

THE INVISIBLE HOME-BASED WORKERS

1. Background

This research report attempts to highlight and understand the living and working conditions of home-based workers (a person who produces goods and services for an employer in his/her home or any place other than the employer's workplace). Agrasar has been actively supporting the inter-state migrants with identity documentation and linking them with Employees' State Insurance (ESI), Provident Fund (PF) and other government schemes. While working with the community women at our Gandhinagar centre in Gurgaon, we observed that most of them are home-based workers and many of them have been facing the same problems. We made a decision to form a collective of home-based workers to bring them together, understand their situation better and enhance their connectivity. This report is to better our understanding of the worker and to strengthen our collective through knowledge.

This paper is divided into four parts. In the first part, to understand the in-depth situation of the home-based workers, we look at the root cause of the problem from the society's perspective. The second part shows how the legal system is failing to provide protection and fundamental rights to the workers, and we see the consequences of both the societal and legal issues in the third part. Finally in the fourth part we look at the possible solutions for moving forward and the limitations of the study which should be worked upon further.



2. Introduction

For this research, our definition of home-based workers aligns with the Social Security Code, 2020, which defines home-based workers as “a person engaged in the production of goods or services for an employer in his home or other premises of his choice other than the workplace of the employer, for remuneration, irrespective of whether or not the employer provides the equipment, materials or other inputs” (Ministry of Law and Justice 2020). There are two kinds of home-based workers. First, are the own-account workers, who are generally in direct contact with the market as they buy their raw materials. The second, are subcontracted workers without control over raw materials or finished goods. They are informally employed by a subcontractor, agent, or a middleman and are paid for the pieces they make (Sinha 2006). This research is primarily concerned with covering the problems of the second kind of workers who do not control raw materials or finished goods.

Based on the data drawn from the ILOSTAT Database¹ of 118 countries from 2000 to 2019, about 260 million people are employed in home-based work, of which 35 million are in developed countries. In India, there were an estimated 49.2 million home-based workers in 2011-12, which decreased to 41.9 million in 2017-18 (Bonnet, et al. 2021). The home-based workers comprise 11 per cent of the total employment in 2004-05 and 2011-12, but this share reduced to 9 per cent in 2017-18. There are agricultural and non-agricultural home-based workers, and most women are employed in the non-agricultural manufacturing sector. Around 72 per cent of total employment by industry in the field of home-based work in the manufacturing sector was occupied by women in the wearing apparel sector, while only 24 per cent were occupied by men in 2017-18. More than 50 per cent of women work for at least 36 hours per week in home-based work alone (Bonnet, et al. 2021).

These numbers may not represent the reality entirely. As per our experience, nearly 16 percent of the women (aged 18 years and above), whom we assist in our Workers Facilitation Centre in Gandhinagar, are home-based workers who often call their occupation a “time-pass activity”. This is one of the reasons why the home-based workers have remained invisible and their economic contributions are overlooked which gives an avenue to the law-makers to ignore the social benefits and other rights of the workers. Their working and living conditions are perhaps the most vulnerable compared to other informal workers.

¹ ILOSTAT is the database created by the Statistics Department of ILO. The ILO Department of Statistics establishes international standards for improved international comparability and better assessment of labour issues as well as produces appropriate, timely and comparable statistics.

3. Objective

The objective of this research study is to ascertain and highlight:

1. The working conditions of the home-based workers
2. The rights on papers vs their rights in practice
3. The collective bargaining power of workers

4. Research Methodology

We surveyed home-based workers in Gurgaon to understand their living and working conditions and what rights and protection are available to them. Through face-to-face interviews, we collected data from 30 women workers residing in Gandhinagar, 3 contractors and a subcontractor from the garment industry. The workers, contractors and the subcontractor were migrants from Bihar, UP, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and Haryana. The language of communication for the interview and throughout the conversation was Hindi for ease, comfort and better understanding. The purpose of the study was conveyed to the respondents beforehand, with an assurance of maintaining anonymity.

The interview was more in a discussion format where no questions were imposed on the participants, and data was collected voluntarily. The interviewer was also mindful of how they conversed with the participants to prevent offending anyone. Since most of them are busy and overburdened with work, the interviews were scheduled with due consideration of their time and convenience. The data collected was treated with the utmost confidentiality, and the information related to caste, religion, gender, race, etc., was handled with sensitivity to avoid any feeling of discrimination or biases.



We interviewed **30 home-based workers**, all of whom happened to be **women**. Of the 30, **16** work in the **garment industry** and **14** in the **automobile industry**. **Twenty-three** of them migrated to cities because their partners couldn't find work in the villages, and the remaining **5** followed their parent's occupational legacy and went on to work in the same field. The interviewees were from **Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and Haryana** (17 are from Uttar Pradesh and 8 from Bihar).

5. Research Findings

The workers in the garment manufacturing sector are engaged in stitching laces in Dupattas and stones and elastic on clothes. A few women were also making Santa Claus's socks to be exported abroad (as informed by the contractor). In the automobile industry, women were majorly engaged in two kinds of work- one was to stitch part of the seat covers (to be done using a stitching machine), and the second was rubber cutting, where automobile parts of rubber are to be separated from a rubber sheet produced by machines.

5.1. Restriction of the Domestic

5.1.1. Overburdened with the dual responsibility of care work (that remains undervalued) and paid home-based work, the women remain confined within their domestic spaces and yet 20 out of 30 reported negatively when asked whether they find the work tiring.

Most home-based workers are women who migrated to cities with their husbands. The reason for the preference for home-based work by the women was majorly to ease the double burden of work they have to face- paid work for an additional source of income and undervalued domestic and care work. The gendering of roles places the responsibility of domestic and care work solely on women, and for the pursuance of any other work (even if it is for an additional source of income for the household), they have to have completed or balanced it well with the domestic responsibility. Their work in both the domains is highly invalidated and invisibilised to an extent where they believe their paid work contribution is just a “**time-pass activity**”. Because of this invalidation of their work and experience, their economic contribution goes unnoticed.

With this double burden of work, it is evident that women get tired and complain. Informal mentions of no holidays on Sundays are evidence of their ignored rights. One of the women stated, पीस-रेट वालों का कोड़ सँडे नहीं होता मेडम! (Piece Rate workers don't get Sundays off, madame). But about 20 out of 30 workers answered negatively when asked whether they find the work tiring. This takes us into two possible directions- first, tiredness being a norm in their life that is not highlighted as a noticeable thing anymore, and second, a correlation between them considering the work as a timepass activity and thus not finding the work tiring even if they have to take medicines to keep working. This is discussed and highlighted in more detail later in the 'discriminatory laws undermining workers' rights' section of the paper.

5.1.2. Social and cultural norms restrain women from entering the labour market, turning the labour market into a gendered institution which authorises men as the sole decision-makers and asset owners of the household, leaving women to struggle for basic bargaining power in the labour market.

Being home-based, the workers are given an opportunity to earn a little cash while fulfilling their domestic responsibilities. It avoids pressure or the question of ‘who will take care of my children while I am away?’ and does not need skill or formal training. It is also pertinent to highlight the existing social and cultural restraints that pave the way to gendered spaces and the accompanying constraints which come with them. Working from the allotted space makes ‘market’ somewhat an accessible domain for them with an opportunity to earn. Because the market exists in the same social-cultural environment, it too develops and maintains a structure to uphold these segregated lines of roles and spaces. The market restricts the women in specific spaces to extract cheap labour from them while they are working at home (read, restricted in their domestic spaces), considering their economic contribution worthless. Thus, the statement by Diane Elson stands corrected that “labour markets are institutions which are bearers of gender” (Elson 1999).

On the other hand, husbands of the workers are in ‘respectable’ work positions in comparison to their wives. They are actively engaged in the work in the public domain and thus are believed to contribute majorly to the economy. With active growth and development in the market, men continue to become asset owners in households. This empowers their decision-making authority and, thus, a larger say in domestic decisions. This further presents a grave situation where women in either of the domains- public or domestic- are suppressed and do not have any control, power, or say in the decision-making processes. This becomes one ultimate vicious trap for women.

For the reasons discussed earlier, women in large numbers want to be employed as home-based workers. This abundant supply of labour in home-based work further degrades their situation. Their demands for good working conditions are not met as even if they go on strike, they can be easily substituted because of the surplus labour. Due to the cheaper availability of labour, even if the workers try to bargain, they are still forced to work at a lower piece rate with no scope of increment. Hence, their economic contribution and presence in the labour market remain invisible. In our interviews with the contractors, one pertinent point of observation was the subtle form of oppression of the bargaining demands of the workers by contractors. One contractor elaborated on an incident where he mentioned his techniques to suppress the bargaining demands. He said that when women demand more money, he makes one among the group as their leader (and pays a little extra to them) to subdue the rest of the women and their demands. Another reason behind their invisibility is that the type of piecework they do is often considered small and is “unregistered, uncertain and unprotected” (Sinha 2006) from the law perspective, which we will discuss in the next section.

5.2. Discriminatory Laws Undermining Workers’ Rights

5.2.1. The new Labour Codes attempt to include informal sector workers but it has not been put into implementation yet. Despite being both an Inter-State migrant worker and a contract labour, a home-based worker still does not get social benefits such as ESI or

PF. They only get benefitted from ‘Government Sponsored Socially Oriented Insurance Schemes’ but a lot of them are not even aware of such schemes. Otherwise, their information is just a database so far.

The informal sector workers remained outside the purview of earlier labour provisions until the new Labour Codes, 2020 came in and started acknowledging the existence of the workers (Kumar n.d.). Yet the legal system has been comparatively weak to deal and handle with the above mentioned issues of working and living conditions of home-based workers. The workers are often neglected and thus, denied their basic rights. The new labour code has now expanded its definition of workers and employees and are now applicable to workers of both the organised and unorganised sectors².

The 30 workers we surveyed fit into the definition of contract labour and inter-State migrant workers as defined by the Social Security Code, 2020. They are inter-State migrant workers who obtained employment in Gurgaon and are “drawing wages not exceeding eighteen thousand rupees per month”. Furthermore, they are contract labor hired to work for manufacturing industries “through a contractor, with or without the knowledge of the principal employer” (Ministry of Law and Justice 2020). Yet they remain invisible & undervalued and miss out on various social security benefits. None of them is covered by ESI or PF. The 68 percent³ working-age population of India will be ageing in the next 20 years, yet the home-based workers would still be struggling to afford necessities. The only benefit they are eligible for is social insurance programmes offered by the government, such as Atal Pension Yojana or Shramjivi Maandhan, for which employees must voluntarily apply. Here, the issue arises that the workers are not even aware that such schemes exist and that they can be benefitted from them. Social security benefits are meant to be essential for every employee working in both the organised and unorganised sectors (Mehrotra and Parida 2022). The new Social Security Code, 2020 attempts to include workers from the informal sector as well, but it has not been put into action yet.

According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPF), the working-age population (15 to 64) is 68 percent of the total population and in the next 20 years, India will be an ageing nation

The Ministry of Labour and Employment started collecting a comprehensive database of unorganised and migrant workers called the National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW) e-Shram Card. The reason behind creating this database is to extend the benefits of social security schemes to the aforementioned workers (Ministry of Labour & Employment 2021).

² We have differentiated workers into “organised” and “unorganised” sectors, instead of “informal” and “formal” sectors, throughout the document to align our understanding of workers with the one in the Labour Code, 2020. A home-based worker comes under the definition of both an informal worker as well as an unorganised worker.

³ According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPF), the working-age population (15 to 64) is 68 percent.

5.2.2. Home-based workers' occupational safety, health and working conditions are often neglected because their efforts and struggle are confined within the four walls of their house, and no one is there to inspect and ensure better and healthy working conditions even when the law exists.

As mentioned above that a home-based worker is both an inter-State migrant worker as well as contract labour, and according to the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020, it is the responsibility of every contractor hiring inter-State migrant workers in connection with the work of an establishment- “(i) to ensure that they are provided with appropriate working conditions given that they are required to work in a different State from the original one, (ii) to notify the appropriate state and national authorities, as well as the worker's legal guardian, in the event of a fatal accident or significant physical harm to any such worker and (iii) to provide such workers with benefits including those provided under the Employees' State Insurance Act of 1948 or the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act of 1952” (Ministry of Law and Justice 2020).

In our research, we realised the working and living conditions of the workers are not as satisfactory as expected. The working conditions that the company should be taking care of are not met, which makes the lives and working a challenging and tiring process for the workers. Even though there is a legal document in their support, the home-based workers often run into problems because of their small houses, which get more chaotic and suffocating with the raw and discarded material lying all around the house. This hampers their productivity and leaves them with very little room to relax. They are frequently exposed to dangerous chemicals, smells, and highly unhealthy postures throughout the work. But even discomfort and pain have become normalised in their lives. While inquiring about their working conditions and problems, we were surprised to realise that they have become used-to to many discomforts, pain and problems as a part of their lives. They take them as a part of the package, which comes with work and cannot be challenged. Following is the list of responses which is the testimony of this problem-

Worker A-

उंगली टेढ़ी हो गई 10 साल से काम करते करते। (finger has gone crooked while working for 10 years)

Worker B-

बस आँखे दुख जाती हैं काम करते करते। (Only eyes start paining while working)

Worker C-

आँखों से पानी आने लगता है, फिर सिर दुखने लग जाता। (eyes start watering and then head starts aching)

Worker D-

पैर दर्द करने लग जाते हैं मशीन चलाते चलाते, बस अभी दवाई खा कर आ रही हूँ। (Legs start paining while using the machine. I have just taken medicine before coming here)

5.2.3. About 27 out of 30 women were out of work, grappled with uncertainty during the pandemic and went back to their villages. 23 of the 27 were unaware of the company they were working for. These information gaps among the workers increases work uncertainty, leading to untimely payment because- “Who is accountable?” remains an unanswered question.

Not just the lousy working conditions but also the uncertainty of work is normalised. About 27 women were out of work during the pandemic. When asked about their work in Covid, almost all said they were out of work during the nationwide lockdown. When they were further questioned about how they managed their expenses when all sources of income were shut down, they replied that they went back to their villages which was the only source of their survival as they had savings and family support to sustain themselves. The rest of the three women managed to find work in the same field at a lower piece rate than the before-pandemic rate. It was plausible for them to take any opportunity coming their way, even if it paid low as, at times, they didn't even know where to find work or which all companies are hiring. Thus, in such cases denying any opportunity is not possible for their sustenance.

About 26 women were unaware of the parent company they were working for, and out of these 8 informed that they did not get paid on time. On the contrary, in our conversation with the contractor we found out that either the company pays on time, and the contractor forwards the same to the workers or else, in case of non-timely payment by the company, the contractor sometimes pay the workers out of their pockets (in the hope that they will be paid later by the company). In fact, a few contractors have fixed dates with the workers for their payments. A contractor informed us that he pays everyone on the 20th of each month- whether the company has paid him or not. This does not mean that the workers are usually paid on time. While talking to the workers and people around, this seemed the other way round. They are usually paid late or complain of non-payment more often. So, the contractor might pay a few workers on time or have made a few timely payments, which does not mean that they usually pay on time.

Since the workers hardly have any information about the parent company, this awareness gap further explains why the workers don't have any avenue for redressal when there is a problem of late payment or complaint of non-payment. The workers do not even know who should be held accountable and who they should complain about. The legal system has been lagging in providing home-based workers with the same rights and protection as those in the organised sector. For instance, Section 20 of the Social Security Code, 2020 defines contract labour as a “**worker** who shall be deemed to be employed in or in connection with the work of an establishment when he is **hired in or in connection with such work by or through a contractor, with or without the knowledge of the principal employer**” (Ministry of Law and Justice 2020). This definition has to be extended to include the **workers who do not have the knowledge of their principal employer** but the question remains that why is there an information gap between the worker and the employer in the first place? The scope of this

definition has to be expanded to cover workers who do not have the knowledge of their principal employer, but the initial problem of this information gap between the employee and the employer needs to be addressed. Despite being essential to manufacturing value chains, home-based workers are denied basic information about their workplace and primary employer. And not just the primary employer, some workers were unaware of the contractors they were working for or the number of contractors involved in the value chain. Another significant point of highlight is that since they work in their homes, they are not aware of the working conditions of other workers. Because of the separation of the workers from their co-workers, the exploitation of such workers by the company is bluntly invisible. The workers, because they are working in isolation from one another, can be seen as easy targets of exploitation.

The aloofness of women from the process is very evident because they do not know the number of middlemen involved. On being asked if they received the payment on time, **8 out of 30** said NO. These are the same women who do not know about the parent company.

5.2.4. Twenty-two women earn even less than the legal minimum wage of an unskilled worker per day, as the Haryana Labour Commission set. They only make Rs. 170 per day and cannot afford to pay for private schools when the government schools aren't open to accept their children.

Unlike organised workers, home-based workers do not have any written agreement specifying the piece rate or time of work. This is why most of them are overworked and are still not earning more than Rs. 170 per day, which is even less than the minimum wages received by an unskilled worker. In Haryana, the legal minimum wage for an unskilled worker is Rs. 388.42 per day (Labour Commission, Haryana 2021), yet the women earn less than half of this amount despite having the skill of weaving and stitching that a machine cannot replace. Because the workers work from home, the companies get to hire workers with the aforementioned skills for considerably less money because they don't have to pay for office space or other workplace related costs. In other words, it is easy for the companies to extract cheap labour from them as companies do not have to incur costs like the cost of workplace, electricity, furniture and other logistical & administrative costs. In the case of a home-based worker, workplace-related costs are solely incurred by the workers without them even being aware of the same. Due to the work from home, it is difficult for women to manage domestic work and paid work and enjoy their leisure time. They generally do not have leisure time because the breaks taken during work are viewed by them as leisure which is more disheartening.

Another problem faced by migrant workers in the admission of their children to government schools. Although they have the right to free and compulsory education, it was found that every 1 out of 5 households we surveyed, the working women conveyed the problems they are facing in sending their children to schools as none of the government schools are ready to accept kids with a gap year and they cannot afford private schools. Children of migrant workers often struggle with the gap year issue because they have to migrate with their parents, which compels them to leave their former school and adjust in a new location, which is a time-consuming procedure.

Due to very little legal recourse available (which too mostly remains non-communicated), workers' non-trust is justified. One of the ways to tackle the mistrust and weak legal protection is that they only work for the contractors who reside near their residence so that they can directly approach the contractors in case of any issue or non-payment.

The piece-rate workers are more vulnerable to exploitation as their income is significantly low. For instance, they remain stuck in a financial trap of borrowing money through informal channels to pay for 'any' significant household expenditure. The need for money forces them to borrow money from their employers (which are contractors in this case). Taking money from the employers creates a debt trap for the women in such a way that they keep on silently working even in exploitative conditions. Due to the debt, they are not in the position to demand an increment of any rate and thus the lower piece rates. With the increase in debt, exploitative working conditions increase and, and the family members (including children) become a part of the process due to the helplessness to pay it off as soon as possible. In our conversation with the contractors, we found out that if any woman asks for advance payment for any reason, they provide it non-hesitantly. One of the contractors also informed us that people who took money from him in lockdown worked for him without any payment to repay those debts, and a few of them worked for him to pay it off in installments and then left the work. This hints that the worker is indirectly coerced for the payment or to pay off the worth of that money. Can it be called debt bondage (and indirectly, modern slavery)? In the upcoming study, we need to/will explore and research this subject in more detail.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates that more than 40 million people are treated as modern slaves. Modern Slavery does not have a legal definition but is used to describe practices such as forced labour ("**work that is performed involuntarily and under the menace of any penalty today**"), human trafficking, forced marriage, and bondage labour. In other words, it refers to the exploitative practices where a person is forced/coerced to work and cannot refuse or leave because of the fear of threat, violence, and the misuse of authority (Desk n.d.).

The exploitative practices seen above resemble the situation of the home-based workers. They are often left with no choice (thus, forced) other than working as a home-based worker because their primary job of domestic duties does not allow them to work outside the domestic boundaries of their households. Home-based work provides them with the safest option to work and earn a little money without stepping outside their domestic spaces and 'without ignoring their domestic responsibilities'.⁴

⁴ Developing on this aspect might change the direction of the discourse of the paper and thus, we expect to work further on it in our follow-up research.

6. Insights

Women are overburdened with work and are conditioned to an angle where they do not accept the tiredness of their work. The researchers do not deny that a few women might be working just to earn a little extra cash and might not find the work tiring, but the women we interviewed expressed their hefty routine and still said that it is not tiring for them as they take breaks from work and find their leisure time. They are confined in a gender-divided spatial structure perpetuating a patriarchal framework that further strengthens men's power, control and authority. The definitions in the Labour Code indicate that a home-based worker is not only an unorganised worker but also an interstate migrant worker and a contract worker, which strengthens their status in the Labour Code but they are still not provided with any social security benefits. They only get the benefit of a few government social insurance schemes, that too, if they are aware of it. The living condition of the women is directly impacted by their working condition, and there is nothing to regulate and elevate this condition.

After the lockdown, the uncertainty and competition increased, and the rates decreased. The fear of workers who are always skeptical that the contractor might run away with the money magnified after the pandemic. Anyways the money paid to them is significantly less if they do not have the required skill set. They earn barely enough to survive throughout the month. Adding to this, the urgency of completing the orders sometimes makes the entire family (including children) to sit and work.

About 8 workers reported that their children help them voluntarily but this is because of multi-reasons like wanting to spend time with their mother as it becomes the 'only' way to talk or sit with them because their mothers are constantly engaged in one activity or the other—either taking care of the domestic responsibilities or the paid work. Since the children have no other opportunity to spend time with their mothers, it is not appropriate to refer to this 'help' as 'voluntary'.

Being home-based workers, they are more vulnerable to suppression. They neither receive proper legal protection nor are their rights protected or paid attention to. Due to these reasons, they are looked down upon in the market, degrading the workers' self-perceptions. Even with the intense amount of labour, effort and time, they only earn as little as Rs 5000 per month. On the contrary, one of the contractors expressed, “मेडम, इस कॉन्ट्रैक्टर के काम मे बहुत पैसा है” (There is too much money in this contract business, madam). This clarifies the reality and commission the contractors receive and how it is ultimately very profitable for them as with minimal work of creating a link between the companies and the home-based workers, they earn a hefty amount in accumulation. Thus being a contractor pays off well for them.

Thus, in the next section, we are moving towards possible responses that might improve workers' working and living conditions.

7. Response

1. The isolation of home-based workers from one another gives an added advantage to the contractors (and the situation somewhat resembles the old saying - “divide and rule” means that it is easy to rule when people are isolated from each other). Because the workers work from their homes, it has been observed that they work for different piece rates and contractors. They hardly have any bargaining power because even if one or more decides to bargain, a large group of unemployed women are ready to work even at lower piece rates. One worker even expressed “अकेले बोल कर भी क्या ही फायदा है, बाकी औरतें भी कुछ बोले तो कुछ होगा ” (there is no use in raising your voice alone; only when other women speak up will anything actually happen).

We discovered while working with the home-based workers (at our Gandhinagar centre) and gathering data that everyone is experiencing the same issue but is unaware of the issues that other workers, particularly those employed by other contractors, are also experiencing. We made the decision to form a collective in order to bring together all of the garment industry's home-based workers along with the contractors to better understand the production process and its possible problems. We believe this will aid in bargaining for higher piece rates, and in case of payment failure on time or any other situation (read exploitative situation), they can collectively raise their voice and concerns. The collectivisation will help equal pay for equal work with transparency in the overall process. It will also include contractors so that we can understand the value chain and the problems occurring at different production levels so that it is a win-win situation for all the stakeholders involved.

2. One of the workers told us that if a piece gets rejected by the company, the primary employer either sends it back to the workers to fix the issue or sells the defective pieces at a cheaper rate without paying them their share. This came out in our conversations with the contractors as well who informed us that the defective pieces are usually sent back to work on them again (majorly in the garment industries), where if possible, the clothes are rectified, and if not possible, they are discarded. These discarded clothes are not actually thrown away but sold at low prices, for which the workers do not get any money. The workers who are already paid less are further exploited in the best possible opportunity available. Thus, regulation of the production chain would ensure fair processing of payments.
3. According to the Wage Code, the government shall hire an inspector-cum-facilitator to verify that no one breaks the wage law, but the inspection process is limited to factories or the workplace, and there is no avenue to oversee the situation of home-based workers. As a matter of fact, in case of huge orders, the companies sometimes send a person to check the condition of the work and how the orders are being handled. But a

contractor said, “अगर कभी कोड़ बड़ी कंपनी अपने आदमी भेजती भी है चेकिंग के लिए तो वे हमारे ऑफिस से ही चाय-पानी पीकर चले जाते हैं।” (If the company ever sends someone for inspection, they usually have a cup of tea in our office and then leave without inspecting). He further added that it rarely happens that these people actually visit the workers to assess. Thus, it is essential to enhance the function of the inspector-cum-facilitator so that they can oversee and comprehend the circumstances of workers who are working from their homes. This will help improve workers’ living and working conditions.

4. It’s been two years since the codes came, but it has not yet been implemented. The codes obviously are not flawless, but the first step of implementation is pertinent to provide basics to the worker, especially ESI and PF. Thus, the government must at least provide a timeline for implementing the code.

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