/embellishment	Ranging from Rs. 7-50 depending on the piece and work (often the price is paid for work on a complete dress material including neck piece and two arm pieces)
	Suit Stitching	Rs. 100-150 (includes material and stitching)
	Thread cutting	Rs. 10 for 25 pairs of pants/jeans
		Rs. 5 for frocks – to remove thread and paper/ foam for complete finishing
		50 p – Rs. 1 for a single pair of jeans
Addas/Small units	Hand embroidery	Rs. 40 per hour
		Ranging from Rs. 200 – 500 depending on the piece and work required
	Stitching	Rs. 60 – 80 for complete stitching of a ladies top
	Machine embroidery	Rs. 300 – 450 for a complete dress material, neck, back, arms and dupatta

Children were paid occasionally and the frequency with which they received the money varied with the changing economic condition of the household. At times, on request of the children, they were given money on a weekly/monthly basis or during festivals and special occasions. Very poor households seldom gave any money to their children, except to get some eatables; households with slightly better income gave their children some money on a weekly basis or to buy them new clothes. Many children, who did receive money on a regular basis shared during discussions that they saved the money and used it to buy something special.

Of the 148 children working in households, 64% said that they have been given some money by their parents; 36% are not paid

Table 4.8A: Average monthly earning of children engaged in home based garment industry work

Amount	%
< than 500	28
501 to 1000	18
1001 to 2500	16
2501 to 5000	10
More than 5000	2
Don't Know	26
N	148

⁵ These rates are indicative; based on interaction with children, women and *adda* owners in different locations in Delhi



anything. Of those paid, 36% reported to have got about less than INR 100 a month, 51% said they got between INR 100 to 500 a month; and 12% reported to have received more than Rs. 500 a month (Table 4.8A).

For the children working in the *Addas*, wages ranged from INR 1000 to more than INR 5000 per month. 45% of the children working in the *Addas* reported to get more than INR 5000 per month and 45% received INR 2500 to 5000 per month (Table 4.8B).

Both systems (home based and *Addas*) followed the piece rate wages. Of the total respondents, 86% reported that the payment was on piece rate basis; 12% reported to receive monthly payment and 1% each reported hourly and daily payment (Table 9 – Annexure A). Nearly 93% of the home based child labourers reported that the payment is on a piece rate basis, however, of those working in *Addas*, nearly 60% were paid on a monthly basis (Table 10 – Annexure A). The payment is thus almost entirely on a piece rate basis, except in *Addas* where payments are paid monthly too.

Figure 4.9 shows 36.6% children engaged in embroidery/zari work (mostly in the *Addas*) reported that the payment was made on a monthly basis.

The piece rate is fixed based on skill and intricacy of work required in each piece. While smaller and less intricate pieces requiring less time to finish would be paid a smaller sum; the larger and more intricate pieces, would be paid a higher sum (See Table 4.7 which provides details of piece rates paid in *Addas*). On an average, a child working in an *Adda* earns more than those working in households (Table 4.8). Nearly 90% of those working in *Addas* earn more than INR 2500 a month.

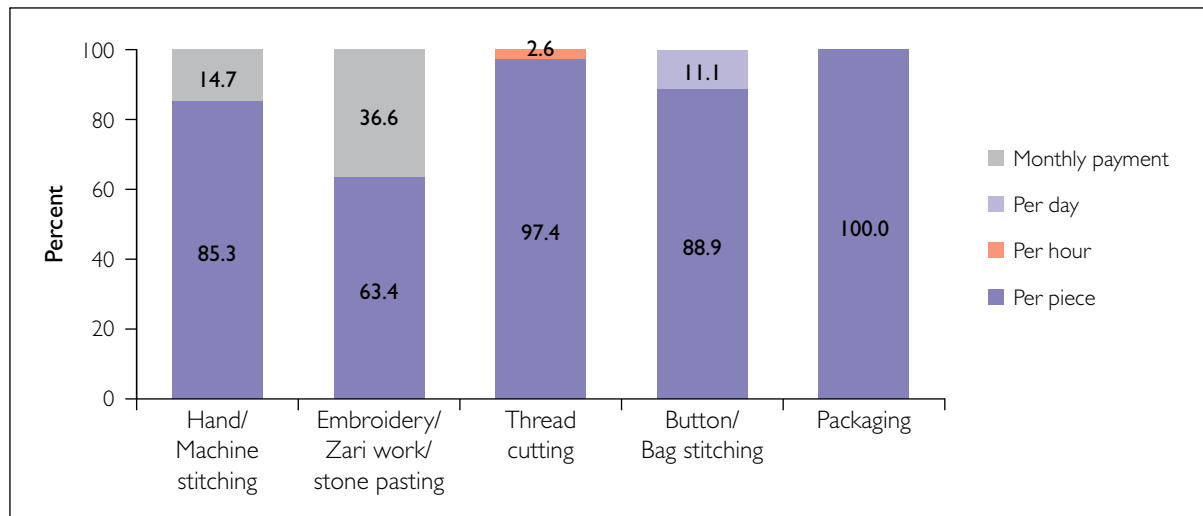
Table 4.8B: Average monthly earning by children working in Addas

Wages	%
< than 500	-
501 to 1000	-
1001 to 2500	9
2501 to 5000	45
More than 5000	45
Don't Know	-
N	22

Table 4.8C: Children reporting as having got some money on a monthly basis (average) from parents for doing garment work

Amount	%
<100	36
100 - 250	25
251 - 500	26
501 - 1000	8
More than 1000	4
Don't know	0
N	95

Figure 4.9: Basis of payment by activity





During the first 2 – 6 months, when a child joins an *Adda*, it is considered a period of apprenticeship, where the child is taught the skill and he assists other workers. During this period, the child is not paid any wages; however, his food and other expenses are taken care of by the *Adda* owner. Once the child has learnt the skill, he is treated as any other worker and paid. Frequency of the payment is determined by the deal worked out with the owner. Six monthly or annual visits to a labourers' family is mostly not covered by the *Adda* owner.

Factories being a part of the organised sector engage adolescent boys (above the age of 14 years) as labour for activities such as packaging, loading and delivery. Older boys are preferred since such activities are physically intensive. These child labourers are paid a fixed sum on a monthly basis that is decided at the beginning of employment. Work is undertaken in fixed shifts of 8-10 hours, any work beyond which is considered an overtime; one day a week is a designated holiday. On interaction with children working in such factories, the children shared that they earn between INR 4000-6000 in a month. It is the most formal arrangement of all three where there are clear employment rules, fixed work and resting hours/days and pay.



In regard to issues with payment, only 10 respondents reported to receive delayed payments and one reported to not receive the entire amount. Rest of the respondents (88%) shared that they were not aware of any issues with the payment. Very few respondents reported to have any issues with payments; in fact most said that their payment was timely and correct (Table 11 – Annexure A). However, the veracity of this statement can be undermined by the fact that most of the children confessed ignorance to knowledge of any issues regarding payment.

Despite poor pay the children and families had the opportunity to take loan or advance payment from the contractors or *adda* owners. This served as a compelling incentive to continue work for most of the households and child labourers working in the *Addas*.

Another interesting aspect of the engagement of families and children in *Addas* is the flexibility in the amount of work taken up by the households/children working in *Addas*. Some households took lesser number of pieces or no work when they are busy. Some child labourers in *Addas* and small household units chose to work only for 10 months a year, spending the rest of the time in their villages. This flexibility exists only because they are not bound by any formal contract and they can choose when they would like to work. On the contrary, while they can choose not to work for as many days as they would like, they have no fixed pay and job security during that time. Many child labourers, who visit their native village for over a month, often end up finding jobs once they return, either with the same employer or someone else. The flexibility in work, along with option of taking loan/advance payment, works as a binding factor to keep this informal group of child labourers engaged in their current form of work.

4.4.6 Living Conditions

Most of the households that engage in garment related activities belong to the poorest households living in small rooms in the slums of Delhi. Most families are migrants from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal, who come to Delhi in search of work and engage in the garment industry's informal sector. In some areas like Madanpur Khadar, which is essentially a resettlement colony (people from slums in Nehru Place allotted land in this area), some people tend to have relatively larger houses with a few rooms.



Most men in such families first migrate to Delhi in search of work; rent a small room in slums; after which, the family moves in from the village. As explained previously, most men being unskilled or daily wage labourers engage in occupations such as rickshaw pullers or fruit and vegetable cart owners; work in shops, factories, restaurants; some skilled in stitching join garment units (Table 4 – Annexure A). The income in such families is usually low and highly variable, especially for those pulling rickshaws and carts, resulting into women taking up thread cutting, stone pasting etc., to supplement the family income.

Considering the small sum of their monthly income, the spaces that these families can rent are often just small rooms available in slums; the entire family of husband, wife and 4-5 children live within the space of a room or two rooms at the maximum (with each room having a maximum space of 12×10 ft). The cooking and living space is usually within the same room; during the day the bedding is folded and kept away to make room to sit, during the night everyone adjusts and sleeps within the same space. There is often little light and ventilation and the rooms are dark and dingy. In some households, the space is so small that the garment pieces occupy the whole house and members sit and work in the little space around it; some sitting on top of the garment pieces. Most houses do not have bathroom facilities and have to use either public bathrooms, if available in the locality or resort to open bathing and defecation.

During the day, most women and children work in the outdoors, in common spaces in the locality, along with other women; or just outside their rooms for better light and ventilation. During the night, subject to power supply, all households have tube-lights and other lights in which they work. Food is scarce in many households, and the available food is shared among the family members; in the poorest of households, children are often thin and malnourished. Many women during interactions say that given the high cost of living they are unable to give their children proper nutritious food.

“Doodh, fruits vagehra jo dene ko bolte hai baccho ko acchi sehat ke liye, kahan se laae utne paise, vo sab toh unko de he nahi paate”

(Milk, fruits etc. are essential for good health of children, but where do we get so much money from? We are unable to give them such nutritious food)

— Mother of one of the children engaged in garment industry in Gandhi Nagar, East Delhi

The *Addas* are usually small or large rooms depending on the owner and the space available for rent. Small spaces have one or two *Addas* (traditional Indian cot) in them, while larger spaces may have more. Often multiple *Addas* are placed close to each other to maximise space utilisation; there is just enough space for the children to sit around the *Addas* and work. These rooms are often taken in places where rent and consequently available services are poor; they are bare rooms where old carpets have been spread, on which the *Addas* are laid out or stitching units are placed. Many do not have fans and during summers can get extremely hot to work in. Since the work is undertaken in anonymity, hiding from the police or any visitor, many of these units cover their windows with paper or cloth, reducing ventilation and making the room stuffy. The rooms usually have few windows and are poorly lit; most units work all day long in artificial light. The *Addas* and work equipment are kept away at night and the children sleep in the same space. In *Addas*, all child labourers live and work together, irrespective of age; thus children of all ages (6-18 years) have to share the space with much older men as well.

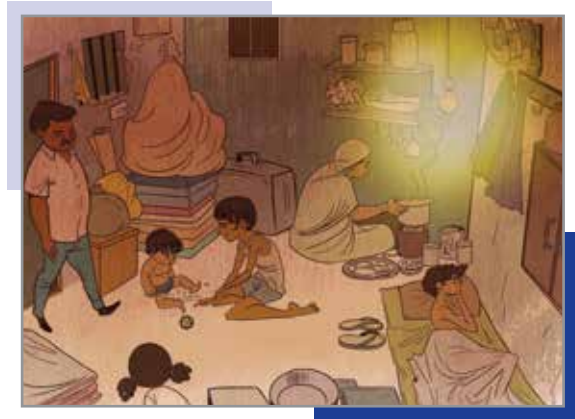
In some of the *Addas*, there is cooking facility and supplies provided by the owner. In such units, the younger workers/children may often be asked to cook for all. In some *Addas*, there may be cooking facility, however the supplies would have to be bought by the workers, often children. Further, there are also *Addas* where workers go out and eat either paid for by the owner or themselves. This arrangement depends on the initial negotiations with the owner and the established systems in each of the *Addas*.



In the case of employment at factories and small informal units, children return home every day. Living conditions at home are similar to those described earlier in this section.

4.4.7 Risks, Hazards and Benefits at the Workplace

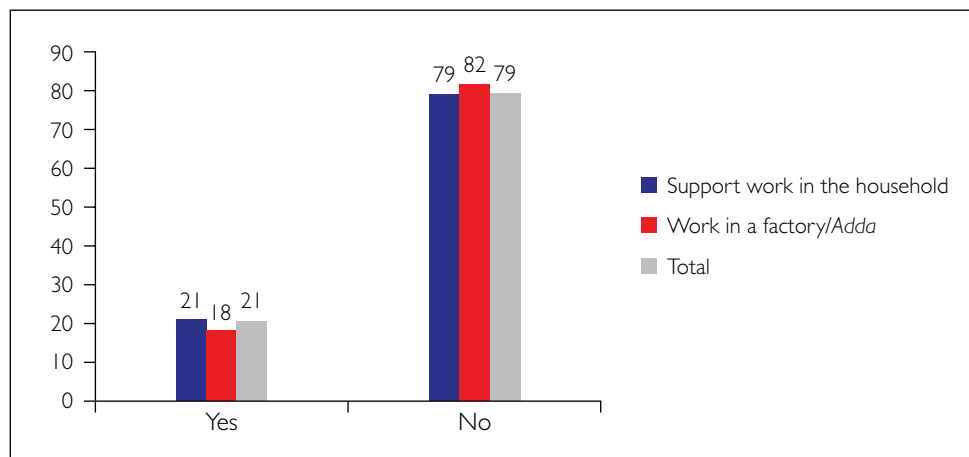
Some of the risks and hazards faced by children while working are similar in both systems – home based work and at *Addas*. Cramped spaces, poor light and poor ventilation are some of the characteristics that mark their physical environment making them vulnerable to different risks. Children often sit in uncomfortable postures for long periods during work; specifically for those who undertake embroidery work at home and in *Addas*. They sit on their haunches working for long hours. Many children engaging in thread cutting and stone pasting complain of back pain owing to sitting for long hours. 51% of respondents complained of poor light and ventilation. Children often have to work with sharp tools, cutters, needles etc. 43% children sighted loud noise and the use of sharp tools as hazards and risk while working at home. Some other issues mentioned by children were the lack of fresh air, dust, fumes and smell while working at home. In *Addas* and small factories, children mentioned the use of sharp tools (36%), loud noise (9%) and poor lighting in rooms (5%) as the risks and hazards they faced during work.



Apart from issues of uncomfortable posture and back pain as described above, issues of weakening eyesight and pain in the eyes were sighted by several children during qualitative discussions. Those engaging in tasks such as stone pasting and embellishment work that requires precision, keen vision and concentration to paste small stones said that after working for a while they would feel a strain in their eyes. In such situations, children would usually take a break and then get back to their work. Some said that they had to get glasses as their eyesight was deteriorating. Few children who engaged in thread cutting shared that their hands would hurt from using the cutter for long hours. They usually applied some balm or flexed their fingers and palm to get back to work.

During the qualitative interactions, those working in larger factories and units also identified poor ventilation as a hazard; they mentioned the use of sharp tools, machines with sharp edges and needles as a risk. Constant noise of large machines is often perceived as disturbing to the ear. However, of the

Figure 4.1 I: Physical difficulty in work



**Table 4.9: Employers attitude in Addas**

	Caring	Neither caring nor harsh
Employers attitude	14	8
N	22	

total respondents, only nine had ever faced any injury or illness due to work; of which three were issues of back pain and two were eye issues (Table 13, Annexure A).

It is interesting to note that despite identifying risks, hazards and physical ailments resulting from working in dismal physical environment, nearly 79% respondents described their work as physically not taxing (Figure 4.11). Only 21% respondents working at home and 18% of those working in *Addas* described their work as physically difficult. Of those who did think that the work was physically difficult, 50% said it was because they had to crouch and sit all day and work, 37% said it was because they had to work long hours, one said they got no break in-between work and a few did not explain why it was difficult (Table 12 - Annexure A).

Children in *Addas* are also vulnerable to physical, verbal and at times sexual abuse from older co-workers, who also live in the same premises. During the field study, very few children (6%) expressed that they were verbally abused by co-workers or even by parents at a household level for not completing tasks in time. In fact most working in *Addas* described their owners as caring (Table 4.9). 14 of 22 respondents working in *Addas* said that their employers were caring and 8 said that their behavior was neutral – neither caring nor harsh.

15-year-old boy, Manveer (name changed) lived with his father, mother and younger sister in a one room house in the slums of Geeta Colony. His native village was in Bihar. His father worked in a factory and mother worked as a domestic help in the neighbouring locality. In order to support the meager household income, he dropped out of school at the age of 14 years and started working in a garment factory near his house in Gandhi Nagar. He used to work during the night shift from 8 pm to 8 am so that in the day he could undertake thread cutting from home. In the factory, his role was to ensure that the correct pieces of cloth were placed under the embroidery machine. His task required acute precision, concentration and caution to ensure that he repeatedly places the fabric at the right spot matching the pace of the machine. In case he lost his concentration and did not match the pace of the machine, he ran the risk of severely injuring his hand. He added that the workers in his factory often worked behind closed shutters, with poor ventilation and light. Though he would like to be educated and avail better employment opportunities, he did not find time for anything else in his busy schedule. Although he had enrolled as part of the open school system, he hardly found anytime to read or study.

In most cases employers and *Adda* owners belonged to the same village as the children; they were seen as older brothers who left the village and made a living for themselves. Children often saw them as role-models, hoping to be owners someday themselves; thus they did not think of them as bad or negatively. Many owners having been young workers themselves also understood the situation of the child to some extent, and thus, were not rude and abusive.

Table 4.10 presented below details the physical and verbal abuse as reported by respondents. As can be seen 50% of those working in *Addas* have never



**Table 4.10: Abuse in work place–Adda**

	Rarely	Never
Abuse in workplace - Verbal & Physical ⁶	11	11
N	22	

Table 4.11: Access to healthcare at the work place

Home based work			
First aid	Doctor called	Taken to doctor	Total
3	1	2	6
Work in factory/Adda			
First aid	Doctor called	Taken to doctor	Total
	4	7	11

Household workers are considered self-employed

Those engaging in garment related activities at a household level are considered 'self-employed', i.e., they do not fall under the purview of the factories or contractors for pay and welfare; they are responsible for their own welfare. Thus in case of any issues/injuries or illnesses, those working in households are not provided any support from their employers/contractors.

In-fact most employers/factories do not know where the work goes once handed over to the contractors. And the contractors, who are themselves entrepreneurs, work on minimal margins and get no benefits from factories. Hence, they provide none to those working under them.

The supply chain works largely due to the 'need for money' among poor households. As some women explained, "paise chahiye kam hoya zyada, majboori toh humari hai" (whether the pay is less or more, it is our desperation to work). They explain that they take work having considered the risk – they can choose not to take or take less work, but they cannot afford to take such stand. There will be many others people interested to take up the work from the contractor. Ultimately, the loss will be theirs. Even if they refused more than once or twice, they may not get the work again; a more regular/responsible household would replace them.

Working at home also provides women the flexibility to manage the household and children while working and earning some money. Given this, coupled with the need for money, and fear of competition, makes most agree to work at whatever poor rates are paid and not demand any benefits.

faced any abuse and 50% reported to have faced abuse but rarely. None of those working at home reported that they faced any abuse from their parents.

Though risks and hazards have been identified by children working in homes, *Addas* and larger factories; only four respondents reported that there were safety equipment such as protective clothing etc. that were available in their workplace (Table 14 – Annexure A).

For those employed in factories and some children in *Addas*, the employers/owners took care of expenses related to any injury or harm to the worker during work. The person injured was often taken to a nearby medical care and any expense incurred on account of treatment was paid by the employer. However, workers were not compensated for any wage loss that they incurred due to inability to work. The children working in the household had to be taken care of by their parents, in case of any injuries. The contractors who gave work did not provide any support.

⁶ The low reporting of abuse could also be due to reluctance in sharing such information with the research team in *Addas*.



Of the total 170 respondents, only 17 (10%) claimed to have access to health care⁷ during work or at their work place leaving 90% of working children vulnerable, at risk and without access to any healthcare (Table 4.11). Of those who mentioned access to healthcare, six children were working within their houses, i.e., their healthcare was taken care of by their parents and they received no support from the employer. Those working in factories and *Addas* mentioned that either doctors were called or they were taken to the doctor for treatment.

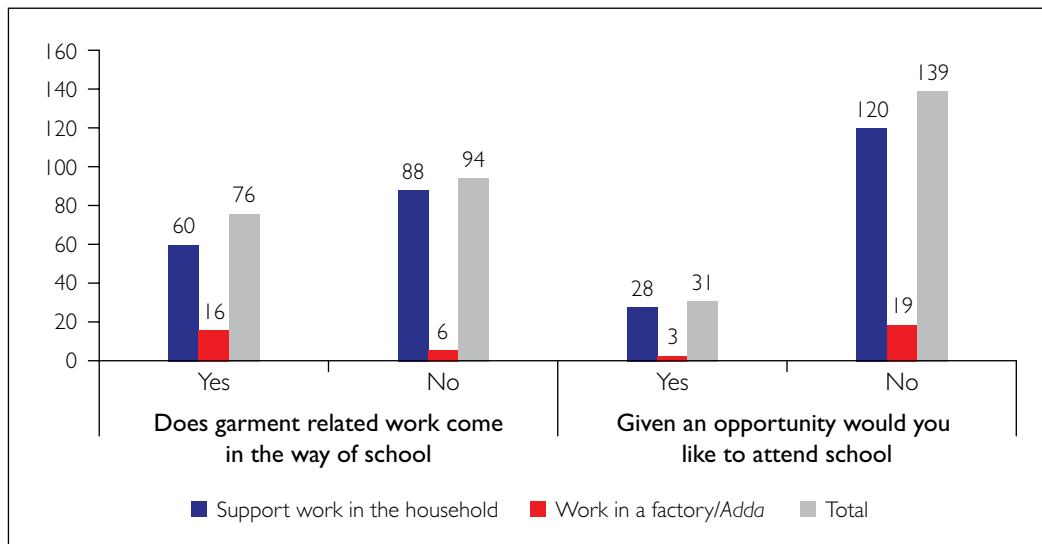


4.4.8 Children's Perception of Work

On being asked if the garment related work came in the way of education, 55% respondents felt that it did not; while 45% felt that it did come in way of their education. 73% of those working in *Addas* felt it came in the way of their schooling as compared to 41% of those working at home. Interestingly nearly 82% respondents said that given an opportunity, they would not like to attend school, showing an extremely low interest in education (Figure 4.12).

In some of the study locations, NGO's such as EFRAH and Salaam Balak Trust (SBT) run centres in the community that offer non formal education to children, supported by Save the Children that specifically engage with children working in garment related activities. Some children apart from attending formal school also attend bridge learning courses provided in these centres. The objective of these centres is to be able to provide children with an avenue for learning and recreation, regenerate their interest in education and eventually enroll children into the formal education system. Such centers

Figure 4.12: Education and work



⁷ Healthcare in this context refers to the services of doctors that employees are taken to in-case of any illness; or medicines/ any treatment services that are paid for. This may vary from employer-to-employer and depends on the available services nearby. For instance, in Seelampur, a large Government hospital is available nearby – Guru Tegh Bahadur Hospital in Dilshad Garden; and hence employees are taken there, in case of any issues. In other locations, they may be taken to small private nursing homes/known doctors. In such cases it is unknown if the doctors are those of the alternative medicines such as Ayurveda, homeopathy etc.



also help families with the school enrolment process; which at-times can get complicated as migrant families usually do not have the proper documentation for admission.

Many children especially older boys and girls (above the age of 13-14 years) tend to drop out of schools owing to various reasons. While girls prefer to undertake vocational training to learn skills such as computer training, tailoring, beauty parlor training etc.; boys tend to work at either garment factories or engage in other occupations to supplement the household income.

Most parents often complain that while they make the effort and send their children to schools; some even paying for private school education, there is often little being taught in the schools. Especially in government schools, teachers are unavailable many a times; and the teacher to children ration is very high, with one teacher having to manage 70-80 children. Many children thus have little interest in education and often wander around during school hours. They feel that rather than their spending money on education and the child not really benefiting, it would be better if they engaged in some work and contributed to the household. With such common perception, families and even children do not generally consider the long term impact of dropping out of school or becoming a part of informal sector.

Figure 4.13 depicts the feelings of children about their work; it can be seen that 92% children responded positively about their work. The remaining 8% expressed negative/neutral feelings like sadness,

Figure 4.13: Perceptions about work

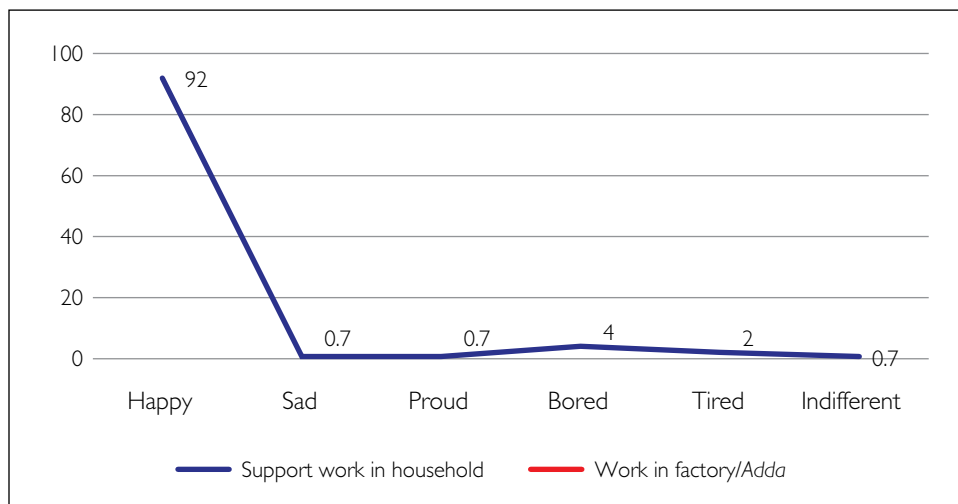
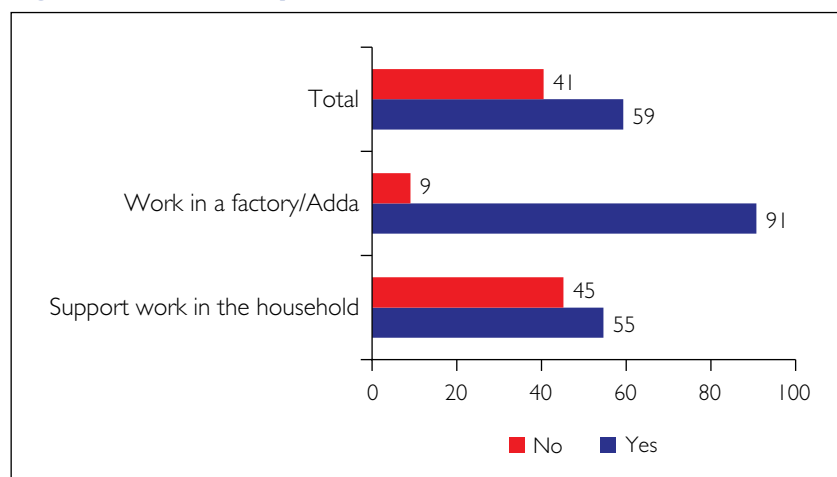


Figure 4.14: Would you like to do the same work as an adult





boredom, tiredness and indifference towards their work. Analysing the difference in perception given the place of work, it is interesting to note that all 22 children working in small factories/*Addas* said that they were happy with their work; the little discontent expressed was only by children working in homes (Table 15 – Annexure A). Many children in-fact said that they would like to continue the same work as adults (Figure 4.14). This willingness to undertake the same work as *Adda* owners in future when juxtaposed with the fact that *Adda* owners have also been ex-child labourers hints at their perpetual presence in the informal sector of the garment industry.

69 of the total 170 respondents, i.e., nearly 41%, who did not want to continue in the same profession in the future expressed a variety of occupations that they would like to pursue in the future including being a doctor, engineer, police, lawyer, teacher, driver, tailor, factory manager and such like (Table 16 – Annexure A).

Important to note here is that most of these children have little exposure to other ways of life and other professions; most are stuck in the cycle of poverty and surviving for a living. Thus many may not know about other professions or believe that they are capable of achieving them; this may be one of the reason for many children wanting to continue in the same profession seeing that it ensures survival and that they already know the skill and the system.

Awareness on issues of child labour and Right to Education (RTE) were quite high among all respondents; with more than 78% respondents being aware of the RTE and that it is illegal for children below the age of 14 years to be employed (Figure 4.15). This indicated that despite high level of awareness, children continued to work.



Awareness regarding government initiatives is relatively high with 45% respondents being aware about raids to rescue and protect children engaged in exploitative labour (Figure 4.16). 9% were aware of Non-Government Organisations and help lines working on child labour that could be contacted in case of any issue. Of those aware of Non-Government Organisations, 27% (4 respondents) mentioned that they had met representatives of such organisations.

Figure 4.15: Awareness on issues

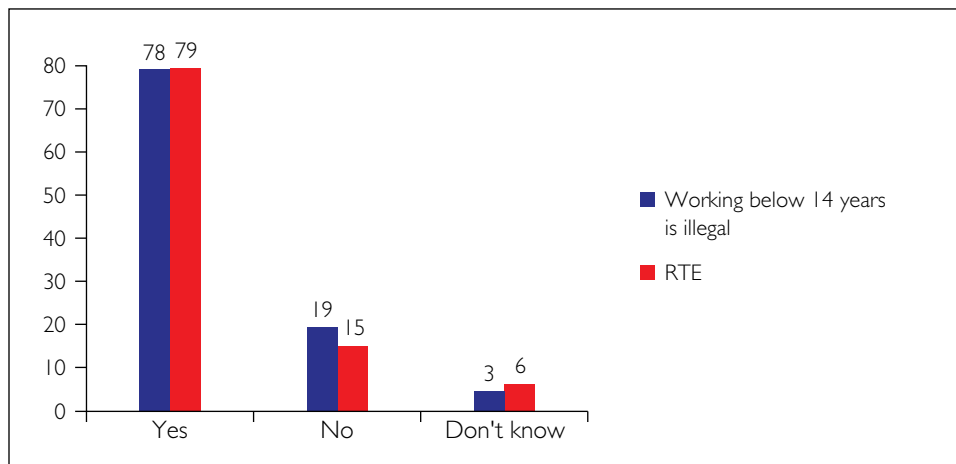
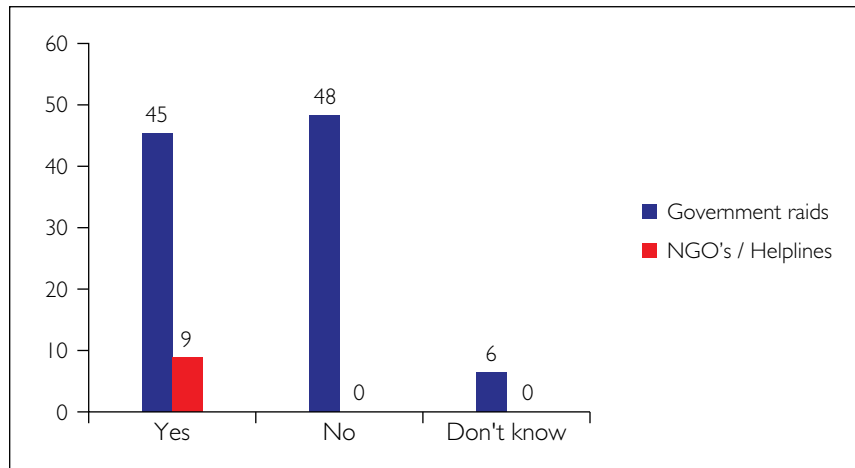




Figure 4.16: Awareness on initiatives for child labour



On being asked to name some organisations that they are aware of, children mentioned Save the Children, Childline and Bachpan Bachao Aandolan. Some respondents, in-fact, knew the 1098, Childline number.

Table 4.12 presented below provides a consolidated overview of living and working conditions of children in the garment industry based on the study findings.

Thus, children are often subject to poor living and working conditions, owing to poverty, fierce competition and price cutting in the garment industry. They are exposed to several risks and hazards, which along with poor nutrition could have a long-term impact on their health and well being. For instance, poor eyesight and posture along with poor nutrition, could lead to stunted growth, permanent posture issues and poor eyesight in the long-run.

Owners of many *Addas* and small units with whom interactions were undertaken mentioned that they also began working at a young age, having progressed to be owners now, they said **'one could be engaged in the garment profession till about 35-40 years of age; after which the body begins to give up and the eyes and hands are not so sharp to undertake work'**.

Despite children's awareness on the illegality of child labour and right to free and compulsory education poor pay and work conditions and lack of welfare benefits, they continue to do this work. Economic factors due to informal sector and lack of better known opportunities for the households continues to push children into informal sector of the garment industry.

4.5 Persistence of Child Labour in Garment Industry

It is only under extreme economic distress that children are forced to forego educational opportunities and take up jobs that are mostly exploitative.⁸ A study to understand 'factors contributing to the incidence of child labour in small scale commercial establishments',⁹ reveals that 52% of the children who were part of the study reported that they began working only because their parents wanted them to, since the economic background of the family was very poor. Some reported that their father/parents did not get any work throughout the financial year and the burden of the families financial crisis was on them. Desire to earn for a better living, some pocket money and no interest in studies

⁸ Parliamentary reference note on Child Labour.

⁹ Factors contributing to the incidence of Child Labour in Small Scale Commercial Establishments – A study in Delhi; Bishnu Mohan Dash; OIDA International Journal of Sustainable Development 05: 12 (2013).



Table 4.12: Living and working conditions of children in the garment industry

	Household level	Adda/Small units (Type 4 & 5)	Larger units/factories (Type 3)
Type of activities undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thread cutting • Stone pasting/Embellishment • Embroidery • Packaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embroidery • Stone pasting/Embellishment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Packaging • Delivery
Age group of children involved	4-5 years onwards	7-10 years onwards	Above 14 years
Hours of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-4 hours on an average for those children enrolled in school • Day long for those not enrolled in school and not engaging in other activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12-14 hours a day; barring rest hours • No weekly off day/holiday 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8-10 hour work shifts • Weekly one day holiday
Wage rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household paid on a piece rate basis • No money paid to the child as such; child is given some money for expenses by parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid on a piece rate basis, depending on the kind of work involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid a monthly salary ranging from Rs. 3000 – 5000
Living conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households engaging in such work usually lived in slums/resettlement colonies in Delhi • 1-2 room accommodations, housing 6-7 members • In very poor families, food is usually scarce and shared in the household 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lived within the work premises/ Adda itself • In some Addas, owners may pay a basic subsistence amount for food • Else there may be arrangements for people to cook • In some Addas there may be no arrangement for cooking; and no amount provided for food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children lived in their own homes and travel to factories for work • Lived in 1-2 room accommodations, housing 6-7 members
Hazards at workplace	Exposure to needles, cutter, sharp tools, cramped space, poor light, little ventilation	Exposure to needles, cutter, sharp tools, cramped space, poor light, little ventilation, long work hours	Exposure to loud/ constant noise of large machines, poor ventilation, sharp tools and machines
Any benefits – medical etc.	None	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-case of any injuries at work place; the medical expenses are taken care of by the unit • At times co-workers/official staff may even accompany to the medical facility
Any abuse faced – physical, verbal, emotional	Verbal/ physical abuse from parents, if any; rare	Verbal/ physical/ sexual abuse from co-workers and older men living in the same place	
Education	Most enrolled in and attending school	Not enrolled in or do not attend school	Mostly school drop-outs who worked to support the household

are also some of the reasons reported by children for engaging in work. Similar aspects of children working in the garment industry have also been seen in the study.

Interactions with children, parents/caregivers and other stakeholders during the course of the study revealed that one of the main reasons for children engaging in work in the garment industry was to *support the household income*. As mentioned in the earlier section, the informal sector of the garment industry thrives on the migrant population. Poor agricultural produce, change in climate and rainfall



patterns and lack of support to undertake and sustain agricultural work is forcing many to look for alternative employment options. Most households interacted with, claim that the opportunity for work is often poor in the villages and thus many come to cities in search of work and income.

“Gao meh kheti meh koi paisa nahi ata, ulta hume he daalna padta hai; yahan kam se kam kaam karo toh maehne ke ant meh haath meh kuch paisa toh ata hai”

(In the villages, there is no income in agriculture, in fact we have to keep investing money; in the cities at least at the end of the month, some income is generated)

— Respondent from Geeta Colony

The garment industry in Delhi being large and growing with rapid expansion in the unorganised sector, provides scope for the engagement of large number of skilled and unskilled workers. The unorganised sector, not being governed by labour laws, provides these units the opportunity to engage children at low wages and children the opportunity to earn in order to support their households.

Many contractors, in need of labour, bring children directly from their native villages. Being native of the village, they carry local good will, making it easy to convince parents to let their children accompany them at times they may even pay a small amount of money to the parents, to allow them to send their children to work. Parents and households often short of money, readily accept such propositions. It is also believed that the child would learn a skill, which would be useful for him to earn money later and support the household. Thus, the motivation of money and prospects of earning in the future lure both parents and children to agreeing to work in this sector. Unaware, parents and children in most cases do not enquire about work conditions or pay etc. Contractors, on bringing children, often exploit them by making them work for long hours with poor pay. Also, children being young and vulnerable often demand less and obey orders easily, making them convenient employees.



The poor quality of life and prospects of a bleak future in the villages, often de-motivates young boys, who run away to cities in search of a better life, employment and freedom. Garment units being abundant with the offer of a place to live, food and some money, provides these boys a base in the city. Some, inspired by their friends and relatives who work in the city, accompany them and join them to undertake work in the sector. Many a times, children who are rescued from garment units and sent back to their families come back and re-join the units. The poor work conditions seems better than the lack of opportunity in the village.

At a household level, though families migrate to the city, given the high cost of living, the earning of a single member (which is also in most cases quite poor) is usually insufficient to meet costs. Unlike other employments, several garment related activities can be undertaken at home, giving women at home the flexibility to both work, as well as take care of the household and children. Women do not mind working for a poor pay, knowing that doing the same work in an organised unit would pay more, as long as they have the flexibility to work at home. Owing to socio-cultural factors, many women are limited to living at home and are unable to step out to work. At a household level, children are inevitably dragged into supporting their mothers, the work being paid for on a piece rate basis, the more number of pieces a household is able to complete, greater the income. Poor household income and living conditions force parents to involve their children in assisting with work.



“Pati zyada se zyada 5000–6000 kama lete hai, itne bacche hai kahan se pet sab ke bhareng, gharka bhaada, is kaam se kuch toh paisa ata hai; bacche bhi saath karain toh aur paisa aega aur kya”

(Husband earns INR 5000–6000 a month, with so many children and little money how do we feed all of them and pay the house rent? At least we are able to make some money with this work, if children also work with us, we can make more money)

— *Mother of children working within their homes in Kailash Nagar on being asked on involving children in garment related work*

In many households children, who were attending school in their villages were unable to enroll in schools in Delhi owing to the lack of proper proof. These children sitting idle at home begin to help their mother undertake garment related work. Several parents also felt that children, though enrolled in schools, are not given proper attention in schools and thus are not motivated to attend school. Many children bunk school and wander around in the slums. Home based garment industry work is seen as a way to engage them into supporting the household income and ward off any possibilities of them getting into anti-social activities. Some parents also feel that after school hours the localities are often unsafe for children to play in and they would rather prefer for the children to sit indoors and also help out with work in the available time.

“Bacche idhar udhar ghoomte hai, buri aadato meh pad jaate hai, isse theek toh ghar baith ke kuch kaam karle, kuch paise bhi ban jaenge”

(Children roam around idle and get into bad habits; compared to this, it is better that they sit at home and work, at least they would earn some money)

— *Mother of children engaged in home based work in Sangam Vihar, South Delhi*

Older boys in many households, though have ambitions of studying and would like to pursue higher education, often have to drop out of school, owing to poor financial conditions of the household. Being older, they have the opportunity to engage in the organised sector and earn better wages. Many thus engage in activities such as packaging, delivery etc., in garment units, both in the organised and unorganised sector, given availability of units in/or near their place of residence. Many such boys, who have previously been part of several educational and training programmes of NGOs such as Save the Children, Salaam Balak Trust etc., are aware that it is illegal for children to engage in labour; yet given poor financial conditions have no choice but to engage in work. Some such boys often work in factories for 10 – 12 hour shifts, come home and help with some garment related activities at home as well for a few hours before they sleep.

The above mentioned conditions, causing child labour leads to the conclusion that the issue of child labour is rooted in and essentially stems from the larger issue of poverty and lack of quality education. It is the need for money and survival that also forces parents to push their children into employment. Several parents said that given a choice they would not want to put their children in employment. It is only due to compelling circumstances that they resort to engage their children in work.

“Kaun chahega ki uska baccha school na jake kaam kare, agar saari suvidha hoti toh hum bhi apne baccho ko padhate/likhate; par kharche itne hai, kahan se aaenge paise”

(Who would want that their children should work and not study; if we had all the facilities, then we would also educate our children, however, expenses are so many; where will the money come from?)

— *Mother in Shahpurjat, South Delhi*



In this content, it is imperative to spread awareness and sensitise all stakeholders on the more long term impact of children working in the garment industry, resulting in the continuous vicious circle of poverty caused by generations of low paid unskilled workers.

4.6 Perception and Role of Stakeholders in Addressing the Issue

Government and Non-Government Organisations, apparel manufacturers, retailers, sub-contractors, Apparel Export Promotion Council (APEC), Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), UN agencies etc. are all important stakeholders in addressing the issues of child labour specifically in the garment industry.

4.6.1 Perceptions of Government Bodies and Functionaries

Concerning the issue of child labour, the Ministry of Labour and Employment under Government of India has developed National Child Labour Policy and National Child Labour Project Scheme. Under the project, systems for rescue and protection of children have been established through setting up District Task Force to ensure implementation of the programme and 24-hour helpline for children in difficult circumstances. Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) have been constituted to ensure protection of children in need of care and protection. Interactions were held with members of each of the above mentioned networks. Some of the highlights of the discussions are as follows:

- ***Child labour in the garment industry*** – Members of Childline and Child Welfare Committees reported that children were engaged in the garment industry mostly as part of small unregistered manufacturing units scattered all over the city and at home, along with the women. Over the years, due to stringent laws against employing children, presence of child labour in registered units and large factories has almost completely diminished. In addition to stringent laws, some of the other reasons that played a role in bringing down child labour in organised sector are: institutionalisation of systems to address the issue, greater awareness among parents about exploitation of child labour in workplace, and better understanding of the importance of education. Consequently though, they also felt that engagement of children in domestic work and restaurants had increased.

While children working in factories and small units come under the purview of Child Labour Prohibition and Regular Act (CLPRA), those working at home are seen as working within the private space of their families. There is little scope for intervention by any legal authoritative bodies, unless there is a specific complaint pertaining to employment of a child. Another important aspect is that in the home-based business operations, no specific trade link is made with the children; the children are usually enrolled in government or private schools in the vicinity and attend classes regularly. Parents claim that children in their free and leisure hours support the mother and other women at home to carry out work and enhance earning. Thus, in the eyes of the law these are school going students who help with family chores and neither child labour law or law enforcement agencies are in a position to intervene.

Older girls, who drop out of school or do not pursue higher education after school, often find such activities as an opportunity for skill building for any possible future home based employment.

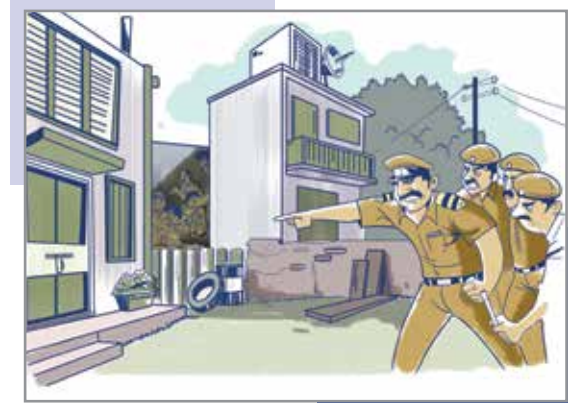
- ***Mechanisms for identification and protection of children*** – It is civil society organisations, District Task Forces and Childline that are involved with identification and rescue of children. The process begins with a report/complaint made to Childline. This complaint can be made by children themselves, civil society representatives or any observers or parents. The case is then verified



by Childline, efforts are made to locally resolve the issue, if possible and as a last resort, with permission and support from the District Task Force and one representative from the civil society, raids are conducted in specific areas on specific owners in factories etc., and children are rescued.

Once rescued, the protection and rehabilitation of the children is usually the responsibility of the Child Welfare Committees under the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS). An established mechanism involving several departments looking into aspects of education, health, security, rehabilitation works collectively to ensure that the child's rights are restored and he/she is protected.

The CWCs are responsible for this process are a quasi-judicial body and hear cases that may be brought before the committee by Childline, police, civil society or individuals to protect a child in distress. The CWCs analyze the case and case-dependent decisions are taken – children are either sent back to their own village and families in-case of migrants, families are counseled and children enrolled in schools; else children may be kept in child welfare homes in Delhi, and educated and trained till they are adults.



However, the process of identification and rescue of children is fraught with challenges, as articulated by Childline representatives. 'Given the multiplicity of agencies and actors involved in a raid and rescue response (Childline, District Task Force, civil society representatives and police) and given the processes involved, news of raids and visits reaches the locality/ employer beforehand. This gives the employer the opportunity to be prepared and time to hide the children. In fact in many locations, children are prepared/coached to say that they are above the age of 14 years; and to run and hide in specific spots, if any unknown person approaches'. This nexus between authorities and employers is a major hurdle to rescue operations.

In addition, most of these units being located in residential areas, function behind closed doors, shutters and covered up windows. These clandestine efforts make the identification extremely difficult, unless there is any specific information from a trusted source.

• **Way Ahead**

- It was felt by several duty bearers that involvement of the larger society and stakeholders such as local panchayat members and municipal councilors, who could monitor school enrolment and drop-out of children, would be useful to prevent child labour and at-risk children could be identified early and counseled.
- The local administration in all states, especially ones with high child labour and ones from which children migrate, should take an active role in curbing this migration and control migration networks. Also, once rehabilitated, they should ensure that the child is enrolled in school and does not fall into the same cycle of migration.
- Local governments should play an active role in monitoring home based work and the nature of involvement of children.
- A larger role was seen for civil societies, which, it was felt could create awareness about the issue in the community, especially amongst parents to prevent exploitation and migration of children for labour.



4.6.2 Perception of Garment Manufacturers and Contractors

Interactions were held with various garment manufacturers, owners/managers of large export units, mid-level factories and small home-based units, and contractors, who took work from large units on contract and further sub-contracted to households.

All of these stakeholders were aware of the laws, against employing children under the age of 14 years. While large units and factories felt that post a few previous incidents involving international companies and child labour, the international market claimed to have a zero tolerance policy towards non-compliance of international labour and sub-contracting rules and regulations by garment manufacturing companies or merchants. Non-compliance by employing child labour would lead to cancellation of export licenses. Smaller units however, are not so particular about following the norms. Most owners of small units, themselves began as child workers, having progressed to become owners; while their own children attend school and do not work, they often have young boys, working as a part of their units.

Most such owners of small units were skeptical and guarded while talking about the issue and often insisted that they do not employ children less than 14 years of age. Many also felt that there was too much sensitivity around the issue and that it was not all so bad – it was at the end of the day, an opportunity for the children – as it was for them, to break away from the cycle of poverty from the villages and make a better living. Almost all owners opposed the common belief and shared that it was entirely up to each employee to decide the number of work hours per day. They reiterated that there was no pressure from owners to work long hours. The work was undertaken on a piece rate basis and more the number of pieces each employee made, more money they were able to make for themselves.

“Kaam poora piece rate pe hota hai, jitna piece banao utna apna faida, kisipe koi bandish nahi, jitna kaam karn chahe, utna kare”

(Entire work is based on piece rate basis, as many pieces one makes, that much one benefits from it; there is no compulsion for any worker, as much as they would like to do and earn, they can)

While most owners of small units claimed not to employ children below the age of 14 years; during visits made by the teams to Madanpur Khadar, Batla House, Shahpur jat, Nabi Karim, it was observed that children of different age groups, with some who looked as young as 5 - 6 years, were engaged in various skilled and unskilled tasks as a part of various informal household units.

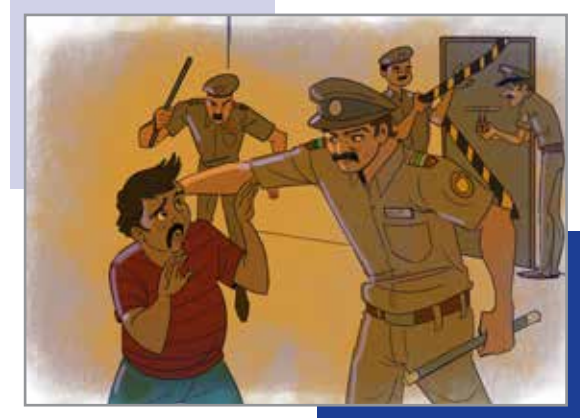
Some owners also felt that recently, with the economic slowdown in the market, it was getting difficult to find workers and even getting work done at households was becoming an issue. With lesser rates, it was becoming difficult for contractors and owners to pay households at the earlier rates. One particular garment unit owner from Madanpur Khadar, originally from Bihar, also felt that with better livelihood now in Bihar and with many people migrating to the gulf countries for work, children migrating to places like Delhi had reduced immensely. An owner of a small unit in fact said that an NGO worked in his area of operation and often sensitised children, parents and even him leading to fewer children wanting to enter the occupation.

On the issue of child labour as such, some respondents shared that given the frequent raids, all owners were now in fact scared of employing children. If the police have the faintest inkling, all units in the area are sealed and owners are put behind bars. One *Adda* owner in Tuglaqabad recounted the story of his friend, also an *Adda* owner, who was talking to a young boy and giving him directions; the



police assumed that he was employed and caught his friend and put him behind bars and sealed all his units.

Discussions with former AEPC chairman revealed that international pressure had completely eliminated child labour in the organised sector of the garment industry. He added that most factories, now as part of compliance protocol displayed a board in the manufacturing unit stating that children under the age of 18 years are not employed. He also mentioned that in export production, quality is of utmost importance, any slack in quality could lead to rejection of the entire consignments and thus each unit had to comply with ethical and environmental standards to ensure that quality. There were mandatory audits conducted by international agencies for its domestic counterparts. Therefore, all export oriented factories followed norms of minimum physical work space per employee, light and ventilation, temperature control, protective clothing for tasks involving sharp, hot and chemical tools etc., systems of regular pay and job security, holidays and benefits for employees. Conversely, it was not possible to ensure complete in-house production and finishing of all products at all times; certain tasks were carried out in factories and some outsourced to the open market through contractors and middle men, either regularly or in times of need. He conceded that human resource was in fact one of the biggest challenges of the industry and that even large manufacturing units were dependent on outsourcing during incidents of temporal and financial constraints.



While within the formal unit, it was the complete responsibility of the owners to ensure that all standards were followed and laws maintained, little was done or known beyond the factory boundaries. While it is a known fact that children are involved in work within families and small household units, owners of large units shared that it was nearly impossible to impose their rules and standards on small household units. Some owners said that at times, monitoring teams were sent to review the work of the contractor on-site; however, this is a rare event.

4.6.3 Perceptions of Non-Government Organisations and Child Rights Experts

Interactions were held with researchers and technical experts, programme and policy implementers and field staff of several non-government organisations working on the issue of child labour and child rights. A vast range of perspectives were revealed by different civil society organisations on the issue. While one lobby strongly advocated for a blanket ban on all forms of child labour in the light of every child's right to enjoy a free and leisurely childhood; another acknowledged a multivariate response to the complex problem of child labour, an issue which was seen as a compelling result of multiple vulnerabilities faced by the bottom of the pyramid. The latter section's response involved improving behavior and perceptions of parents and children themselves, role of various agencies in implementing child protection systems; enhancing the education systems and income generating opportunities. Some key opinions and aspects that brought out the issue of child labour in a different light than as it is normally seen are as listed below:

- One view that was articulated was that in many locations, the neighbourhood was considered unsafe for children by the parents. Lack of recreational parks and presence of anti-social elements contributed to making slums unsafe for children. It was felt that it would be better and more useful for the child to sit at home and help the mothers with garment related work than stepping out of the house. Some felt that there is likelihood for children getting into bad company hence, it is better for them to stay at home.



- Some field level personnel of a grass root NGO working with rescuing children said that many children left their homes to be free and independent, and to be away from poverty and restrictive family living. They migrate to cities hoping for a better living but often get stuck into doing menial jobs such as rag picking in and around the railway station, working at small factories/units, roadside eating stalls/hotels etc. These children prefer this life of hardship to the one in villages, as this at least gives them some hope. This is also the reason why many children keep coming back, despite having being rescued and rehabilitated.
- ‘Some parents are extremely restrictive and cannot look beyond money’, says a teacher from a local NGO that runs a school for rescued child labourers. She explained that the perspective of parents was the key to understanding and addressing the issue of child labour. It was felt that while every parent did think of the welfare and benefit of the child, the poor living conditions however, forced them to think more about money first. It was felt by many parents that there was no harm if the child, after school and home-work, spent some time helping with some work, as the income from that work would ultimately benefit the child, in providing them with better facilities.
- The lack of proper systems of education – insufficient teachers in government schools, private schools being expensive and lack of any encouragement or guidance at home; means that children are often not motivated to study. In the name of school, many children loiter around; it was thus felt by families that rather than spending time roaming around, children may as well work and make some money.
- The lack of support systems and unavailability of services and proper care at many government health facilities forced families to access expensive private healthcare. Lack of systems of insurance and social security, force families to borrow money and sell assets; to repay debts, often the entire family, including children work.
- No systems to address the issue of child labour in the source locations – several NGO representatives and experts felt that while some efforts were being made to address the issue in locations like Delhi, where children migrate, there was not enough being done at source locations – states like Bihar, UP, West Bengal etc. to prevent the en-mass migration of children. Also, children who are rescued and sent back are often not linked to rehabilitative programmes in their native villages. Their families are also not counseled. Such children in many cases re-migrate to cities in search of employment and income.
- The need to address the larger issue hitting the root cause of child labour was reiterated. Unless efforts are made to address issues of poverty, improved systems of education and health, child labour would persist, as rescue and rehabilitation were limited to only a certain number of children.

4.7 Role of Save the Children in Addressing Child Labour

Save the Children is a leading independent child rights organisation working for the rights of children in over 126 countries across the world. Save the Children India works on addressing various child rights issues including humanitarian relief, health and nutrition, education, child protection and disaster risk reduction.

The organisation has been working on the issue of street and working children in Delhi and several other locations in India. The organisation is implementing a project on ‘Protecting the Right of Children Working in the Garment Industry’ in Delhi since 2011. The project aims to gradually withdraw children working in the garment industry in Delhi and work towards bringing long-term impact in their quality of life. The intervention engaged critical stakeholders involved in the informal sector of the garment industry, such as the government institutions, factory owners, local contractors, parents of child labourers and concerned citizens from the communities dominated by the informal sector of the garment industry.



Some of the key initiatives undertaken to address the developmental and protection needs of children working in the garment industry are listed below.

- **Establishment of Multi-purpose Activity Centres (MAC):** Along with implementing partner NGOs such as Salaam Baalak Trust (SBT) and EFRAH, Save the Children has established multi-purpose activity centres for children engaged in the garment industry in different locations in Delhi across three districts; South, South-East and East Delhi. These community based centres enroll children engaged in garment work between the age of 6 to 14 years. Children engaged in home based work and *Addas* come to the centre. The objective of this centre is to enhance children's learning skills, orient them on child rights and life skills and guide them to access their rights including the right to education. Some of the activities undertaken in each of these centres are:
 - **Provision of Age Appropriate learning:** Each child is taught based on his/her individual learning level which is determined by an assessment test at the beginning of their enrolment in the centre. They are provided learning skills with the ultimate aim to enroll children into the formal education system. In addition to school readiness skills, children are given the opportunity and freedom to interact with each other and engage in various group activities so as to promote holistic learning and development. To improve children's leadership skills, selected children also attend an annual residential training on leadership.
 - **Awareness generation on the issue of child labour:** Children's awareness on child rights is enhanced especially on right to education and child protection issues.
 - **Counseling:** Any child in distress or in need of care and protection is provided with in-house counseling services at the activity centre.
 - **Provision of health care services:** Children are provided access to basic health services by organising health camps within the centre or in the community to target even those children who are not enrolled in the centre. The camps are organised on monthly or quarterly basis.
 - **Enrollment of children into formal education:** Children who are ready to be enrolled into the formal education system are helped with enrollment processes by helping them identifying schools and supporting parents in the school admission process.
- **Community mobilisation:** In order to build awareness of parents on the long term impact of child labour in the informal sector, the field staff regularly interacts with parents and the larger community through meetings and focused group discussions held at the centre. They work with parents to build their understanding on children's right to rest and leisure; and to motivate parents to withdraw their children away from undertaking work in the garment industry.
- **Vocational training for adolescents:** Through vocational training centres, adolescents nearing the age of 18 years are equipped with marketable vocational skills to diversify their employment opportunities on completion of the age of 18 years. Adolescents in the age group of 15-18 years are trained on vocational courses like computer literacy, spoken English, tailoring and beauty culture.
- **Awareness generation and capacity development:** Keeping in line with the preventive approach of the intervention, several training and awareness generation activities are organised at the district level with stakeholders such as the police, officials of the labour department etc. These trainings are expected to create a larger awareness of laws and rights of children and to ensure sensitivity of officials while dealing with the issue.
- **Conducting raids to rescue child labour:** In coordination with the District Task Force, the project has undertaken raid and rescue operations in several locations in Delhi.



Project Achievements

Some of the major achievements of the project till July 2014 are as follows:

- Nearly 1300 children across the city benefited from the intervention including bridge course learning through MAC, access to legal social entitlements, formal education, child rights awareness and counseling services.
- Nearly 400 children were released from child labour through raid and rescue operations and through community sensitisation.
- Approximately 300 children were enrolled in government schools.
- Close to 250 children were given vocational training.
- More than 20 training programmes were conducted and over 700 police personnel sensitised.
- Over 2000 children were provided healthcare facilities.

Children and parents with whom interactions were held during the data collection also appreciated the effort of the local field staff and the project intervention. They felt it provided an avenue for education for children who could, for various reasons, not obtain formal education. Several parents and older children showed keen interest in vocational training courses. Community members commended the staff for being friendly, helpful and approachable. Some common issues for which the community members approached the field workers were support in obtaining proofs for school admission, acquiring aadhar card, and access to health services. This reflects the goodwill created by the field staff and the project intervention in the community.

Conclusion and Way Forward

Despite legislation against child labour and efforts of civil society organisations, children continue to be engaged in the garment industry in Delhi. These children have been found to have either migrated or belong to the second generation of migrated communities. Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are some of the states from where communities migrate and engage in the garment industry with children working in the informal sector and adults in the organised sector. Any intervention towards child labour in this industry has to focus on the issues at the source states.

There are no children in the organised garment firms owing to contractual obligations of Indian industry with the international buyers. While the international buyers expect the manufactures to comply with their rules, they also expect them to produce at low rates in order to be ahead in industrial competition. One of the means to cut cost is by sub-contracting processes to the unorganised sector where the workers are paid wages far below the minimum wages prescribed by the Government. Hence, to earn more, the families are forced to take higher volumes and in the process, children get engaged too.



Many of the processes such as stitching and button hole making or machine embroidery are sourced out. Of the processes that are sourced out, two continue to be dependent on manual labour. One is cutting the threads in finished garments and the other is embellishment through embroidery and moti sticking. It is in these two processes that the children are engaged.

The process of informalisation of the garment making, which enables outsourcing while helping to reduce costs, leads to the engagement of children in garment production. As the adult earning is low, in order to ensure that the ends can be met, children are pushed into labour at the household level. This, coupled with the fact that learning environment in schools is hardly appealing for the children, most children (interviewed) would rather drop out of school.

Child labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 of Government of India does not consider *home based work* as child labour. However, Save the Children's intervention approach on addressing the issue of child labour views the engagement of children in work as means of deprivation of child rights.



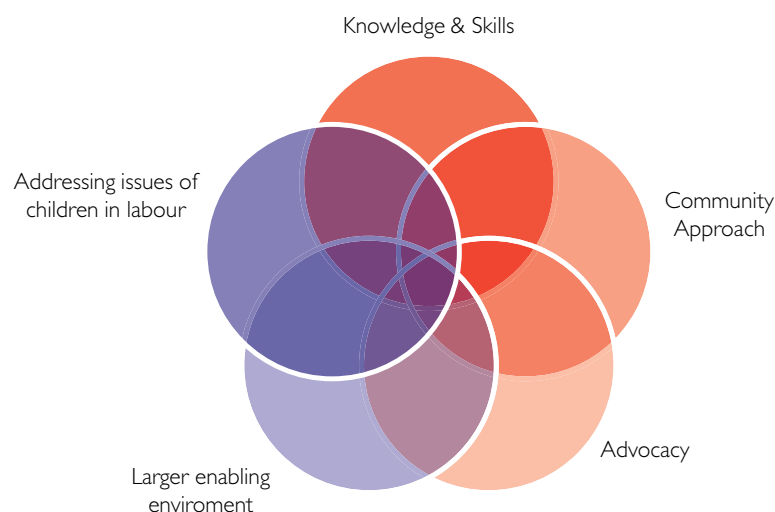
Many children do not attend school or drop out at an early age to support their families. Further, the working condition of the children alienates them from their rights.

The following findings reiterate the need to address the issues of children working in the Garment Industry:

- Children seem to be involved primarily at the household level (87% respondents) with 13% respondents working in *Addas*
- At the household, it is predominantly the female child (69% of those working at home) who supports garment related activities
- Although there may be some cases of children being forced to work, nearly 80% respondents work out of will to supplement the household income
- Most children do not seem to be deprived of education; 70% respondents working at home attend school. Many in fact attend school but seem to have no interest in education; 50% of those working in *Addas* said that they undertook this work as they were not interested in studying
- The working and living conditions of these children, owing to poverty, are dismal. Given the available resources, most families try and give their children the best possible living. Small household based units are also established in places with low rental cost
- The larger issue appears to be the poor pay for work from the garment industry, which means that the families and workers have to undertake greater volume of work, leading to families involving more hands in the form of children; and those in small factories working longer hours.

The following section describes a proposed remedial model and recommendations for various stakeholders including the government, corporates, civil society organisations. The model entails a five pronged approach to address issues of children in the garment industry.

1. Addressing knowledge and skills of children
2. Community based approach
3. Addressing issues of child labour
4. Advocacy
5. Addressing the larger environment that leads to child labour





The matrix presented below, details the above mentioned approach:

Proposed approach/Recommendation	Aspects it addresses	Expected outcomes	Role of stakeholders in facilitating implementation of the approach		
			SCF/Civil society	Government	Garment industry/Corporate sector
Addressing knowledge and skills of children					
Post-school centres for working children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides an avenue for children to play/engage in recreational activities after schools Children could be helped with school/home work language skills could be improved Provision of non-formal education to those not enrolled in schools Regular health-checkups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moves children away from spending time at home post-school, thus reducing the available work-time Improves skills and knowledge Bridges gap between school and non-school going 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further the already established centres to take-up this role Establish such centres in each hot-spot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of vocational training centres Effort to establish and institutionalise newer training courses, given market needs 	Support of the garment industry stakeholders could be sought to establish centers as a part of their CSR initiatives
Vocational training/Skill building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study to map the available employments and aspirations of children engaged at present Link children to available IT training centres Provision of soft-skills training Apart from the established/available vocational courses – such as tailoring, beautician training, basic computer course etc.; given the aspects of education, skill and employability, training for occupations such as driving, specific IT related courses, store/cash counter management, food delivery etc., should be looked at to generate alternate occupations Linking courses with employment opportunities/job placements – such as livelihood schemes, employment exchange, link-ups with private/non-government organisations to employ those trained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A work-force, trained and skilled in various domains is created Increase in employment opportunities Provision of alternative options and occupations apart from the garment sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake skill and employment mapping exercise Explore opportunities to design and provide vocational courses, apart from those that already available Establish and support the establishment of vocational training centres Establish linkages with various employment opportunities 		
Knowledge on rights/entitlements and managing issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sessions/classes to increase the awareness and knowledge of children on aspects of their right and entitlements as children and child labour – such as the RTE, CLPRA, minimum wages etc. Creating awareness and know-how on addressing/managing issues of violence and abuse, seeking help, healthcare, education etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children more aware and adept to dealing with any situations of abuse and violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake sessions/classes as a part of the post-school and vocational training centers 		

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Proposed approach/Recommendation	Aspects it addresses	Expected outcomes	Role of stakeholders in facilitating implementation of the approach		
			SCF/Civil society	Government	Garment industry/Corporate sector
Encourage and support education among children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate admission processes – such as helping migrant families with proper documentation for school admissions Bridge courses to mainstream children into formal education Encouraging children enrolled in non-formal education to enroll in the formal education system Identifying children good at and interested in formal education and financially support their educational aspirations/ higher education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More number of children mainstreaming into formal education and pursuing higher education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through local support agencies, facilitate admission processes Integration of children with open school Financial support/ scholarships for few children to pursue higher education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of education – Establishment and easy admission to bridge course Ensuring easy admission procedures for migrants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for education for children in labour; establish scholarships and assistance schemes through the garment/traders associations
Improving the school environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying schools in hot-spot locations where children engaging in garment work are enrolled - Sensitisation/orientation of teachers to address any special needs of working children Orientation of teachers in innovative teaching techniques Improving the child-student ratio and introduction of innovative/participatory teaching methods Re-integration of drop-outs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop greater interest in children for education Improving quality of education provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy with the government to improve the educational facilities and teacher-student ratio Sensitisation/ orientation of teachers Support for monitoring and re-integrating drop-outs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of education – Hiring teachers to improve student-teacher ratio Introducing innovative teaching methods as a part of the school curriculum Monitoring drop-outs; reaching out and re-integrating into the system 	
Community-based Approach					
Creating women's and youth groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitisation of the groups on issues of child labour and child rights; creating awareness on issues of social entitlements Youth groups could be sensitised to be vigilant of the issue and report cases to the appropriate authorities In due course of time, these groups could be key advocacy agents in the local communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater community sensitisation and awareness on the issue Available groups to look out for and report on the issue, undertake advocacy and support any activities on the issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing and orienting the groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition for these groups as key community agents 	

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Proposed approach/Recommendation	Aspects it addresses	Expected outcomes	Role of stakeholders in facilitating implementation of the approach		
			SCF/Civil society	Government	Garment industry/Corporate sector
Large-scale awareness campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focused campaigns in hot-spot areas Liaisoning and reaching out to a range of stakeholders including local garment units, contractors, local leaders etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater community sensitisation and awareness on the issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local level liaisoning and advocacy with local leaders and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Labour and employment to undertake focused campaigns 	
Establishing contact/nodal points in hot-spots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nodal contact points in hot-spot areas; established in coordination with the police could help in early identification of children labourers in these areas Issues could be dealt with locally and more effectively The local contact points could develop local goodwill in the community and work towards awareness generation and perception change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early detection and local resolving of issues in hot spot communities A nodal point for the community and children to contact in case of need Greater awareness and consciousness in the community on the issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical support for the establishment of such contact points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of contact points 	
Addressing issues of children in labour					
Rehabilitation, tracking and monitoring of children in source locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On return, enrollment of children in schools and linking to Sarv-Siksha Abhiyan Systems in source locations/ states to track/ monitor the children being sent back and review their status and progress from time-to-time Counseling sessions with children, (those abused, addicted etc.) if required Sessions be held with parents of children who have been rescued and sent back to make them aware of the issues and work conditions of children working; and to try and motivate them to restrict the involvement of children in employment as larger impact of children undertaking unskilled work and leaving education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that children do not re-migrate Ensuring rehabilitation support for those who have been rescued 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination with states and establishment of appropriate systems 	

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Proposed approach/Recommendation	Aspects it addresses	Expected outcomes	Role of stakeholders in facilitating implementation of the approach	
			SCF/Civil society	Government
Convergent approach to addressing child labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a convergent forum, involving stakeholders from various departments such as Women and Child Development, Health, Labour, Rural Development etc., to address the issue of child labour as a whole and not just as a labour issue Establishing an inter-state forum for child labour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that all issues of children in labour including, rescue, protection, health etc., are dealt with comprehensively Ensuring shared responsibility between different states 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convergent forum can be established under the Delhi State Child protection society, with representatives of each of the mentioned departments as members Similar forums to be established in source states Inter-state forum, established under the ministry of Labour and Employment, GOI, with representatives of labour departments from different states, looking at the issue of child labour to develop a coordinated effort between states to address the issue
Advocacy				
With Government of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure better implementation of child labour elimination programmes To work with state governments to prevent migration of children for work A more convergent approach to addressing issues of child labour Facilitation of easy enrolment of families in various benefit schemes; and ensuring better implementation of such schemes Regulation of the unorganised garment sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater effort towards the issue of child labour at a national and state level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake advocacy 	

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Proposed approach/Recommendation	Aspects it addresses	Expected outcomes	Role of stakeholders in facilitating implementation of the approach		
			SCF/Civil society	Government Garment industry/ Corporate sector	
With state governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure better implementation of local livelihood programmes and schemes Undertake initiatives for employment Agricultural schemes and subsidies for farmers Skill building for youth Addressing issues of poverty, health system strengthening etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate local employment and prevent migration to cities Addressing larger issues of poverty and healthcare, leading to poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake advocacy in different states; work with local partners for advocating on the issue 		
With the corporate garment industry—units, AEPC, traders union etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow a zero tolerance policy towards vendors and subcontractors on violations of child rights Follow child rights and business principles* to ensure clean sourcing Making key stakeholders aware of critical issues of child labour in the unorganised sector Better pay for those working in the unorganised sector Monitoring on issues of child labour – spot checks on contractors Establishment and institutionalisation of women' SHG to undertake work Financial investment to support work on issues of child labour 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study/list key stakeholders, large units, forums and unions in the garment industry who could be approached with the issue Undertake Advocacy on various issues with stakeholders identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align its Outsourcing/subcontracting policy with Child Rights and Business Principals 	
Addressing the larger environment that leads to child labour					
Establishment of women self help groups	<p>Establishing self-help groups comprising women in each of the localities; given population and women work-force, one or more groups can be established in each location; women could congregate and work in a place nearby their homes for as many hours a day as is convenient. Young children could also be brought to this work-place and look after during work hours. The garment units could directly give work to these women' group, eliminating the middle-men and contractors</p> <p>Representatives of garment units could monitor the work from time to time and ensure that no children are involved in the production process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The groups would have an entity of their own which could at a later stage be formal bodies that could lobby for their rights Eliminate the middle men and to that extent ensure a more fair pay to women and households engaging in work With all women working in one location, the involvement of children could be monitored and curtailed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy with garment units, bodies and unions for establishment of SHG's Technical and implementation support for establishment of such groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition and support for such groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial support for the establishment and institutionalisation of women's SHG's; and ensuring work is given directly to them

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Proposed approach/Recommendation	Aspects it addresses	Expected outcomes	Role of stakeholders in facilitating implementation of the approach		
			SCF/Civil society	Government	
Systems for child protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police patrolling in areas identified as unsafe Establishment of parks and other open spaces where children can safely play and engage in recreational activities Rehabilitation services for children exposed to addiction and abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring a safe environment for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy with the Police, Public Works Department and Child Welfare Committees and other established networks for child protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delhi Police – Patrolling of key identified areas in each locality; Public Works department – regularisation of housing, creating safe spaces for parks CWC's – establishing rehabilitation centers 	Garment industry/Corporate sector
Avenues for urban employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of employment avenues for men and women Skill building to suit employability Link-ups with government, industry and non-government organisation (NGOs) for employment of those skilled Link-ups with urban employment schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving family income and reducing poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake assessment and skill building for men and women Enabling tie-ups with industry and NGO's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delhi Labour Department- Enable easy enrollment in schemes Establish employment schemes for migrants 	
Linking to schemes for social entitlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating social entitlement by providing support for enrollment in Aadhar, ration card etc. Facilitating enrolment in medical benefit schemes such as the RSBY 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving overall socio-economic status of the family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through local partners, facilitate support for enrolment in schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable easy enrollment in schemes 	

* Refer to the Ten Commandments for the corporate sector aligned towards securing the rights of children; established under Child Rights and Business Principals constituted collaboratively by The Global Compact, UNICEF and Save the Children.

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