

SITUATION OF STREET CHILDREN
IN SIX CITIES OF INDIA

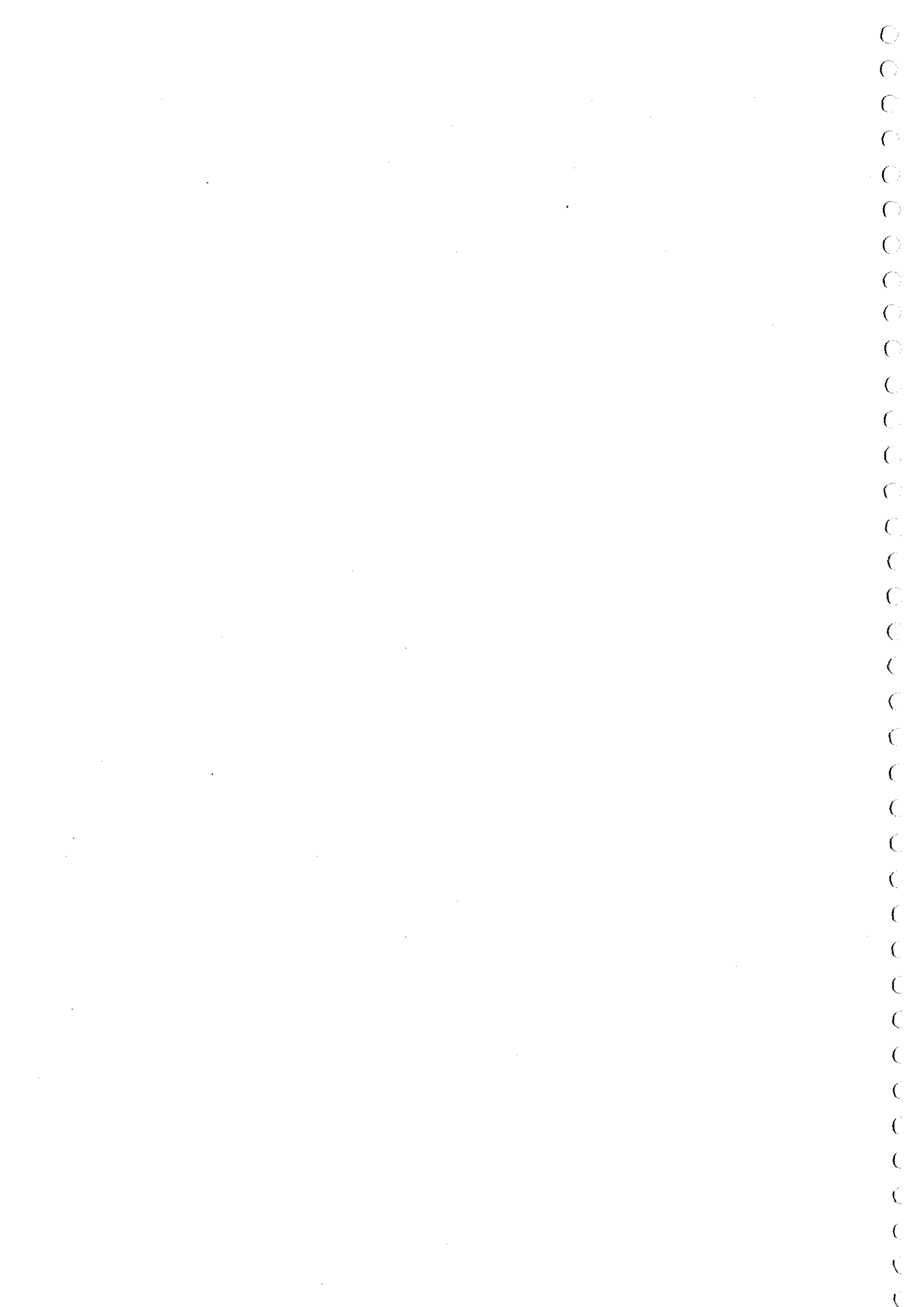
(BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, DELHI, MADRAS,
BANGALORE & HYDERABAD)

A Brief Note On The Major Findings & Recommendations
Of The Six Cities Studies On Street Children

BY

RITA PANICKER
DIRECTOR, BUTTERFLIES

COMPILED AND PREPARED BY
BUTTERFLIES - PROGRAMME OF STREET AND WORKING CHILDREN
DELHI



SITUATION OF STREET CHILDREN
IN SIX CITIES OF INDIA

(BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, DELHI, MADRAS,
BANGALORE & HYDERABAD)

A Brief Note On The Major Findings & Recommendations
Of The Six Cities Studies On Street Children

BY

RITA PANICKER
DIRECTOR, BUTTERFLIES

COMPILED AND PREPARED BY
BUTTERFLIES - PROGRAMME OF STREET AND WORKING CHILDREN
DELHI



SITUATION OF STREET CHILDREN IN SIX CITIES OF INDIA

I. STUDIES IN INDIA

The Problem :

By the turn of the century, more than a third of India's population is likely to live in the cities. Today, 217 million of the total population of 884 million (1991 census) live in urban areas. There are 23 metropolitan cities which account for 71 million i.e. they are one-third of the urban population of India. Nearly one out of every three persons living in an urban area is below the poverty line. As of 1984-85, the urban poor numbered over 50 million 68% of them women and children.

In a scenario so depressing, one could only imagine the status of poor marginalised children. They are the street children. They live and grow up on the margins of society-often without education, affection, care and guidance from adults. They are representatives of a mute and nameless magnitude. The street children live, work and sometimes die on the streets unnoticed.

The estimates of street children in the six cities has been calculated at 4,14,700. Collecting accurate data on the numbers of street children in a city or for that matter in a country is difficult and estimates vary widely depending very much on the definition of street child.

There are such limitations as multiplicity of concepts, methods of estimation and sources of data.

2. Their struggle for survival and growth ;

On an average of 47.4% of street children spend their night on the open street. But in Calcutta almost every street child (99.6%) spends night on the open street. The percentage of such children is also quite high in Bombay (61.6%). This is because there are large of families living on pavements.

Contrary to common belief most of the children in the metropolitan cities are not rootless or unattached. As high as 89.8% are either with their parents or with other family members and only 10% live outside their family. The majority of street children are working i.e. 58.3%. Almost half of them (46.6%) are self-employed as porters, vendors, show-shiners newspaper sellers, parking attendands etc. About 32.7% are employed in shops and establishments. Though the law prohibits children working for more than 5 hours a day. 60% of the children work for 7 to 12 hours a day. The average income of 70.3% of the children is Rs.100/- and many of them 28.4% do not have any rest period.

More than one-fourth of the children suffer due to bad health and majority (52.5%) do not have access to medical facilities. About 50% to 70% of the children in Bombay and Madras and 100% in Hyderabad suffer due to chronic diseases.

3. Their Major Problems :

(a) Environmental Hazards: 90% of the street children are exposed to dirt, smoke and other harmful objects. Majority (87.9%) do not have any bathing or toilet facilities and (89.1%) are exposed to sun, rain and cold.

(b) Harassment by Police and Municipal Corporation Officials:

The children complained that they are often nabbed by police for crimes they have not committed, mercilessly thrashed and put under lock-up for charges of vagrancy, gambling, street brawls or are sent to remand homes. Municipal corporation officials usually confiscate their shoe-shine kits, carts etc. as they have no licence to work.

Adult vendors also harass the children by shooing and beating them off from choice spots of business. Street children are also easy victims of drug peddlers who, in the children's lonely and unhappy moments, urge them to have smack (provided free) and once the child gets addicted force him to peddle drug to support his drug habit.

(c) Exploitation by Parents and Employers: Majority of the children (53.4%) feel they are not adequately fed and clothed by their parents and 36.6% feel that the parents make them work to supplement their income.

children (35.4%) complained that their employers forced them to work long hours and of not being paid adequately. They also complained of physical abuse and assault by the employers.

(d) Recreation Facilities: The recreational facilities for street children are almost nil, except for what the themselves improvise.

Future : In spite of the hard life the children lead, 74.1% have an ambition. 40% of them would like to have education, 29% jobs and 27% training in skills to get better and secure jobs.

Children's Priority of Services Required: 60.7% children give priority to food and 39.7% to clothing. However, in a city like Bombay 70.2% felt night shelter was important. children were willing to pay for such services.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIONS:

Role of Local Bodies:

The street children are primarily a phenomena of the metropolitan cities. While the cause of family disintegration and subsequent child destitution are mainly rural based and more specifically rural and urban poverty based, yet such destitute children end up in urban areas and metropolitan cities and struggle for survival and livelihood, engaged in various trades and occupations which are street based.

Based on the experiences in other developing countries and more specifically the city administrations of metropolitan cities of these countries, it has been established that the most effective and relevant way the city administration could intervene is by identifying existing NGO's both those

who are directly involved in programmes and services for street children, and those who are involved in programmes generally for children in the cities, support and facilitate them for formulating approaches and services for street children.

Therefore, while the municipal corporations could initiate development of data base with the help of secondary data and special studies if necessary to assess the magnitude and dimensions of the problems of street children, the actual service delivery should be undertaken by NGO's.

The following steps could be considered by the Municipal Corporations :

1. The Corporation's institutions providing basic services health, education, recreation etc. should be sensitised with a view to adapt time for facilitating access to these by street children.
2. Facilities that are set up by the corporation for the welfare of urban poor-slum dwellers, pavement dwellers etc. such as community centres, school buildings, health centres, hospitals; parks, etc. should be made available for street children and programmes for street children.
3. Education:
formal school are inaccessible to street children as they are not open at times suitable to them nor is the method and curriculum relevant to these children. The other major problem is that even when a child is motivated to

attend school, the admission requirements such as birth certificate, father's name and address etc. are a stumbling block.

To motivate the children and their parents to send them to school, we may have to begin with holding non-formal education classes.

Municipal corporations could provide space for these centres at locations where there are large concentration of street and working children. Municipal schools (after school hours) and community centres could be utilised.

These non-formal learning centres should equip a child to be able to ultimately join a formal school and complete his/her schooling.

One of the ways of preventing child labour and street children is for the Municipal Corporation to organise school enrollment campaigns on a regular basis, to ensure 10% enrollment of primary school age going children and also retention.

4. Vocational Training :

Along with non-formal education vocational or skill development training must be linked. The skills identified must have a market and should help the child to get immediate employment or be self employed. The remuneration must be attractive. In other words she must earn as much or more than what she was earning as a rag picker, vendor, shoe-shiner etc.

Shramik Vidyapeth could review some of their schemes and design new ones to suit the needs of the city.

5. Health Care :

Mobile health teams could make regular weekly trips to the areas where working and street children population is heavily concentrated. The scheme must also ensure relevant referral backup services. This scheme could be jointly implemented with an NGO.

6. Night Shelters:

Delhi is one city that has night shelters located at appropriate places. However, these shelters are only for males. Most often small children do not gain admittance to these places. Perhaps what is required is separate night shelters for street boys and girls, with facilities for toilet, bath and lockers to keep their belongings. To ensure that these shelters do not become a place of anti-social activities, it would be important that they are managed by professionally qualified social workers round the clock.

7. Police :

Every zone/cluster of police stations should have a professionally qualified social worker who would first deal with every child brought to police station on a charge, to ascertain the needs and problems of the child and suggest the appropriate agency for help and follow up. Training/orientation programmes

for police force may also be organised so as to sensitize them on the issues of street and working children.

8. Banking Facilities :

Some national banks and post offices could have mobile banks which could visit specific points where there are large numbers of children and help them to open accounts. Bank officials could meet and motivate the employers and self employed children to bank with them. They could also educate the children on various investment schemes.

In the beginning, banks have to work through NGOs working with street and working children to identify potential child clients and also to propagate the schemes.

9. As many of the street children are engaged in a considerable way in ragpicking, street side eating places, as shoe-blacks, porters/coolies etc. efforts should be undertaken by the municipal corporations for facilitating such occupations and preventing exploitation and harassment of children engaged in such trades. For example ragpicker children could be given identity card by municipal corporation as bona fide voluntary workers.

10. As among the larger group of street children, the girls are the more vulnerable and the exploited ones and have relatively a greater danger of being used in the prostitution trade,, the appropriate departments of the corporations should be advised to facilitate identifying young girls on the streets so that appropriate interventions are developed for referring them to NGO's working in this area.

11. Bus Passes :

Street and Working Children should be given the facility of travel concession in buses just as any other school child enjoys. The employers and NGOs could recommend their eligibility.

12 Creation of Public Awareness :

It is very important that public i.e. parents, employers, educationalists, police and children are made aware of the Child Labour and Juvenile Justice Acts and its implications. Public have also to sensitized about the situation of working and street children. Media such as radio, TV, literature, posters, hoardings, street plays etc could be used for creating awareness and also for advocacy on behalf of these children.

CONCLUSION :

we need to respond to the problem of street children now, before it grows in magnitude and becomes difficult to handle. The street children are children first and hence need all our sympathy and support in their process of development and growth and their struggle to be respectable and contributing citizens. The national Government, the state government the municipal corporations and NGO's have a very specific

role to play and to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of these children. So does every member of the public have a responsibility to contribute meaningfully to improve the lot of these children. We need to act now.

We must remember the children on the street are there not as a choice but due to adult irresponsibility. They struggle for survival and opportunities in harsh urban environments with a hope to become one day acceptable citizens of the country. the challenge is to all of us to create an environment and conditions that will help them grow.

Working Group On Street Children

Compilation from the "Summary of Situational Analysis of Street children in 6 cities")

Number of Street Children in Ten Cities as per Studies conducted (Estimate)

Total Population (Million)	Street Children (No.)
Calcutta 10.86	75-100,000
Bombay 12.57	N.A.
Madras 5.36	25,000
Delhi 8.37	100,000
Bangalore 4.10	45,000
Indore 1.104	N.A.
Hyderabad 4.273	30,000
Kanpur 2.10	5,000
Poona 2.44	12,589
Vijayawada 0.839	1400-1600

Based on the estimates furnished by studies on Street Children at Bangalore, Calcutta, Hyderabad, Kanpur and Indore (total sample Size :7606) on size of family and number of siblings, and to estimate the number of children on streets. It was found that the 7606 street children interviewed 7606 had 33057 siblings (average 4.34 siblings per child) and one may assume that the siblings are potential street children as well. Thus the studies estimates street children population of 369,000 to 419,000 actually representing 1.6-1.8 million actual or potential street children, which means, somewhere between 3.12% to 3.55 % of the population of the nine cities could be actual or potential street children.

Taken, 1991 census total urban population of 217.18 million , the street children in India could number somewhere between 6.77 to 7.66 million. (Crude Estimate)

Age Distribution:

28% of the Children are in the age group of 11-15 years and about one fourth of the children from 6-10 years age group. Below 6 and over 16 years constitute about 21 percent. In the cities of Calcutta and Hyderabad children in the 6-10 age group are more in number . This shows that children enter into street life at a very early stage of their life the years when they are supposed to be in the schools for education.

01115
work

56y
9/8/85

Education :

Around 80% of the children have been dropouts from schools and that too, before completing the first grade . The factors leading to their leaving the studies are mainly (i) their failure (ii) parents indifference to the studies and lack of conducive atmosphere at home, (iii) peer influence on the street (iv) economic necessity, or humiliation at school because they work. While on the streets, majority of them have no access to any meaningful training programmes.

Religion and Caste :

70% of the children are Hindus and 18% are Muslims. But the percent age of Hindu children is very high 80-82% in the cities of Hyderabad , Indore and Bangalore.

Poona and Hyderabad have tribal children (19% each) while in Calcutta , Bangalore and Indore 6% each and in Kanpur and Madras 2% each.

Migration (Resident Status) :

60.5% children are first generation migrants. In Calcutta, Bombay and Hyderabad the migrant families constitute 100% and 99% each respectively. Besides inter and intra District and State level migration, cities like Calcutta, Bombay and Delhi attract international migration as well . The countries contributing to this national problem are the neighbouring countries like Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. On the other hand Non-migrants are greater in number in cities of Kanpur (90.4%); Bangalore (78%) , Madras (76.5%) ; Indore (64%) and Poona (58.6%).

It is poverty mainly which forces families to migrate to other places in search of employment. In Calcutta alone where there is cent per cent migration, 82% of the families had to migrate because of the poverty that forced them to come to this city in search of livelihood. Most of the parents are landless and wage earners which is not regular. Similarly in Bombay , which provides a lot of opportunities for employment has large number of migrated families who had to come to the city mainly in search of employment.

The other reasons like natural calamities, family breakup etc., again indirectly lead to search for employment anywhere. There is not much variation in the reasons in other big cities too, which hold better prospects of employment.

Socio-economic status of the family :

As apparent from the pattern of migration and the reasons for which children had to drop out of schools, it is basically parents' unemployment or acute poverty that forces children to supplement the family income. In Bangalore virtually all the parents (99.03%) are from very low income group. None are from low income or middle income group. Also one father out of every ten is without job. Madras situation is also equally bad with 91.5% parents belonging to very low income group. Hyderabad has 57% unemployed parents whose children have obviously to enter into work force at an early age. Employment fields for the parents are also not very attractive. They work as rickshaw puller, coolie, ragpicker, vender, cobbler, beggars and other casual work. People working on wages get petty wages and for that too, they never know that the next day they would get it or not. This there is always a sense of insecurity in this respect which is directly reflected on the well being of the child in that family.

Employment Pattern of Street Children :

Majority of children i.e. 56% are engaged in economic activity, regular or irregular while the rest are not doing any work. The unemployed group consists of school dropouts and idlers who loiter around parks, streets etc.

Distribution of children (N=8910, in ten cities) in different occupations is shown as below :

Category of Work	Percentage of Children (engaged in)
Self employed	42.4
Wage Labour	27.6
Casual	7.6
Beggars	4.0
Others	18.5

Self employed category includes ragpickers, petty vendors, shoe shiners, coolies and car cleaners' etc. In spite of the fact, ragpicking is the most hazardous jobs in terms of time and energy, ragpickers form majority in this group. Because of lack of education and skill, children get engaged in all sorts of manual work. Child Labour being cheap most owners of all Dhaba; Tea Stall ; garage/ workshop/shops' attract to work for them and eventually land up as a victim of harassment. Children engaged in begging often 'work under the supervision of father, mother or elder siblings. Girls are frequently placed in household as domestic help and are vulnerable to all sorts of exploitation at the hands of parents and employees as well.

Work Hours :

Majority of the children have to work for seven to ten hours per day. Average ten to 12 hours work day is common for children working as wage labour. Quite a significant number works for even twelve to sixteen hours per day.

In Bombay largest number of 478 children work for 10-12 hours per day with second largest group working for 7-9 hours per day. Considering that almost 40% of the sample covered children in the age group of 11-15 yrs, obviously large number of children figure in these groups working for 7-12 hours per day which is too much for the children of this age. Among girls 40% work between 4-9 hours per day outside their homes in addition to work in their own household. Duration of working hours for 16-18 hrs. has too been noticed. (Refer Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation Act, which prohibits child to work for 7-6 hours per day.

Thus , about one fourth of the children of the sample of 2169, are over worked which is a common feature among all these cities.

In Calcutta, 40.5% children are over worked and about 29% are even made to do night work. The situation is not very different in Poona where these children work for 6-12 hours and even more than 12 hours. In Delhi too, children working as helpers in Tea shops, Dhabas etc, have to work for 12-15 hours per day. In Vijaywada again half of the number of children work for more than 10 hours. In Indore mean work day is 8.59 hours. 52% of the children work for 10 to 12 hours a day.

According to the estimates made by the study on street children in Delhi, about 18% of the child population out of which one million are street children. Vendors and children working at Tea shops constitute 13.6% and 13.7% each . Beggars are 9%.

In Bangalore 93% of working children are self-employed, followed by wage casual labourers. So, invariably in all these cities, greater number of children are self employed howsoever petty the jobs are.

Earnings/Wages :

Consolidated data of five cities i.e. Bangalore, Madras, Calcutta, Kanpur and Hyderabad shows that slightly more than one third of the working children there , earn hundred rupees or less per month.

In Calcutta three fourth of the children earn less than rupees one hundred, while percentage of such children is too high (92.2%) in Hyderabad. In Bombay, twenty percent children earn more than Rs.600/- per months and in most of the cases their median income is greater than that of their parents.

Though in Delhi study wages have been shown in relation to the type of job one does for, on an average 10-12 hours per day, there doesn't seem any clear relation between income and type of occupation. Generally, children often, working for long, hard day of work could earn only Rs. 10-15 per day that amounts to Rs. 300-450 per month ignoring the irregularity of the job.

Rest Period during work hours :

Inspite of such a long working hours every day, most of them don't get any break for rest. About 22.2% have no rest period while 26.2% have only one hour of rest.

Working Conditions :

Irrespective of kind of the work children have been working in very tough conditions. They are exposed to all sorts of risks like going through the scrap, broken glass, steel scraps, tins etc.). Skin diseases because of unhygienic work (rag picking) and burns, cuts and wounds etc for children working at T-stalls, Dhabas and aches and pains on top of it because of carrying back breaking heavy load of customers while working as porters, are not uncommon. Besides this they are exposed to all sorts of elements like dirt, smoke, accident etc.

Nature of Exploitation :

Almost all children have been victims of exploitation and the major forms of exploitation reported are overwork, low pay, physical abuse and nightwork. About 80% children have fallen to the economic exploitation and 10% to physical abuse at the hands of their parents. In Calcutta, 23.2% children feel their parents overwork them; and 24.6% feel their parents use them as instrument of income, 60 children from Bombay complained of physical abuse, children who work as coolies at Railway Station, Bus Stands, ^{and} Markets have to share their earnings with the police and sometimes with the senior and the licensed coolies. That is why police is always hated by the children. Many a times, police becomes so mean, that besides extorting money from small children, policemen take extra work from them like fetching water, tea, cleaning their checkpoints and other personal jobs.

finger & Craypattles

Harassment by Authorities :

In this matter, Police ranks first (43%) 35% children reported harassment from Municipal Corporation people while for 22.1% there was no such harassment might be because they stay with the families.

Thus Police harassment is maximum and widely reported. On mere suspicion, Police round up children and any money found upon them is taken away besides they are made to do petty jobs for them at the police station.

Harassment takes the form of atrocity and physical abuse. Both the police and the Municipal Corporation often behave very atrociously beating them and throwing away their meagre belongings and threatening to put them behind bars in case of disobedience.

Family Life of Children :

Majority children (7.7%) are living with father/mother or both parents. they get all their emotional needs satisfied.

But 80% children have reported that their basic needs are poorly met, by their parents but they defend their parents because of their helplessness.

859 children are living with their siblings without adequate adult supervision. They are abandoned by their parents. Around 8% (1296) children live with friends, relative, employers and well wishers.

Shelter : Out of the sample of 15,901 (10 cities) 48.0% live in slums while 40.8% of the sample live on streets meaning pavements, car parking etc. They are exposed to all the elements of environment and other exploitations/abuse.

Food/Health : In general both quality and quantity of food is very poor. Very few are able to get breakfast and large number of children get their first meal at mid day. This may be because, very few have cash with them in the morning, because they try to spend all of it before going off to sleep on the street and if caught by police, they would forcefully be take the money from them. About 78.6% of children are mal-nourished and 4.2% severely malnourished.

Illnesses have relation to the type of jobs children do. Generally children suffer from seasonal illnesses like cough and cold, fever and work related illnesses scabies, backache, stomachache. In spite of existing facilities like public hospitals, majority of such children don't have access to any medical help. Bangalore city children 87% of boys and 97% of girls don't get any treatment. Nine percent suffer from chronic illness another 16% have been suffering for 4-5 years. To 87% of children in Hyderabad medical facilities are not available.

In Calcutta too, situation is equally bad 48% of the girls working reported that they don't have medical facility to avail themselves of 50% of the remaining have the advantage of such facility like public hospital but they don't avail it of because of rude attitude of hospital staff. Only 2.4% of girls get treatment from private medical practitioners when they are ill. In Bombay, in spite of being aware of public health facilities, they use these very rarely that too, when they don't have any money. They usually get themselves treated from private clinics or medical store.

Toilet & Bath Facility :- Invariably there is no proper facility for daily bath. Usual places of bath are the public taps, sometimes the public bathrooms.

[This is major problem with the jobs.] ^{girls} Among the sample about 51% of them, have attained puberty; and majority of them don't have access to toilet and bathing facility during periods. Quite a large number of girls don't have access to medical doctor. The situation is more serious in Bombay, where children have to face the harsh behaviour of not only the medical staff but have problem in getting into the hospital campus even.

Ambition : Despite the adversity, majority of children are very open, social and confident. Large majority of children have very special goals to achieve. The range of occupation/jobs vary from skilled crafts persons, trained workers, teachers to doctors. Some are not sure of the kind of occupation but want to do a job which may provide them a steady income and obviously better life 10-15% of them just want to study.

To achieve all these ambitions, nearly 34% children want education, next 28.1% want vocational training while 13.1% and 11.9% need finance and regular job respectively.

SCHEMES FOR STREET CHILDREN

1. Centre Government :

(i) Ministry of Welfare, G.O.I has launched the following Scheme :

"Scheme for the Development of Street Children" announced by Min. of Welfare, Sept. 1992

For the purpose of this scheme, "definition of street children is :

- i) Children who live on the streets or pavements with or without families.
- ii) Children who live in slums but spend most of their time on the streets engaged in various activities.
- iii) Children who work in street trades like, shoe-shine, hawkers, carwashers on road side tea shops/hotels, newspaper vending, rag picking, coolies/loaders, helpers in garages, etc

But of these, three categories, priority to be given to street children with no family ties, whatsoever and Street Children victims of exploitation and abuse and also girls.

Objectives : The overall objectives of the scheme is to provide integrated community based non-institutional basic services for the care, protection and development of street children facing destitution, neglect, abuse and exploitation in 13 most popular cities of India.

The cities are namely :

1. Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Madras, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Pune, Kanpur,¹ Nagpur, Lucknow, Surat, Jaipur.

The scheme is implemented as a project by NGOs with support from local bodies and other departments of the State Government/Union Territories under the guidance of city level task force.

Grants given to 45 voluntary organisations in these cities @ 300 children to be covered by each organisation.

As the scheme includes education, nutrition and health care. Mr. M Dewanji, Gen. Secretary of one NGO 'Parishad' says that the Ministry has sanctioned Rs. 4,32,341 to his organisation, for the education of 60 Parishad children, in two phases. Rs. 3 lakhs has been given to his organisation. According to him, it is difficult to educate, train and ensure their rehabilitation, within a period of six months.

(ii). City Task Force to aid Street Children; Aug. 29, 1993 :

National Capital Territory of Delhi Govt. has constituted a City Task Force for the care, protection and development of street children in the metropolis.

The Task Force comprises Delhi Chief Secretary, Police Commissioner, Commissioner Municipal Corporation, Social Welfare Ministry, Union Govt. Secretary, Director Social Welfare, NCT, Programme Officer UNICEF and representatives of seven NGOs.

Task Force is supposed to meet once in every four months a year to review, monitor and oversee the implementation of the scheme for the welfare of the Street Children.

(iii) 20 ILO- aided projects for Eliminating Child Labour launched Sept. 1993 :

The Govt. launched 20 additional projects in the country under the ILO assisted international programmes on elimination of Child Labour.

The projects would implement in close cooperation with the State Govts. and other agencies such as voluntary organisation, trade unions and employers associations. Nine such project are already in existence.

These Projects funded by ILO, would benefits 16,005 child workers with another 63,000 receiving indirect benefits. The project also seek to benefit 3,86,030 parents.

These projects are distributed as :

New Projects (20)

West Bengal	5	
Gujarat	2	
Tamil Nadu	2	
U P	2	
Andhra Pradesh	4	
Orissa	1	
Manipur	1	
West Bengal]	
Sikkim]	1 jointly
Tripura]	

Two of these projects are national projects fund allocation : Rs. 1.59 crores have been provided for these new projects (20)

Old Project (9) distribution are in the following State :

Madhya Pradesh
Rajasthan
U P
Andhra Pradesh
Tamil Nadu

Rs. 1.63 crores was spent on the these 9 projects during 1992-93. For the current year, Rs. 3.2 crores have been allocated for these projects.

**IMPLEMENTING MECHANISM :
RESPONSES TO THIS SCHEME : FROM CALCUTTA**

A survey conducted by voluntary organisation, it was found that in the city of Calcutta alone, there are 100,000 children living on pavements. About 30% of them are orphans and 40% live with single parents.

The complaints of the NGOs working in Calcutta on Street Children are as :

- i) A required by Central government and stipulated in the scheme, a task force at city level should be constituted by State Social Welfare Dept. with NGO representatives into it. But, the task force that has been set up doesn't include NGOs. Some of them have reportedly been left in dark about an UNICEF teacher training scheme for field workers.
- ii) No office has been set up by the State Social Welfare Department to coordinate the work of all these organisations.
- iii) There are financial constraints and short time allotted to achieve the target.

No Central Funds for State Orphanage (West Bengal)

The Union Social Welfare Ministry has informed its counter part in West Bengal that annual grant which has helped children for almost 3 decades of about Rs. 70 lakhs for running orphanage home is being discontinued.

21 homes for about 7,300 orphans and destitute children run by NGOs in West Bengal face uncertain future. The expenses for running the homes are shared by the Centre and the State who contributed 45% each, the rest is borne by NGOs running the homes. Social Welfare Department, West Bengal is fearful that in the same fashion Centre might stop the funding of other successful schemes without prior notice.

II. State Government :

(i) Under JJ Act 1986, institutional care is provided to the children by providing care, protection, development and rehabilitation of juvenile and neglected children. But, the condition in these remand homes is horrible (refer news item Pio . 24.8.1994).

(ii) The Labour Welfare Board and shramik Vidyapeeth of Karnataka have been running educational and training programmes through the NGOs forum but only 15 children are getting benefits.

(iii) Tribal Welfare Department of M P runs primary and secondary schools with mid day meal.

IV. Local Authorities : At present no local authority has any scheme for the care and protection of the street children.

While Calcutta Municipal Corporation runs 114 schools, none can be utilised by street children as they have address.

Similarly Bombay Mun. Corporation runs education health facilities but no accessible to street children.

- UBS (Urban Basic Service) programme is too targeted towards slums.

- National literacy mission, Min. of HRD, has taken total literacy mission in around 250 districts.

IV. NGOs : 39 NGOs are running projects for street children. The total coverage is around 10,000 in the cities of Bombay, Delhi, Bangalore, Calcutta, Kanpur and Madras.

POLICY ISSUES :

(i). With NGOs efforts - whose efforts are directed towards supplementing basic needs, better access to existing services and some skill training. About 20,000 children would be covered, by 1993-94 with this effort.

Therefore these projects need to be extended to cover as many as children as possible.

(ii). Under the child labour Act, which precludes sanctions against employers in the informal sector, alternative methods for a concerted effort to prevent cruelty towards children need to be evolved.

(iii). Ability of implementing agencies needs to be declared and improved if required.

(iv) A complementary scheme of financial support to destitute parents for sending their children to school may be considered.

(v) Community participation may prove effective by intervening at locations where the problems of poverty, illiteracy, social behaviour and lack of development are endemic.

PROGRAMMES :

(i) Cochin Corporation issued Identify Cards to Ragpickers :

According to rough estimate, there are about 400 ragpickers in Kochi, alone identity cards have been issued to only 24 of them which display their photos and profession as ragpickers. To start with I D card is issued to those who come with recommendations from legislature. The whole effort was done with dose collaboration with Don Bosco Centre.

(ii) Programmes for Street Children in Karnataka ;;

A comprehensive Welfare programme for Street Children has been under consideration by Karnataka State Govt. as announced by Chief Minister of the State on Children's Day Celebrations Nov. 14, 1993 organised by Departments of instructions and Karnataka State Council for Child Welfare. The Programme was expected to be launched from April 1994..

CS 115
W.P. 56.
9/8/95



100

100

100

