

# A Study of Slums in Urban Bihar

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Glimpses of socio-economic aspects of lives in the slums from Patna, Bihar

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## **Motivation:**

In any popular discourse whenever we talk about poverty the first thing that comes in our mind is village. Almost all the poverty alleviation schemes by any local government or international organization are framed and implemented by keeping rural poor in mind. Several decades after industrial revolution a different kind of poverty, which we call 'Urban Poverty' these days, evolved with time and now it has become a monster which is more scary and complex to understand than rural poverty. We all have some visuals of urban poverty in our mind either from our personal experience or from movies and documentaries; usually we recognize these visuals as 'slum'. Over the time we have become so accustomed or we can say we are made to be accustomed with these visuals that we have accepted this as the inevitable part of our society. We hardly put an effort to know about the other side of our city. To add to this ignorance from our side, governments never forgets to divert attention from this side of the city. Every now and then this neglected part of the city suddenly becomes the subject of international movies (example – Slumdog Millionaire), art exhibitions, highest selling books which turn out to be a huge money-making venture and a matter of discussion and debate among intellectuals, but these poor people get nothing in return. The irony of our society is that if we have to make a movie or write a book about some celebrity or popular face, who is already rich and empowered, we still have to pay some royalty to that person just to borrow his/her story, but no one bothered to pay royalty to this part of our society on which numerous film and art work have been done. There is no uniform framework under which we can do a socio-economic study of a slum as the definition and categorization of slum is not very clear and straight forward. Although United Nations has a standard definition of slum but in practice it is very difficult to categorize a slum as they are very unstable and dynamic in nature and often they are not even recognized by the state or local governments, which makes things worse. On the contrary, government maintains a database of villages and relevant information about them which can help researchers to frame and implement their study in a structural and efficient way.

Who are these urban poor, where do they live in an urban setup, what kind of work they do for their livelihood, what kind of life they are living, what are the sufferings that they have to face in their day to day life, what are their aspirations in life etc. are the questions that motivated us to do this field visit and we were seeking answers of these questions.

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*“.....every fifth urban child in the country in the age group of 0-6 years is a slum dweller.....The highest proportion of population in this age group of 0-6 is in the slum areas of Bihar (16.8%) followed by.....”*

-‘Slums in India-A Statistical Compendium 2015’,  
Union Government

## **1. Background &Introduction:**

Bihar, one of the BIMARU states in India, is still founded as 2<sup>nd</sup> least developed state just after Odisha in India depending on the MDI scores (RaghuramRajan Panel Report, 2013). Patna being the largest city and capital of Bihar is located on the banks of river Ganges and has the status of main economic hub of the state. It has marked its improvement in both education and health fronts having infant mortality rate 31 which is below state average 44 and the literacy rate as 70.68 percent higher than the state average being 61.80 percent. Bihar with an urban population of 11 percent as against 31 percent in India is least urbanized among all the Indian states. Patna with over 2 million population is the 18<sup>th</sup> largest urban agglomeration of India. As rural Bihar’s economy mostly relies on agriculture and because of the negligence of the governing authorities, land disputes-fragmentation and uncertainties regarding climate (e.g. floods, droughts) rural population finds it attractive to migrate to the nearest urban agglomeration. And in the developing countries this rural to urban migration has caused the more than proportionate growth of population in the urban areas leading to the formation of what is known as ‘slums’. On the basis of number of out-migrated population (i.e. migrate to other states), Bihar is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest state after Uttar Pradesh (Census, 2011). Despite of the migration across state borders for more job opportunities and basic amenities, according to the census 2011 Patna UA has 3.8percent of its population living in slums but the City Development Plan prepared for the State Government shows the estimated slum population to be 63% of total population. This implies that the rural population still migrates to UA within borders and the underestimation of slum population in census leads to underestimation of this chronic problem of deprivation without any kind of proper monitoring on the part of state government. With growing urbanization and lack of policy designing to deal with this deprivation faced in different dimensions of urban slum population, slums are no longer to be considered as transitory phenomena of fastest growing economies rather they have become poverty traps for the population of migrants who have initially preferred this subsistence living standard over the lives in rural area. In Patna itself, only 12 slums have come under the ‘Bihar slum policy, 2011’ with the assurance of provision of basic facilities and improvement in the slum settlements on sustainable basis. But it is a smaller picture, a large number of slum population is outside the reach of this basic facilities still surviving in an inhuman environment pointing out the chronic disadvantage of urbanization in growing economy.

Many studies on urban slums have shown the impact of social networks, property rights and public services in the slums. But studies done before have not shown how deprived the population of slum in many dimensions along with the conventional income per capita and how deep the problem of poverty is. In our study we have studied five slums from Patna, Bihar where

each of the two slums come under the two broad categories of slums of 'Notified' and 'Non-notified' as per as NSSO 69<sup>th</sup> survey definition of slums (discussed in section 2). This study also tries to understand the day to day life of these two types of slums and underlying socio-economic factors through our observations during field visit and narratives of residents of these slums.

## **2. What is slum?-Definition and classifications:**

The UN-HABITAT identifies slum households to be a group of individuals living under the same roof in mostly urban area and depriving in one or more thing from the following:

- i. Durable housing of a permanent nature that protects against extreme climate conditions.
- ii. Sufficient living space which means not more than three people sharing the same room.
- iii. Easy access to safe water in sufficient amounts at an affordable price.
- iv. Access to adequate sanitation in the form of a private or public toilet shared by a reasonable number of people.
- v. Security of tenure that prevents forced evictions.

As per as the Census 2011 definition, it considered three broad categories of slums:

- i. All notified areas in a town or city notified as 'Slum' by State, UT Administration or Local Government, Housing and Slum Boards etc. under any Statute including a 'Slum Act' are considered as Notified Slum.
- ii. All areas recognized as 'Slum' by State/Local Government, UT Administration, Housing and Slum Boards etc., which may have not been formally notified as slum under any statute are categorized as Recognized Slum.
- iii. A compact area of at least 300 populations or about 60-70 households of poorly built congested tenements, in unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructure and lacking in proper sanitary and drinking water facilities in the State/UT are categorized as Identified Slums.

Whereas, the NSSO tried to define slums in their surveys for the years of 1976-77, 1993, 2002, 2008-09 and 2012. Though they defined slums in two categories as 'Declared' and 'Undeclared' slums in the survey years of 1976-77 and for the years of 1993, 2002, 2008-09 and 2012 it has defined the slums in two categories, namely, 'Notified' and 'Non-notified'. The operational definition given in the 69<sup>th</sup> survey is as follows:

- i. Areas notified as slums by the concerned municipalities, corporations, local bodies or development authorities were termed notified slums.
- ii. Also, any compact settlement with a collection of poorly built tenements, mostly of temporary nature, crowded together, usually with inadequate sanitary and drinking water facilities in unhygienic conditions, was considered a slum by the survey, provided at least 20 households lived there. Such a settlement, if not a notified slum, was called a non-notified slum.
- iii. Slums: The word "slum" covered both notified slums and non-notified slums.

But Definition of slums varies across states of India depending on the socio-economic conditions even when their physical structures are almost similar and these definitions get adapted in a form of legal stipulation in the respective states' Slum Acts. As we have chosen Bihar, to be specific Patna as our area for study, we can look at the definition of slum given in Bihar Slum Act 2011 which is roughly based on the slum criteria given under Census 2011 slum definition with some additional characteristics to look upon:

- i. Inadequate availability of settlement level infrastructure - Street lighting, storm water drainage, garbage collection and predominance of narrow and kutcha streets.
- ii. At least 60% of families living below the poverty line (as per the criteria of the State Government).
- iii. Insecurity of tenure.
- iv. Inadequate access to education and basic health care facilities

After going through the definitions carefully we have chosen five slums in Patna to do our survey which will be discussed in detail in section 4.

### **3. Sampling Procedure:**

The primary objectives of the study were as follows:

- To understand the dynamics of daily life in a slum
- To do a comparative study of slums based on the following characteristics
  - Based on Location (Center vs Periphery/Exposed vs Less exposed)
  - Based on caste structure (Homogeneous vs Heterogeneous caste structure)
  - Based on surroundings of slum (Residential vs Non-residential Surroundings)
  - Based on type of land (Government vs Private land)

Keeping these objectives in mind first we had to select the city where we wanted to do our study and we choose Patna over other cities, reasons of which are as follows:

- UP and Bihar are considered to be two major states in terms of out-migration population but despite that fact every year lot of population from interior villages migrate to Patna also (i.e. within state migration) in search of employment and better lifestyle, which makes Patna an interesting city for our study.
- In last decade or so, number of people living in slums of Patna has increased rapidly.
- There is not enough literature on the slums of Patna unlike other megacities' slums (such as Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata)
- Majority of the group members have familiarity with the local culture and also have few contacts to begin with our study.
- Convenience in terms of housing and other logistics.

We contacted NGO 'SAMAR' to give us information about the slums in Patna. This NGO is engaged in teaching children in the slums in Patna. Through our discussion with the NGO, we got a list of 10 slums which can fulfil our requirement for this study. As per our objective of our

study, we wanted to choose slums which are different in following characteristics so that we can develop a comparative understanding among slums

- Location
- Caste structure
- Residential and Non-residential Surrounding
- Rehabilitated Slum

Based on the above considerations, we selected Indrpuri, Shivpuri, Adalat Ghat, Rajbanshi Nagar, Abdul Bari Bhawan & Rajeev Nagar. We were not able to do household survey in Rajeev Nagar as people of this slum were not responsive enough. Also, we didn't approach this slum through our contacts which can also be one plausible reason of their non-responsiveness.

Below is the location of the selected slums on the map of Patna.



Fig.1. Location of the slums surveyed

It is very evident from the above map that we have covered a diverse range of slums in terms of their location.

To get the information needed, we employed an intensive interview method following the questionnaire prepared (Appendix 9.3). Initially we started to fill up the questionnaire in front of the interviewee, but it turned out that it made interviewee self-conscious about what he is saying to us and some of them also seemed voraciously angry because they have always seen '*pen-paperwalababu*'s and giving information to these *babus* never helped them a bit. So, we started talking to them without having printed questionnaires in our hand and depended on the field notes to later work out the qualitative information. In this way, it was also very interesting on the part of our interviewees to talk to us like talking to a friend and we got reliable qualitative information through our chosen sampling method.

Selection of households in each slum is completely random and we tried our best to avoid any kind of sampling bias. Below is the table which will help us understand the scale of our study.



<b>Slum name</b>	<b>Approximate number of total households</b>	<b>Number of households surveyed</b>
Indrapuri	40-50	18
Shivpuri	40-50	10
Adalat Ghat	30-35	10
Rajbansi Nagar	150-200	14
Abdul Bari Bhawan	43 rooms (500 people)	1

Table.1. Scale of household survey

**4. Overview of the slums:** Keeping in mind our study's objectives and the time constraint, we selected four slums to work on and find out how characteristics of a slum varies depending on lot of factors like location, caste and religion of people living there etc. Below is the summary (full description is in the appendix).

Characteristics	Indrapuri	Shivpuri	AdalatGhat	Rajbanshi Nagar	Abdul Bari Bhawan
<b>Location</b>	Near Railway Track & less exposed. Periphery.	Near Railway Track & less exposed. Periphery.	Near Gandhi Maidan& surrounded by PMCH, district court and Ganga Ghat. Center.	Near DAV Public School & M.S. Dhoni Academy. Surrounded by government quarters. On government land. Peirphery.	Near 'Pathar Ki Masjid' in Sultanganj in old Patna City. Rehabilitated slum
<b>History of slum</b>	Came into existence after 1970's flood in Bihar	Same as Indrapuri. Clusters formed organically based on caste. Evolved because of family relatives and social networks.	50-60 years old and most of the current residents are born and brought up here only	The entire area was forest 50-60 years ago and only 2-3 huts were there at that time. Slowly through social networking and expansion of existing family it grew over the time.	In 1994, with the demand for recognition, these people boycotted the roads to get the attention of the ruling govt. back then. Lalu Prasad Yadav was then the chief minister of Bihar and he accepted the demand of this people and approved fund for constructing a proper shelter for this people instead of <i>jhopris</i> , which now is called Abdul Bari Bhawan.
<b>Caste &amp; Religion Structure</b>	Only Hindu. Heterogeneous. Majority are SCs	Only Hindu. Homogeneous. Only Dalits	Around 20% Muslims and rest Hindus. Among Hindus	Only Hindu. Heterogeneous. Thakur/Hajam	Only Muslim. Homogenous. The Bakho are a

	(Paswan, Shahnietc) and some are OBCs(Kurmi, Yadavs) too	(Doms&Sahni)	majority is SC but few OBCs are there too	(OBC), Paswan (SC), Kurmi/ Mahto (OBC), Sao/Halwai (OBC). Higher proportion of OBCs in this slum.	nomadic community, who are a traditionally associated with singing folk songs. Little is known about their origin, but it is likely they are division of the Domcommunity, which sometime in the distant past converted to Islam.
<b>Native place of the residents</b>	Nearby districts Danapur, Badh, Samastipur, Begusarai, Patna center etc.(At max 2-3 hours journey from Patna). Frequent visitors, once or twice in a week, of their native lands especially Yadavs	Nearby districts Badh, Danapur etc. Majority have neither farm land nor own house in their native village. Very less frequent visitors of their native village.	Relatively far districts from Patna, such as Muzaffarpur (At max 5-6 hours journey from Patna). Less frequent visitor, once in a month.	Major population live here from past 3-4 decades and their native villages are Darbhanga, Samastipur, Sitamadhi, Muzaffarpur etc. Some of them have some land and own house in their native village too. Visit to native village twice or thrice in a year on some special occasions and festivals.	Bakhos have migrated for so long that their own native land has been forgotten in the flow of time. So, we did not get any concrete information about their native place.
<b>Major occupation</b>	SCs – Daily wage laborers (painter, carpenter, construction workers etc), Women – Domestic	Doms - primarily municipality workers (cleaning staff) and manual scavengers. Some of them sell pig meat too.	High proportion of self-employed persons such as rickshaw or thella puller, E-Rikshaw/Auto Driver, Vegetables/Fruits	Higher proportion of self-employed people, which includes rikshaw/thella Puller, E-Rikshaw/Auto	Traditional occupation of this community is barter exchange of new utensils for old clothes. Most of the

	workers as maid, OBCs (Yadavs) – Milk selling business. Very few self-employed residents.	Sahni - cleaning staffs in nearby apartments	Vendor. Some of the SCs are daily wage earners	driver, vegetable/fruit vendor, gumti shop (only one in the entire slum), barber(Thakur). Some of the residents are daily wage labourers too which includes painter, helper, domestic workers (Especially women of the slum).	people in this slum work as Hawkers who exchanges Steel items for old clothing and then sell this old clothing. Women of the slum also help their husband in this job. Women of this community do not work as maid and it is considered to be against the dignity of this community
<b>Household status</b>	Houses are made up of bamboo and plastic covers. Majority of children go to nearby government school. High dropout rate (before class 7-8). Found only one metric pass resident (Kaveeta). Illegal electricity connection and no legal gas cylinder connection.	Houses are made up of bamboo and plastic covers. Unlike Indrapuri, only some of the children go to nearby government school. High dropout rate. Found only one metric pass resident who wants to become CA(Shankar). Illegal electricity connection and no legal gas cylinder connection.	Very congested. Houses made up of mud, bricks, bamboo etc. Higher proportion of children go to private as well as government school. Low dropout rate. Few studnets take private tuition too. Legal electricity and gas cylinder connection.	Structure of house is similar to Shivpuri and Indrapuri but more organised. Most of the reisdents have television and one of the household has water purifier too. Most of the children go to the government school, one which is the slum only. People are more educated here and some of them work in metro cities as well. Legal electricity connection. LPG cylinder (either	There are total 43 rooms in the bhawan and around 550 people live in this which makes it overcrowded. There is no electric meter in any house since electricity connection is provided by government free of cost. All the households have mittikachulha in front of their flats. They use wood and coal as cooking fuel. Few of them have small gas cylinder. Around 5-6 metric

				14kg or 5kg) as cooking fuel.	pass in this slum.
<b>Drainage and toilet/bathrooms</b>	Open Drainage (clogged). Personal toilets of temporary setup. Men and children take bath in open and women in enclosed private space behind the jhuggi.	Open Drainage (clogged). Personal toilets of temporary setup. Men and children take bath in open and women in enclosed private space behind the jhuggi.	Small open drainage. Paid Community toilets. Enclosed personal toilets over small open drainage. Men and children take bath in open and women in enclosed private space over open drainage.	Drainage is open and clogged. Most of the residents defecate in nearby open field and few of the households have their own toilets on the open drainage only. Men and children take bath near public water tap in open and women take bath in enclosed area inside their own house.	Community toilets Drainage system is the worst. In the sunny day when we visited the slum we saw part of the area is blocked by the water leaked from the nearby drain. Open drainage and its condition become worse in rainy seasons.
<b>Water Source &amp; Sanitation</b>	No govt. tube well connections. One public tube well in nearby temple premises. Private tube wells of Yadavs. Visible caste discrimination when it comes to water usages.	Single motor installed by the government, which is the only public water source. Some affluent household have their own private tube wells behind their huts.	Three public taps installed by local ward commissioner and one public water tank too which residents use seldomly.	Local government authority (ward commissioner) has installed one motor in the slum and there are several taps where government water is being supplied. Better in sanitation and cleanliness as compared to other slums.	There is only a single govt. installed motor pump for the entire community living there and sometimes the connection is irregular. Then they have to go far to fetch water from a public water tap, which is 300 meters away, even in the time of summer.
<b>Government schemes &amp; Institutions</b>	Almost everyone has voter id card, and few have ration card and aadhar card. Nonfunctional Anganwadi center.	Almost everyone has voter id card, and few have ration card and aadhar card. No Anganwadi center.	Almost all of them have voter id card and ration card. Functional Anganwadi center.	All of them have voter id card and some have ration card too but not getting ration form 2-3 months.	Everyone has voter id card. Madarsa inside the campus where kids of this slum along with some orphan Muslim

				Most of the old age people are getting pension.	kids study and live here. The Anganwadi center was allocated for that area but the school shifted a little far from the place as the staffs were reluctant to work with Muslims.
<b>Other Remarks &amp; Observations</b>	Frequent incidences of fire. Instances from 'International day against child labor'. Constant threat from local government.	Few years back a suicide case. Comments about liquor ban and accessibility of alcohol. Increasing sale of cough syrup after liquor ban.	Communal Harmony. Residents feel relatively more stable and secure.	Case of theft few days back near this slum and residents outlook about the whole incident.	Past communal tension between this community and nearby Hindus (in Ambedkar Bahawan). Because of strong leadership, residents feel more safe and secure. Part of mainstream politics because of the leader.

## **5. Observations and narratives:**

In this section we are focussing on what we got to hear from slum dwellers. We heard from them their story of how they ended up in the slum. They shared their day to day struggles with us. Many of our interviewee complained about the government and its officials. They also told us about the discrimination that they face. We talked to women and girls to know about their lives. In the following subsections we are looking at these aspects more closely.

### **5.1. Migration and Slum formation:**

Major, chunk of population staying in the slums today, when they moved from their village to the city, found some job and rented a room for themselves to stay, however there are few families/individuals who ended up directly in slums from their original place (a) because they were born in the slum (b) because of natural calamities like flood (c) because of mass scale displacement due to development project or (d) because of any other life tragedies.

Limited income and ever-increasing cost of living forced those who were staying in rented room initially to find new ways to reduce spending. Since rent payment is a major proportion of total monthly spending, leaving the rented room and finding a place to live for free stuck everyone's mind sooner or later.

*“I moved here during the 70s flood in Patna with my uncle and aunt. My uncle used to work in the government office as a clerk. So we stayed in the government quarter with them. But when my uncle died and government quarter was taken back, we had to choose between staying on rent and staying in a slum for free. We chose the latter because staying on rent for a family of six would mean spending half of the monthly income on rent. Even now when we are staying in a slum where we do not have to pay to stay we find it very hard to run the family.”*

- Kaki, Indrapuri slum

If he/she had migrated with his/her spouse and children, soon figured out that staying in a rented room is not economically sustainable. If he was alone in moving to Patna with a plan in his mind that he will send money to his family, found out that a big fraction of his income is going in paying rent. What he could save after all the expenses were only little more than what he earned in his village itself. To save more, he had to cut his spending on rent.

Binod Ram who moved to Patna with his wife, one son and one daughter fifteen years ago, rented a room for his family. Four five years later, as the number of children grew, spending increased. Staying in a rented room when he could not feed and clothe his children properly, made no sense to him. His brother who was working in the municipal corporation as a safaikarmchari and was staying in a slum told him that there is vacant space in Shivpuri along railway line where there are already other jhuggis in existence. He decided to leave the rented room. He made a jhuggi in Shivpuri himself and shifted in it. Since then he and his family have been staying here.

Suresh Yadav came in Patna with four buffaloes. He made a kahtal for his buffaloes in Indrapuri along railway line. Initially he had rented a room where he slept, took bath and used toilet. But after sometimes he left the room and arranged a bed for himself in his khatal. Since he had to take care of buffaloes, milk them and sell them he spent a great deal of his time in khatal. He did not spend more than 6-7 hours at his room so he left the room.

*“I am here for my business only. I take care of my cows and they take care of my income. I was staying in a rented room earlier. Since most of the times of my day I spend in khatal with my cow, I left the rented room and arranged a bed for myself in the khatal.”*

- Suresh Yadav on staying in Indrapuri Slum

Lakshmi Devi had to flee from her village after her village was submerged in flood of 1970s. She with her husband and her children took refuge in Rajbanshi Nagar. Since then she and her family have been staying here. They do not go back to their village there is nothing now which belongs to them.

*“I lost my home, my land, my wealth, my everything in the flood of 1970. Koshi took everything away from us and left us with no option but to migrate somewhere. We came to Patna and came to know from one of my relatives about Rajbanshi Nagar. At that time, this place was not congested like today. Life has been very tough since then.”*

- Lakshmi Devi, Rajbanshi Nagar

Families who got two rooms flat in Abdul Bari Bhawan under rehabilitation of slums in early 90s, after two decades they are now unable to accommodate all their family member in two rooms. So some member of few families made jhuggis for themselves in the non-built up area of the Bhawan. While member of other families shifted to different slum altogether because there was no non-built up area of the Bhawan left.

Kaveeta and Shankar are living in slum since their childhood. Kaveeta lives in Indrapuri whereas Shankar in Shivpuri. Shankar's father had got a room under rehabilitation scheme but left the room after Shankar's brother committed suicide in that room. They moved to Shivpuri in the slum because they could not afford to pay rent.

Thus, we can see a pattern of migration among the residents of these five slums where they are living in this slum being forced to live as victims of their circumstances. Whether they are born as slum dwellers or they moved here having nowhere to go, have compromised their willingness to have a decent shelter day after day in their own way. But some of the residents of these slums, are desperate to make their way out of these slums as society ignores their existence and treats them nowhere near as human being.

## **5.2. People finding a way out from slum:**

Even the staunchest supporters of market forces will agree that invisible hands can only blur the picture of slums and make it invisible but cannot make it disappear. There is no way slums which



are byproduct of 'Market Mechanism' can be eradicated within the framework of Market, without government intervention.

Even then let us see how some people manage to get out from dehumane life of slums. How long do they manage to stay away from it? Are there any who are fortunate enough to stay away for rest his/her life after they got out once?

Rajkumari Devi has been staying in slums for twenty years with her husband and three sons and a daughter. The youngest son is handicapped, and her daughter has down syndrome. Two of her sons after their marriage shifted to rented rooms leaving their youngest brother and parents in the 'jhuggi'. None of the two brothers could afford to pay rent for an extra room for their parent, handicapped brother and sister. Both of them are painters and earn 500 rupees daily. They have their kids who they send to private school. Kids visit their grandparents only on weekend. Both brothers keep visiting their parents. Rajkumari Devi and her husband earn for their handicapped son, their daughter and themselves. Will the two brothers have to shift in a slum again because of fixed income in real terms and increasing number of heads of spending as family grows and time passes? Or will they be able to increase their income and manage to live in rented room?

*"My sons visit us once in a day. They come here in the evening after their work. We have to earn to feed ourselves and the youngest son and the daughter. We are somehow surviving in the slum. We cannot go to the native village as there is no work for us. And we cannot stay on rent as we do not earn enough. I don't know who will look after my youngest son and the daughter when we will not be in this world. I pray for my grandchildren that they don't have to live their lives in a slum. I pray that they do not have to struggle in their life as much as we are struggling."*

- Rajkumari Devi, Indrapuri slum

Shankar's two sisters are married to men who have their own house in the city. One of them got married before she turned eighteen. Parents try to find a match for their daughters in those men who are not staying in a slum. Of course, not every girl is married to out of slum. But few of them get married to a man who is not staying in a slum.

Lakshmi Devi's daughters are also married to someone who are not living in slums. She and her husband made it sure that their daughters don't have to live all their life in slums. They arranged the marriages of their daughters far from the slum. No body from the grooms' family knew that they live in a slum. They hidden their identity because those who are not living slums may not be willing to marry in a family which live in a slum. Now only their son-in-laws know that they live in a slum. Her youngest daughter is unmarried, and she wants to marry her off in a good family. Her husband died a year back, so it seems very difficult to her that she will find as good a match as she found for other two daughters.

We have also seen young people working as hard as they can to get out of undignified lives of slum where they are stuck because they did not have any other choice. We talked to Shankar in

Shivpuri and Kaveeta in Indrapuri. They told us about their studies. Kaveeta works in a girl PG for few hours. She is continuing her studies with the money that she earns. Shankar who was waiting for his 12<sup>th</sup> class result wants to get a job after finishing his studies. He does not want to stay in a slum.

*“I am here because I have no choice. I want to blame my parents for it but then they also had no choice but to move here after my elder committed suicide. I just want to get out of here. The way people look at us here hurts me a lot. I am planning to become CA, but I don’t know how long my parents can support my studies. Thinking about the day when my parents would no longer be able to finance my studies, scares me. Thinking that I will not be able to get a job scares me. You know, I haven’t told my friends in my college that I live in slum out of the fear that I will lose the handful friends I have. I request you to make sure in your report that nobody gets to know that I live in slum.....”*

-Shankar, Shivpuri

When we went to Abdul Bari Bhawan, we saw a community run Madrasah. Aga Saheb, the leader of the bhawan told us that he wants every kid of the bhawan to study so that they do not have to live in slums. He himself had sent his two sons to polytechnic collage and daughter and daughter-in-law for vocational course.

*“If they (children) complete their study, they will not have to suffer like us. They will have a better job and a stable income. As a parent of these children all I want is all of them study and get job so that they do not need to stay in a slum”*

- Aga Saheb, Abdul bari Bhawan

The desperation to move out from slum speaks the volume of miseries these people go through. They don’t want to be rich; they want to be ‘dignified poor’ where they don’t have to stay in ‘jhuggis’ on road or along railway line or on unattended government land. They want a proper roof over their head which cannot be vandalized by a government order and which at least make them ‘visible’ to the local government.

### **5.3. Poverty as an unavoidable part of slum livelihood:**

People who are self-employed in slum are relatively well off compared to people who are daily wage earners. Those who are self-employed have better sense of job security and earning while daily wage earners are not sure whether they will get some work the next day. Shambhu Yadav, a resident of Indrapuri, has installed a machine in his hut where he prepares chara (food for cattle) from hay. Those who keep cows and buffaloes buy chara from him. He is in a better economic condition than to his neighbours who are daily wage earners, some of them are painters, some are carpenters, and some are laborers. Shambhu has some fixed daily earnings but his neighbors quite often do not get work in lean period (such as rainy season) which becomes a big pain for them.

Some of them go to their native place in the lean period if they have some source of earning there. When they go back they either work on their own land or they work on someone else’s land as agricultural labourer or they engage in allied activities like fishing.

Kaka who lives in Rajbanshi Nagar is a fruit seller and he is also relatively better off as compared to his counterparts. Seema from Rajbansi Nagar has her own small shop (gumti) and she also seems to be in better economic condition despite the fact that her father (only earning member of the family) died few years back. Ramesh from Adalatghat has his own teal stall and is able to provide decent life style and education to his children as compared to his neighbors who are daily wage earners.

Due to bad condition of sanitation and lack of proper nutritious diet (due to high prices of food in cities) people in slums are not healthy enough for certain kind of work such as mega construction work. Some construction workers, who were involved in formation of a bridge behind Adalat Ghat, told us that our contractor does not hire local people of these slums because they are not fit enough to do these kind of works as it requires lot of strength and stamina. Mandal Ji from Adalat Ghat used to be a rickshaw puller initially but later on due to his bad health he had to sell his rickshaw and now he does the business of wood which is being used as cooking fuel.

There is a significant difference in terms of lifestyle and thinking between the people who have always been living in the slums and the people who happen to be in the slum because of some crisis (i.e they were relatively well off before coming to the slum). Shankar from Shivpuri used to live in Ambedkar colony (concrete houses provided by Laalu government) before coming to this slum and due to his elder's brother suicide (in the same colony) his whole family shifted in this slum. He seemed not to be embarrassed as being poor but to be embarrassed as he is living in slum. Being poor at the first place lowers your position in the society and top of that if you come from a relatively lower caste and live in slum, society looks at you as if you are at a mercy of all the society and treats you like low class insect consciously avoiding connection with you. That is what actually has become part of these people's daily routine.

#### **5.4. Caste hierarchy, religious identity and anonymity:**

Caste hierarchy is an old and traditional concept for most of the people living in the megacities like Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru etc., especially for upper caste privileged people of city. But it is unfortunate that even after so many years since independence, caste hierarchy persists not only in villages but also in cities.

People in slums are very clear why they are here in slums, to earn money and to make their life better, therefore they don't let their notion of caste hierarchy enter when it comes to their earnings and livelihood but in their personal and day to day social life we could see several glimpses of caste dynamics.

Slum, by construction, is a result of caste hierarchy. Majority of the population of slum that we have visited belongs to lower caste and we hardly found a single household which belongs to upper caste, which itself suggests that there is a strong force called "caste identity" for every individual which works implicitly in the formation of slum at first place.

Slums are also segregated based on caste. Indrapuri slum is bifurcated between residence of relatively upper caste (Yadavs) and relatively lower caste mixed inhabitants. Communication between lower and upper caste residents is not very frequent but during festivals and emergency

situations they do help each other but the notion of caste hierarchy is still there among residents. During our survey Cheede Yadav from Indrapuri slum said with a sense of proud feeling that *“hum unse kyu baat kare (why should we talk to them)?”* which suggests that there is a clear notion of caste hierarchy among the residents and people of relatively upper caste consider their counterpart inferior.

Upper caste people are in the better position to get advantage of urban job market and extract more from urban economy as compared to lower caste people because of their better endowments at first place. In Indrapuri slum there are lot of Yadavs who have lands in their native places and they live in this slum just to minimize their rental cost so that they get more profit by selling milk in the city at high prices as compared to village (as there is high demand of milk in the city and the supply is limited). People of lower caste do not have enough capital at first place to buy cows and also because of their caste they are not supposed to have cows and no wonder people will not buy milk from them when they will get to know that the person who is selling the milk is a Dalit.

In Shivpuri also we have seen that caste identity dictates in which cluster you are choosing to live. Shivpuri unlike Indrapuri has a caste division within SC categories. People, who are from ‘Dom’ caste, have a cluster of 40 households in one part of the slum and somehow share a neighborhood bond among them. On the other part, relatively higher caste among SCs like ‘Kurmi’s stay aloof from the ‘Dom’s maintaining a neighborhood entirely involving people from their own caste.

*“Brahmins can eat our food. We are not like people on that side. Yes, we know there are 40 households from ‘Dom’s but we don’t communicate with them much.....”*

-Dhaniya Devi, a 60 years old woman from Shivpuri

AdalatGhat slum shows us a different picture as a whole. Unlike Indrapuri and Shivpuri where at least people know people from which castes are living in the slum, in AdalatGhat, people do not care about the caste identities of their neighbors. People here have to work hard to get a subsistence level of earning and being at the centre of the city, it helps the residence of the slum to stay there without actually revealing their caste identity among the mixed soul of the city. Not only caste, here we have seen religious harmony in this slum. Hindus and Muslims live there without having a single rampage over religion issues. There may be quarrels for daily problems of slums, for water, community toilet etc but never ever they have any communal problems.

In Abdul Bari Bhawan and also in Rajbansi Nagar we have seen a strong bond amongst the community living there. In Abdul Bari Bhawan, Bakho community is living there for at least 25 years and as they belong to same community and from same religion they have a mutual relationship of trust and unity. Though, there were times when Hindus from nearby Ambedkar colony used to burn their houses and rob them considering them minorities. There have been several incidents of burning houses back then. Even now also the people from Bakho community and nearby Hindus share a relationship full of communal tension.

In Rajbansi Nagar, people somehow have seemingly less concerned about caste hierarchy and have only focused on daily struggles of having a decent standard of living.

### **5.5. Social interactions, neighborhood bonds and solidarity:**

In all slums we found at least one temple. In Indrapuri they have built a small temple for themselves which is the only construction built up of bricks and cement in the entire slum. We were speaking to a local people was not a slum dweller; he said that they have built the temple close to the railway line so that when government tries to demolish the slum, they can collect religious sympathy. There are two other temples close to the slum which are big and meant for local non-slum people, but there is no restriction for those staying in slum as such.

There is no temple in Shivpuri which is built by slum dwellers, but there are other temples in Shivpuri too where they can go. There is a temple in Rajbanshi Nagar which was built by someone who used to stay in the slum but now has shifted to rented room because he got a job. The temple is used by the slum dwellers only. Adaltghat is no exception. There are temples, though not built by dwellers. Abdul Bari Bhawan has a big mosque which was constructed from government money. Presence of temple/mosques in each slum shows that slum dwellers do not give up on their way of life, customs and rituals no matter how deprived they are in every sense. But it is interesting to see a '*pukka*' temple and mosque built from funds collected from community, although they themselves are staying in jhuggis.

Be it Indrapuri, Shivpuri or any other slums we visited, within a slum people knew each other. Type of interpersonal relations usually depends upon castes, native place, type of job they do and family size in these slums. For example, people in Yadav Tola, Indrapuri where all of them are staying alone do not speak to others in Indrapuri who are staying with their family. When we asked a Yadav whether he communicates with those who are not in Yadav Tola, he responded by saying, "*hum unse kyu baat kare (why should we talk to them)?*" One reason can be that for them it is not a permanent settlement, their family is somewhere else, and they are here only to make money. Other reason seems from their behavior towards other residents is that they don't want to communicate with people from lower caste than they are. However, Yadavs did talk to each other. In fact, when one has to go home, others would look after his khatal. It is true in case of Rajbansi Nagar as well where there are many who are staying alone. Thus, people from same caste, same native place and sometimes same occupation maintain a somewhat strong bond among themselves.

There are many families whose close relatives stay in the same slum but in different '*jhuggis*' like Kaveeta's family (her parents and siblings) and family of her sister (who is married and has children) stay in Indrapuri. Such families hardly have interactions with others and maintain social interaction within their own circle of relatives. However, those who do not have any close relatives in the slum and in the family there are parents and kids only, maintain a good relationship with other families so that there will be someone who will come to rescue in any unwanted contingencies.

In festivals like Chhath Puja they invite their neighbours. Those who do not have even a house at their village; they marry their sons and daughters off in slums only. And on such occasion, they invite their neighbors. Such social gatherings improve mutual trust. But we also met a family in Shivpuri where they stated us that they don't communicate to their neighbours, not even to those

who belong to the same caste. When they married their daughter off they did not even invite their neighbors.

*“No, no, we didn’t invite them. Those people somehow don’t maintain any standard. We didn’t want them to be in the marriage because that will give a wrong impression of us to our son in law’s family.....”*

- Bindu Devi, Shivpuri

slum

They help each other in finding a job if one lost his current job. Suraj, son of Binod Ram got a job of SafaiKarmchari in the Municipal Corporation because he was recommended by his uncle who is doing the same job. When we were talking to Binod Ram we got to know that a man next to his jhuggi committed suicide in his ‘jhuggi’ few months back for unknown reason. A group of twenty people went to local ward member and asked for some monetary help. He was kind enough to give them one thousand, he told. Above that they collected some money from all households and gave to her wife.

Shankar’ father is called ‘Netaji’ by everyone in Shivpuri. If anyone has a small issue, they will go to him. When we asked him the why he has become ‘Netaji’ for all these people, he told us in a humble tone that he did not do something extraordinary for earning this title and unconditional love of the people. He just tried to talk to people to send their children to school as he was doing for his own children. Before him, everyone was not concerned about sending children to school. When he came, he somehow has turned into an example of ideal father for the people of Shivpuri slum and he has earned everyone’s respect and love since then.

*“Everyone addresses me as their ‘Netaji’ with love.They listen to me. I haven’t studied that far but I always tell the children to study. I also ask the parents to send their children to school. Children in this slum do obey me a lot...”*

- Shankar’s Father from Shivpuri slum

This is also true for Abdul Bari Bhawan also. Aga sahib has been trying to promote education for all the children staying in the slum. Thus, he has earned a lot of respect from the residents and residents have started to believe that Aga sahib has done a lot for them as their well-wisher and any suggestion coming from him is always beneficial for them. So, they have made him their leader to speak for them and they have immense faith in him that whatever he does, he does only for the betterment of their condition.

*“I am an illiterate. But when I built this orphanage and ‘madrasah’ to provide education to the children, people started believing me. The children in the slum have become children of my own. Parents also think that whatever I am doing for these children, it is for providing their children a better life. Then they started having faith in me. Now I interact with govt. officials for demands for the whole slum, collect funds from other muslimwell-wishers to run this ‘madrasah’ .....people now love me, listen to my words and obey me.....”*

- Aga sahib from Abdul Bari Bhawan

Thus,for these innocent and hardworking people in the slum, their well-wisher becomes ‘Masiha’ for them, be it any political leader, NGO volunteer or common people living themselves. This even proves that sometimes people can find their closest relative among



someone not related to their blood, speaking for them. These mutual trust, pure love and respect among each other do give us the light of hope that living in inhumane conditions cannot take human qualities from people.

### **5.6. Political Awareness:**

There is a widespread popular perception that one can teach anything to a Bihari but Math and Politics. From movies to memes, the perception has a strong acceptance. Our experience has strengthened the perception.

They can drink tea without milk but not without politics. You cannot find a single man who does not have an opinion on ban of alcohol or demonetization. Find a group of people playing cards in a slum and sit with them for half an hour; you will have a performance card of not only current government but previous governments as well. Caste politics to communal tactics, they know everything. And we should not be very surprised by such political awareness because these are the people whose lives are affected by politics by a great deal. They did not have any idea of GST because it did not affect their lives directly.

Binod Ram in Shivpuri shared with us his understanding of caste politics. He also told goods and bads of different state leaders. He did not hesitate in sharing his preference when he has to vote. But we met some youngsters who were really frustrated when they were asked about the state and local governance.

*“Nitishkumar tells to clean the city. According to him slums are dirt which needs to be cleaned. He wants to demolish slums.”*

- Suraj, Shivpuri

Tanvirchacha in Adalatghat shared his thoughts about political changes in the map of Bihar since Indira Gandhi's rise as first woman Prime Minister and Lalu Prasad's rise to powers from student leader to Bihar's Chief Minister. A clear recollection of these did amaze us that living in the slum makes people more aware of the local politics as their lives depend on these local government policies. But also we met some people who have become disappointed at the performance of any govt. in power.

*“They always remember us when the elections are closer. Be it Lalu's govt. or Nitish's govt., does it matter to us?.....at the end of the day we will be always on the side of the deprived as we become invisible after election for them.....”*

- Rajesh Kumar from Adalatghat slum

Aga sahib from Abdul Bari Bhawan also told us about the good-bad side of both Lalu Prasad's Govt. and Nitish's Govt. For them Lalu has become the 'Masiha' without whom, they believe they would have been victim of communal riots and become refugee in their own residential place. Lalu has worked for them and saved them. But after Lalu's regime, no govt. has worked towards their welfare.

*“What Lalu did for us, we couldn’t be more thankful for that. Nitish is only building roads, fly-overs, buildings, what about us....?”*

- Aga sahib from Abdul Bari Bhawan

Political awareness has made this people more connected with the local politics, helped them to take the decision wisely about whom to vote and what is beneficial for them after they elect someone. It has made them more aware about their rights and the govt. policies for them.

### **5.7. Vulnerability against man-made and natural disaster:**

Slums such as Indrapuri and Shivpuri which are on illegal government land and alongside railway tracks always live under the constant threat that local government can anytime demolish the entire slum. In fact, there have been several instances when municipality officials dismantled several houses to clean the nearby drainage but once officials left the place they rebuild their huts as they don’t have any choice. In rainy season this place becomes a mess; water enters in the huts and stays there for several days, which creates major health hazards. From past several years almost each year incident of fire took place in Indrapuri and several huts get destroyed on regular basis. Very recently in the past month one major incident of fire took place in Indrapuri and 27 huts get completely destroyed. It is very difficult to figure out the exact reasons of fire, but one thing is very evident that the construction of huts and use of gas cylinder inside huts accentuates the fire which eventually leads to a massive disaster.

Other slums such as Abdul Bari Bhawan and Adalatghat are so congested that people can’t even breathe fresh air, which makes them vulnerable towards lot of diseases as it becomes very difficult to maintain minimum required level of sanitation and hygiene because of space crunch. The building of Abdul Bari Bhawan has total 40 single rooms which accommodate around 500 people and the building is around 30-40 years old and since then any local government has not provided any fund for the maintenance of this building. By looking at the building one can easily sense that at any point of time this building can collapse, and these 500 people have to live under this constant fear as they don’t have any choice because this is the only place they have. Most importantly in case of any disaster or unforeseen circumstances there is no immediate support system placed by local authority as these slum dwellers have no voice who can represent them or fight for their rights.

In AdalatGhat, people built 40-50 small extremely low roof rooms per family to take shelter. As the family grew, they have partitioned the rooms where they can barely stand. They sleep with their children in those partitioned spaces with also their LPG gas oven-cylinders. The electricity connection wires in an alarming situation can be found just behind those 40-50 rooms. The whole situation is so terrifying alongside the probable health hazards from open defecation by the side of open drainage.

Rajbansi Nagar since its earlier days has not seen any attempt on the part of govt. or residents there regarding sanitation there. Open defecation and over flooded drainage system have become a part of their daily life. Govt. has not tried the people to include under ‘Swachh Bharat mission’ but has provided them with two water pumps. Govt. has threatened them to clear the area as



drain will be widened and the residents are blocking the drain over time and has already demolished the slum on the other side of the road.

*“When I came to live here after my marriage, I came to know that I have to go out in the open for toilet purposes... I never did that in my parents’ place.... It’s so embarrassing for me every day.... Now the situation is that we are struggling to find out shelter at first as govt. has given us two months’ notice to vacate this place as early as possible.....”*

- Renu Devi, a 21 years old married woman from Rajbansi Nagar slum

### **5.8. Women in the slum:**

The position of women in the slum has remained a matter of interest for the social scientists. When India is progressing in such a higher growth rate and when urban agglomeration has become a gradual phenomenon, urban slums have become the only shelter for the rural people to get the benefit of urbanization. In rural setting, we have always known that there is much more restriction on the women to go out and have their own decision and they are always trained to be a good housewife by making them believe that outside world does not exist for them without guardian (father, husband or son). Then it becomes particularly interesting to look at that is it always remain same for the women who is married off to a person who lives in the slum and she goes from village to city to live in his husband’s house, or for the women who was born in the slum and also married a man who also live in the slum? According to Richard Rambarran, *“What makes women in the urban slums of particular interest is that they are the ones who are the bedrock of the family, versus the man, in the more rural lying communities. As an institution, the family’s coherence and strong existence often times depends on a mother’s ability to fulfill her duties and may even mask or negate a bad male parent.”*

During our survey, we came across women of different ages, from 15-65 years, shy and friendly, working and housewife, sharing with us different stories of their lives. In this section our prior focus will be on age at the time of marriage, education, menstruation education, no. of children and age at first child birth, their decision-making power in the house, employment, safety issue etc. which will give us a much clearer view of these women.

Starting with the age of marriage, we came to know that earlier the median age of marriage was 6-7 years, but they used to go to their in-law’s house at the age of 12-13 after ‘gaona’ ceremony. Now the median age of marriage has shifted to 14 years and they usually go to their in-law’s house immediately after their marriage. We came to know about a very interesting ritual among them, which makes parents to marry their daughters off as early as possible.

*“During marriage, there is a ritual called ‘junghsudha’, according to whom, the bride has to sit on the right thigh of her father....this is the purification custom....as the ritual needs their daughters to sit on their thigh, fathers become very uncomfortable when the daughter is too old (17-18 years old)...That’s why they usually marry them off at a younger age and do ‘gauna’ 1-2 years later....”*

- Indu Devi, a 24 years old married housewife from Indrapuri

Fatima from Adalatghat also agreed that in their family also, she got married when she was merely 13-14 years old. Across the religion though there has been an improvement in terms of the

age of marriage but it is still lower than the age which our constitution considers as adult and the marriage as legal.

When it comes to the education of women, somehow, girls born in the slums are relatively better off than the girls who are married off to her husband and then come from their village to the city to stay in the slum. Throughout the interviews I met some girls who are born and brought up in the slums have at least completed their studies up to class 7-8 after that they usually drop out. Some of them drops out because of they do not want to go to school and start helping the other women in the house in the domestic chores and looking after their siblings. And when they become of the age of 14, they are married off but there is always some exception. Kaveeta being one of them, she has already completed her 10<sup>th</sup> and now in 12<sup>th</sup> class, she is studying for boards and she also wants to go to college (detail discussion in case study 9.1.1). But when we talked to women who moved here after marriage only, most of them told us that they don't know how to read and write. But among them also some got the opportunity to study but has to drop out in order to marry and move to the slum.

*"I was about to sit for the metric exam but due to the marriage ceremony, I could not sit for it.....it is easier for city girls like you to study and still be unmarried, but among us it is not possible.... society will not accept my family....."*

- Mira Devi, a 21 years old married woman from Rajbansi Nagar

But the mothers who did not get the opportunity to go to school, have become aware of the benefits of education. In order to send their own daughters school, they work alongside with their husband and make sure their daughters not to miss out on something what they did miss out.

Age of women at the birth of her first child also differs across different generations. We talked to 60 years old chachi who became mother when she was 14 years old and now she has 3 sons and 3 daughters. When we talked to Indu Devi about this, she told us that she became mother of her first child when she was 21 years old and now she has 2 boys by the age of 24. This situation is not different if we look for all five slums. What seems really alarming is that, they still prefer to give birth at home mainly in Indrapuri, Shivpuri slums. When it comes to the delivery of pregnant mothers, they prefer to go to private chambers (costs Rs.9000) where compounder delivers the baby, or they prefer birth at home (costs Rs.6000) over going to govt. hospital. Thus the new mothers and newly born babies are not getting proper sanitation what they deserve and always at a risk of getting infected and also new mothers are not getting the financial benefits given to them if they give birth at govt. hospital. Even some of the children who are born at home did not get birth certificate and also sometimes are not getting immunization from the nearby Anganwadi centre and health centre. For the other slums, new mothers go to the nearby medical colleges (Patna Medical College and hospital, Nalanda Medical College and hospital and Shastriya Nagar hospital) to deliver their baby.

When I talked to the girls and different aged women about menstruation, I came across different perception about the sanitation level they have. One of the girl stated that she has already been diagnosed with vaginal infection once and doctor has already advised her to use napkin, but she is continuing her practices of using old clothes and rags for her period. When I asked her mother and grandmother about it, they seemed concerned but also put the point of sanitary napkins being

expensive for monthly use. One of the women who is married and has two children, became very uncomfortable and instantly denied the idea when I suggested her to use napkin or in case of use of clothes, it must be cleaned properly and must be put outside in the sun to disinfect it.

During the interview, we also came across the fact when the daughters turn out to be 14-15 years age; parents usually send their daughters to their relatives nearby in the city till the daughters get married. And also, when the girls drop out after class 7-8, their parents usually start to look for a match to marry them off as soon as possible. Apart from the discriminative view towards the daughter's education (which we did not find much in slums), one of the big reason behind these early marriages turn out to be the safety concern parents have for their daughters. In the village where an unwritten law within the community usually protects the girls, in the slum absence of such laws make the parents more concerned. Usually slum is a home to different types of people all hailing from different parts of Bihar with different back grounds looking for temporary settlements and as both of the parents have to work outside from morning to evening, their concern regarding girls' safety somehow becomes justifiable.

Along with the concept of being employed comes the more power to have a say in the decision-making process of the households. When we visited these slums newly married/ new fathers who just had their first child are shy to go out to work in the households as maids and other jobs. But after some time, as the children grow up and start to go to school, the overall expenditure of the household increases. Given their husbands are daily labourers, often they don't find any job for the day and just sit back at home. Then these women have to go out to earn for their children. They become financially independent enough to support the children and themselves. In our Indian societal framework, we assume that the male has to be the head of the family and it is only when the husband dies, female member becomes the head. But in these slums, the idea is whole different. Even if the husband is there and is head for the family in the paper, but it is always the women in the house who make the decisions, work outside, run the house and take care of the children ensuring their education and successfully lead their role as the true head of the family. Among these women headed families, in one family the head has actually started learning to read and write and determined to take every possible step to educate her daughter who is bright and she also recognizes her daughter's potential given better opportunities. Women as the head of the family are more aware of social, economic surroundings and are freer to talk to us about the conditions of the slum. This can even be seen in the case of the women who are working outside. Going outside, interacting with people, handling the matter of the educational matter of the children, managing households' account etc. are giving these women more say in the household decisions compared to their mother-in-law or mothers in their times.

## **6. Priority of Government Schemes:**

One of the most striking facts that we observed in Indrapuri and Shivpuri is that almost all of the residents have voter ID card either of their native place or the place where they are living now but very few of them have aadhar card or ration card. This is reflection of the fact that these people are the most used people by any political parties but despite that fact they are among the most oppressed of Indian democracy.

On the contrary in Rajbansi Nagar and Adalatghat, people do have voter ID card along with ration card and aadhar card. One of the possible reasons is that these slums are at the heart of the city and well recognized by local government because of which they have access to all the government institutions and schemes. Other possible reason can be that the local ward commissioner for the latter two slums are very active and they make sure that all of the residents should have access to important identity cards and government schemes (such as functional Anganwadicenter, UjjwalaYojana, PDS). As one of the residents confess that

*“Since she has become local ward councilor, her husband has worked for us a lot. He has ensured the process of getting ration card and aadhar card for us.....”*

– Lakshmi Devi from Rajbansi Nagar

In all the slums those who had ration cards were not getting ration in the past 2-3 months, this was a common problem in all the slums that we visited. There was a clear distinction in reach and effectiveness of government schemes and institutions across slums. Indrapuri and Shivpuri, which are on the periphery of the city and not recognized by local government, has only one aanganwadi center and that too is almost dysfunctional, anganwadi shevika comes to the centre once in a month. Apart of this there is no legal electricity connection in these slums and not a single household is using 14ltr LPG cylinder under the UjwwalaYojana. None of the lower caste residents have caste certificate which disables them to take advantage of government schemes meant for them in education and job market. But in Rajbansi Nagar and Adalatghat, which are at the heart of the city and well recognized by local government, things are different i.e. almost each of the household has metered electricity connection and also, they are subscribed for UjwallaYojana and getting 14ltr gas cylinder on regular basis. Both of these slums have a functional anganwadi center and sevika comes at the center on regular basis. At Adalatghat we also got a chance to meet the sevika during our field visit. Rajbansi Nagar also has a primary school building, which was closed during our field visit as summer vacation was going on as per the locals.

For Abdul Bari Bhawan also which is situated at the centre of old Patna city gets all the benefits of govt. schemes. By orders of Lalu Prasad Yadav back in 1994, the residents of Abdul Bari Bhawan are entitled to free electricity and come under BPL/Antyodyaya category for availing ration. But in recent days while they are facing problems in terms of water logging from nearby drains without having drain passing from their slum, they did not get any help from local govt. Even the Anganwadi worker did not want set up the centre in the slum due to majority of Muslim residence and shifted the centre a few households ahead in the Ambedkar colony.

*“We went to the MLA with our demand for the drain. But he refused to listen to us. Maybe we are the only Muslim community living here and, in the neighborhood, we are not in good terms with Hindus here. That’s why our MLA being Hindu does not want to work for us.....”*

- Aga sahib from Abdul Bari Bhawan

By looking at above observations, it can be said that slums which are relatively stable and very old in nature (such as Rajbansi Nagar, AdalatGhat and Abdul Bari Bhawan) are more likely to get advantage of government schemes as over the time they get recognized and also they gain some

negotiating power compared to the slums which more unstable in nature (such as Indrapuri and Shivpuri).

## **7. Limitations of this study:**

Our study is subjected to some unavoidable limitations. We have considered these limitations not as barriers to a fruitful study but as some powerful points which will improve our approach to the study later.

1. Sample size is limited due to time and resource constraint. Sampling of households within each slum is somewhat random and doesn't follow any scientific sampling technique. Idea was to capture as much household as we could by maintaining the proper representation of the entire population; we ensured that by randomizing our household selection process.
2. Selection of slums have been done by keeping the diversity of slums in mind but still it does not capture the life of slum in its entirety as every slum is very different from each other and the observations and findings from these slums need not to be necessarily true for other slums.
3. All the observations and findings are subject to researcher's interpretation. As the interpretation are subjective in nature so there is no absolute right and wrong and readers of this report may have different understanding of things but the study has been done by following the scientific methodology so there is some credibility attached to the observations and findings at the same time.
4. Due to the qualitative nature of study certain biases from interview and interviewee part are inhabitable.

## **8. Conclusion:**

This study has become a huge learning experience for us. From going to a new city to entering to the interior of slum, from having tea with the people in the slums to enjoying their homemade 'byangan ki sabji-roti', from laughing with them to facing their complaints against the govt.-this experience have made us more close to the lives of people who are at the root of the economy, people who everyday clears our dirt and keep the days going, people without whose hard work and dedication our economy will just become stagnated. Also this study has also taught us that theories-principles-ethics only exist in the pages of our textbooks and the real world functions in a whole different way. In this study what we did is to bring out the picture of the condition of the people living in the slums of Patna in a much more descriptive way. But given more time, this study has more potential to give us the statistics-based truth of the slum livelihoods and the dynamics working within the slum.

## **9. Appendix:**

### **9.1. Overview of the slums surveyed:**

Keeping in mind our study objectives and the time constraint, we selected four slums to work on and find out how characteristics of a slum varies depending on lot of factors like location, caste and religion of people living there etc.

In this section, we will try to concentrate on overview of the slums to give a pictorial description of each slum in details.

#### **9.1.1 Indrapuri Slum:**

From day 1 to the last day of our survey, we spent a lot of time to get the essence of slum livelihood and got attached to the welcoming people living here. On the first day, we had a warm welcome by a bunch of children who were studying together under the guidance of NGO volunteers. The children were very happy to see us and that makes their parents also comfortable when we were around them. Their parents spoke to us without being self-conscious at any point of the interviews conducted by us. Situated closely to Boring Road in Patna, the area surrounding this slum is becoming slowly the real estate hub just outside the Patna city, which also determines some of the important characteristics of the slum itself. Here we met some of the residents (approximately 16-17 people) and their individual stories turn out to be as an eye opener to the real scenario going on in these slums which are situated on the illegal land or the land owned by central govt., in this case the land is owned by Indian Railways. In this slum we have surveyed approx. 18 people across different ages including all men and women.

**Location:** This slum is situated alongside the Digha-Patna Ghat railway line. There have been multiple clusters alongside this railway line in particular, as this line is not as busy as other connecting lines from Patna Junction and in this line the train runs only four times a day. Indrapuri slum is one of the clusters and is located near the water tank which gives the place name as 'Panitanki'.

**History of slum:** Like any other urban slum, this slum also has been constructed as a shelter in the city as a result of rural to urban migration. Mainly the slum came into existence after the 1970 flood in Bihar where people from nearby villages surrounding Patna moved to Patna to survive. This makes this slum nearly 40 years old. But this setup has never been a permanent set up for most of the people living here. Over the years people came and left and for them this place was part of the transition period of their settlement for living in the city. Though over the years some families have stayed and now currently due to the family structural change (from joint to single families), members of the same family are staying in different houses in this slum. Also, through social networks and relations, their relatives and friends from their native place, have also moved here due to the available job opportunities, better opportunities for the education of their children etc. So, this slum has now become a cluster of 30-40 households, which also qualifies as both NSSO and Census 2011 definition of 'slum'. The slum is situated on the land belonging to Indian Railways. Thus, it gives the status to the slum being an illegal one and being



at the mercy of Bihar govt. land policies. Several attempts have been made to demolish the slum but given the high prices of real estate and rents in the city and outskirts of main Patna city, people living here in the slum had nowhere to go and usually end up here staying after each incident of demolishing their houses by Govt. bulldozers. There has been also a bill passed to build a four-lane road instead of railway line as Indian Railways thinks running train four time a day in this line is really not worthy. This bill will also put the lives of the residents again in uncertainty for a roof treating them refugee in their own place where they are living there for more than 10 years and probably without properly compensating them as the land belongs officially to the Railways.

**Caste and religion of the residents:** There is a seemingly distinct classification of the residences on the basis of caste. On the stretch of 2-3 kms belonging to this slum, in one part, there are people living there coming from SC/Dalit families, e.g. Paswan, Shahni, Kurmi etc and on the other part, people come from OBC families, mainly Yadavs. We did not find any Muslim household here.

**Native place of the residents:** Most of the residents among Yadavs come from nearby districts of Danapur, Badh etc. They visit their native place more frequently (twice or thrice in a week). Other residents also come from nearby districts like Samastipur, Begusarai, Patna center etc.

**Major Occupation:** People of relatively lower caste (Paswan, Shahni, Kurmi etc) are daily wage laborer, painter, carpenter, construction workers and domestic workers (especially women). Almost all the Yadavs are doing the business of selling milk.

**Household status:** Most of the houses are made of plastic trampoline, asbestos and temporary objects and the floors being '*kutchcha*'. There have been two or three incidents of fire in the slum in past 5 years. The house materials being flammable make the condition of houses vulnerable to when a single household catches fire. Approximately 3-4 months back, almost 90 percent of the households came under the grasp of a severe fire incident which made many of the household lose the only roof they had along with official documents such as ration card, voter card etc.

On the education front, the condition is not very good, but parents are slowly realizing the importance of education and send their kids to local government school and in some cases nearby private schools too. "Samar" is also working in this slum because of which residents are more aware about education and its importance. Most of the children go to nearby government school and few of the students (who are little elder) go to a nearby private school where tuition fee is around Rs.500 per month. Almost each student drops out till class 7 or 8 because of the increasing expenses on education and need for more helping hand in family. Children are getting midday meal in the school and also books. Only some of the households have ration card but they were also not getting any ration from past 2-3 months. Many of the resident have their local voter id card and few of them have their native village voter ID card.

**Drainage and toilet/bathrooms:** There is a big drain parallel to the slum location. This drain is over flooded with garbage even in the summer time. There is no community toilet. There almost individual toilets made of saree or polythene and made by the side of drain without any roof.

Men and children take bath at the tube well only Women take bath inside an area surrounded using saree/ polythene sheet.

**Water source:** There are no govt. tube well connections in the slum. There are only a few tube wells in the stretch of where Yadavs are living. They use those tube wells which they themselves have built to feed the cows and for their private use. As an example of visible caste discrimination Yadavs do not allow the other families due to their lower rank in the caste hierarchy. The other families have to bring water from the tube well of a nearby temple. Men, women and children (depending on who is there at the time of requirement) carry water on their head from tube well to their huts.

**Sanitation:** Sanitation is really a big issue when it comes to living in the slum. the drain parallel to the slum is over flowed in most of the times and even lacks the attention of govt. The scheduled cleaning of the drain occurs twice a year and that includes taking out the garbage and dumping it at two sides of the drain. Dumped garbage on the two sides of the drain are left there to rot and that works as breeding ground for mosquitoes and flies and several other carriers of deadly diseases. Thus, this condition fails to give the residents at least a human environment to live in. In monsoon, the whole area becomes water logged and people are left to stay, cook and live on the railway track for these rainy days and without a proper source of drinking water and water for other uses they are exposed to water borne diseases. The cow shelters of Yadavs are not maintained properly which also then works as breeding ground for mosquitoes, flies and several other insects.

#### **Other Observations and Remarks:**

1. Although people of different caste live in this slum together with a sense of cooperation but still in few conversation and instances we got a feeling that there is still a strong sense caste discrimination among residents, especially Yadavs feel very strongly that rest of the residents are inferior to them.
2. Because of the infrastructure and temporary setup of the slum, it is very vulnerable in case of any natural as well as man-made calamities. For example - instances of occasional fire in the slum, demolition of huts as regular basis by local authorities, one man fell from the tree and then went into coma for next 7-8 months and then eventually died, a man died because of excessive drinking and hence died because of cancer, young children get exposed to drugs and gutka etc.
3. This slum is not exposed to local government and hardly any local leader visits this place. There is not a strong mechanism of grievance addressing.
4. During an event organized by 'Samar' in this slum on the eve of "International day against child labor", where kids were encouraged to say something on mike, some of the residents were passing inappropriate remarks which were very discouraging for kids and clearly shows their attitudes and mindset. Some of remarks were "*Ei to maugahai, yehkyabanega*" (*He is feminine in nature, what can he do*), "*Shankarwaka beta hai, dhanenakutega*" (*He is the son of Shankar, he will also make food for cattle what his father does*) etc.



### **9.1.2 Shivpuri Slum:**

After visiting Indrapuri, we realized that we should cover one more slum which is similar to Indrapuri but this time on our own i.e. without any external help (we get introduced to Indrapuri residents by 'Samar' – An NGO which teaches kids in slums). Idea was to capture whether getting introduced by any familiar face for residents make any difference in residents' attitudes towards us or not. Fortunately, they were more welcoming than as we had expected. We surveyed approx. 10 people from this slum.

**Location:** This slum is also situated alongside the Digha-Patna Ghat railway line and almost similar to Indrapuri in terms of infrastructure and locality. This is the same railway line which crosses Indrapuri too.

**History of slum:** Since this slum is also among the clusters alongside the railway track. History and origin of this slum is also the same as mentioned above for Indrapuri in section 4.1. The only difference is that in this case segregation of clusters took place organically based on caste, which is unfortunate, but this is the reality. This slum is 40-50 years old and over the time number of households increase as people get to know about this place from their relatives and social networks who were already living here.

**Caste and religion of the residents:** This slum is more homogenous as compared to Indrapuri when it comes to caste. All the inhabitants of this slum belong to Dalit community only. Within this community also residents are from two different castes, one is Dom (which traditionally do the manual scavenging work and cleaning of toilets) and other is Kurmi. Kurmis are considered to be higher than Doms in caste hierarchy. We didn't find any single Muslim household in this slum. Indrapuri slum is located nearby this slum, where people of relatively upper caste live. There is very limited interaction between the residents of this slum with the residents of Indrapuri slum.

**Native place of residents:** Most of the residents are migrants from nearby villages and they are here only in search of better job opportunities and better earnings. After talking to several residents, we realized that unlike Indrapuri slum, very few of the residents have their own houses and farm land in their native villages. In most of the cases, there is no source of income from their respective native places.

Some of the residents are from nearby district (Danapur, Badhetc and they frequently (relatively lesser than Indrapuri's residents) visit their native village and some of them are from far districts also and very seldom go to their native place.

**Major Occupation:** Residents of Dom caste are primarily municipality workers (cleaning staff) and manual scavengers and those who belong to Kurmi caste are cleaning staffs in nearby apartments. Some of the Dom households used to keep pigs as pet and later on sell them in market. The market rate for a decent size pig was around 10-15k. In any festive season or some special occasion such as marriage, this community used to eat pigs and hence the market price of pigs spikes up in festive seasons. This is also one of the sources of earnings for these households.

**Household status:** Most of the houses are made of plastic trampoline, asbestos and temporary objects and the floors being kutcha. All of the households use illegal electric connection. Very few households have 14ltr legal gas cylinder connection. Most of them have a small 5ltr gas cylinder and few of them 'MittiWalaChulha'. On the education front, the condition in this slum is worse as compared to Indrapuri. Few parents have accepted that fact that their children are destined to do what they are doing but at the same time there are some people who do understand the significance of education and send their kids in nearby government school. We found only one young man in this slum who has just passed out from Patna commerce college and want to become a CA. Apart of this young guy, almost everyone dropped out of school after class 7-8. Children are getting midday meal in the school and also books. Only some of the households have ration card but they were also not getting any ration from past 2-3 months. Almost all the residents have their local voter ID card.

**Drainage and toilet/bathrooms:** Men and children use to take bath at the tube well only and women used to take bath behind their huts in a small area which is made up of plastic or saree without any roof. There is no public toilet in the entire slum, almost each house has their own toilet behind their huts which is made up of either plastic or some kind of big cloth without any roof. Behind their huts there is long open drainage which serves the nearby locality.

**Water source:** There is one motor installed by the local government, which is the only source of water in this slum. Some households have their own hand pump installed by them behind their hut which is for their personal use only and they don't allow anyone else to use that (except some emergency situations). Similar to Indrapuri here also there is a sense of caste hierarchy; Kurmi households are not letting use their personal hand pumps to Doms' households. Men, women and children (depending on who is there at the time of requirement) carry water on their head from the motor to their huts.

**Sanitation:** Since the open drainage extends along the railway track, the structure of drainage is more or less similar to that of Indrapuri, which is being mentioned in section 4.1. Apart of that people try to keep inside and outside area of their huts clean but beyond a point due to lack of proper infrastructure they can't increase the level of sanitation. A positive aspect of this slum is that unlike a typical congested urban slum, this slum has enough space so that people can roam around and breathe freely.

#### **Other Observations and Remarks:**

1. Because of the infrastructure and temporary setup of the slum, it is very vulnerable in case of any natural as well as man-made calamities. For example - instances of occasional fire in the slum, demolition of huts as regular basis by local authorities, one man fell from the tree and then went into coma for next 7-8 month and then eventually died, a man died because of excessive drinking and hence died because of cancer, young children get exposed to drugs and gutka etc.
2. This slum is not exposed to local government and hardly any local leader visits this place. There is not a strong mechanism of grievance addressing.
3. Few years back, there was a case of suicide in this slum. A married person (with 3-4 children) hang himself in his hut as he found himself not capable enough to feed his

family. Although there is no evidence that this was the reason of suicide, but locals gave us this narrative. After the suicide his wife got Rs2000 as compensation amount by local ward commissioner and she along with her children moved back to her native place. She got the compensation amount because of the collective effort of her neighbors as they all went to the ward commissioner and told him to give the compensation to the victim.

4. Everyone unanimously said that they are very happy with liquor ban in Bihar because now they can peacefully stay in the slum during evening and night hours too. Otherwise before liquor ban local lads used to drink on daily basis on railway tracks because of which there was always some kind of tension in the environment which was very troublesome for the residents.
5. From the narrative of locals, it was also very evident that there exists a big black market of liquor in Bihar but now due to very high prices it is not accessible to poor people.
6. Someone told us that after liquor ban sale of cough syrup in Bihar suddenly spiked up which suggests that people have now replaced alcohol with cough syrup (one bottle of cough syrup is equivalent to alcohol consumption).

### **9.1.3. Adalat Ghat Slum:**

We also wanted to cover a slum located at the heart of the city and quite exposed to the government officials; fortunately we found this one which fulfilled our criteria. We got introduced to the residents of this slum by one of the volunteers of 'Samar', who used to teach kids here. We did our survey of 10 households here.

**Location:** This slum is at the heart of the city, area nearby Gandhi Maidan. It is alongside the small passage from main road to the Ganga Ghat. It is surrounded by PMCH (Patna Medical College & Hospital) on one side and district courts on other side and also the nearby police station.

**History of slum:** This slum is 30-40 years old and now it becomes a permanent address for its residents unlike other slums that we have surveyed. The Ganga ghat nearby was used to bring litchis, mangoes from Northern Bihar to Patna using ferries across the Ganga. Now Ganga has become polluted and due to the silt deposition now the Ganga is seen nowhere near the ghat and traces of history is only alive in the memories of the people living in slum for more than 50-60 years. We didn't manage to get enough information about the history and evolution of this slum as people currently staying there have born and brought up there and they are staying here from there grandparents' times.

**Caste and religion of the residents:** People from Hindu as well as Muslim religion live here. Out of approximately 50 households, 10 households are Muslim, and rests are Hindus. Among Hindus, SC and OBC both are there but majority of them are SC.

**Native place of residents:** Most of the residents' native village are little far (more than 2 hours) from Patna (e.g. Muzaffarpur) and they visit their native village less frequently as compared to Indrapuri slum's residents.

**Major Occupation:** The numbers of self-employed people are higher in proportion in this slum as compared to other slums that we have surveyed. Major self-employed people are rickshaw or thella puller, E-Rikshaw/Auto Driver, Vegetables/Fruits Vendor and one of them has its own tea stall on the main road just at the entrance of the slum. Some of the residents are also daily wage earners who work as laborers, painters, helpers in construction work, domestic work (especially women) and as maid in PMCH.

**Household status:** There are around 30-35 households in a stretch of 150-200 meters, which makes this slum very congested. One entire family of size 4 to 5 lives in a small single room along with all their belongings. Walls of the house are made up of mud and bricks, floor is *kutchha* and roofs are made up of tin, plastic and bamboos.

Almost all the family heads are either illiterate or at most attended school till class five. But they send their children to schools. Majority children go to nearby government school but some of them go to private school as well. There is a functional anganwadicenter also in the school and some kids also go there on regular basis. Few parents also provide private tuition to their sons/daughters, who are in class nine or ten or are about to write their board exams.

All the households have metered electricity connection. Majority of the households are using 14ltr LPG gas cylinder and few of them use small 5ltr LPG gas cylinder reason being that they consider small one less risky as compared to the big one. Each one of the residents have Voter id card and majority have aadhar card as well as ration card too.

**Drainage and toilet/bathrooms:** There is a small open drainage on the other side of the road. People have made their small enclosed toilets adjacent to the drainage. Toilets are made up of plastic or of big cloth such as saree but are open from the top. Apart of these personal toilets there are 5 public toilets (made under the scheme of “Swaksh Bharat Abhiyan”) at the entrance of the slum which were not in good condition when we visited the slum. People have to pay Rs.5 each time for using the toilet because of which residents do not use these public toilets. So they use the drain nearby for their toilet pupose which technically leads to open defecation. Men take bath on the road itself in open and there are enclosed small bathroom above the drainage only where women take bath.

**Water source:** There are three public taps, installed by local ward commissioner, from where the residents collect water for all purposes. Apart of this there is one public water tank also in the slum premise, but residents mostly use water taps only.

**Sanitation:** Since this slum is very congested and overcrowded the sanitation level is not good here. Local municipality does not clean the drainage on regular basis and because of that most of the times drainage gets clogged. Also, even after the cleaning of drainage they dump the waste there only, which creates serious health issues for the residents.

#### **Other Observations and Remarks:**

1. This is the only slum where Hindus and Muslim both stay together. They stay in complete harmony. We asked them very explicitly if they fight with each other. They told

“Never”. One old Muslim man said he does not want Babri Masjid or anything but a home to live in.

2. Once Govt. tried to demolish the entire slum about 20 years ago. But residents of this slum stood together against the Govt. orders which resulted in blocking the highway nearby, police actions and a large number of arrests. But after that Govt. has not tried again to uproot these residents of the slum.
3. People in this slum turn into beggars in festive season when a lot of people visit Ganga Ghat during chhath puja. All devotees pass through this slum only and hence they earn substantial money during those days.

#### **9.1.4. Abdul Bari Bhawan Slum:**

Abdul Bari Bhawan is unique among all the slums. It is the home for Bakho community. The Bakho are a Muslim community, found in the state of Bihar in India. The Bakho are a nomadic community, who are traditionally associated with singing folk songs. They visit their patrons from other castes on special occasions, such as a birth of a child. The community speaks Urdu. Little is known about their origin, but it is likely they are division of the Dom community, which sometime in the distant past converted to Islam. They are found mainly in the districts of Begusarai, Patna, Champaran and Nalanda.

The community is strictly endogamous, and is culturally aloof from neighbouring Bihari Muslim communities. They have often been prevented from using Mosques and graveyards frequented by Bihari Muslims. In this slum, we have only talked to the leader of the community and the leader told us that whatever he was conveying, those were the words of residents also.

**Location:** It is situated near ‘Pathar Ki Masjid’ in Sultanganj in old Patna City.

**History of the slum:** The leader of the slum, Aga sahib who is 55 years old, told us that he is staying here since the time of his great grandfather. Bakho community first moved to Bengal for sometimes from Bihar and then came back to Bihar. There are Bakho people living in Motihari, Hajipur, Begusarai, Chhapra etc other parts of Bihar other than Patna. In Patna also Bakhos are living near the Mahatma Gandhi Bridge and near Income tax Bhawan. In the days of his great grandfather even the time of his grandfather-father this part of Old Patna city was uninhabited Govt. land and used to be dumping ground for Patna. The area had a wetland back then and no one used to go there. After the city started growing people from different parts of Bihar came to this area (especially the Hindu lower caste people) and formed one of the many Ambedkar colonies of Patna. But the tension between this two religion groups started. According to Aga sahib, there were times when Hindus used to burn their houses and rob them considering them minorities. There have been several incidents of burning houses back then. In 1994, with the demand for recognition, they boycotted the roads to get the attention of the ruling govt. back then. Lalu Prasad Yadav was then the chief minister of Bihar and he accepted the demand of this people and approved fund for constructing a proper shelter for this people instead of *jhopris*. In

1994, Govt. provided 43 rooms in an apartment for this people and also built them a *Majhar*, as this place used to include a burial ground also by its side. But many people protested the construction of shelters for this people and curfew orders had been issued to tackle the situation.

**Caste and religion of the residents:** Currently, around 500 people stay in forty flats of two rooms. All of them are Muslim (lower caste Muslims) and belong to Bakho community.

**Native Place:** Bakhos have migrated for so long that their own native land has been forgotten in the flow of time. So, we did not get any concrete information about their native place.

**Major occupation:** Traditional occupation of this community is barter exchange of new utensils for old clothes. Most of the people in this slum work as Hawkers who exchanges Steel items for old clothing and then sell this old clothing. Uncertain earning of these people daily makes their situation worse. For them winter is the peak season when they are more able to sell all of their exchanged clothes, sweaters. For other time of the year, uncertainty for the earnings remains. Women of the slum also help their husband in this job. Apart of this traditional occupation, some men and women also work (like cleaning dirty plates, floor cleaning etc) of cleaning in some marriage functions and events happening nearby. Women of this community do not work as maid and it is considered to be against the dignity of this community (inferred from our conversation with the leader of this community).

**Household Status:** There are total 43 rooms in the bhawan and around 550 people live in this which makes it overcrowded. Almost two families are living in a room. In each flat ten individuals are staying on average. There is no electric meter in any house since electricity connection is provided by government free of cost. All the households have mittikachulha in front of their flats. They use wood and coal as cooking fuel. Few of them have small gas cylinder. They all have the voter card of the area they are living and have voted. They have ration card but complained about the quality of the ration provided to them. And also talking to the people not only here but in other slums, we got to know that in Patna city people are not getting ration for past two months and provision of kerosene has completely stopped without providing substitute fuel of LPG under 'UjjawalaYojna' to each and every needy household. What happened in between that when the provision of kerosene stopped, people substitute back to wood, cow dung as fuel as they are unable to go through the 'Red Tape' of our system and get LPG.

As per the leader currently there are only 5-6 people in the slum who are metric passed. There is a Masjid + Madrasa (3 story) in the same premise which is well built and run by the leader of this community only. Around 40 orphans, some of them do not belong to this slum, live and study in this *madrasah* only. Children of this slum also study in this *madarsah* and few of them also go to nearby government schools. There is an AC in this *madarsah* also, where residents do the prayer (Namaz). *Madarsah* is run through public funding (donation). There are also 50-60 people who attend adult education centre.



Few aged people are getting old age pension and those who are not getting have applied for it. Some of the households have TV, Cable connection, radio etc and they all have legal electric connections. Demonetization did hurt them quite lot as there were several problems as they did not have bank accounts and most of them earn their wages in coins and some of the new coins are considered invalid for daily transaction.

**Drainage and toilet/bathroom:** A community toilet is there for the people living there and this is built in 1994 at the time when the apartment is built. Drainage system is the worst. In the sunny day when we visited the slum we saw part of the area is blocked by the water leaked from the nearby drain. Open drainage and its condition become worse in rainy seasons. Residents have complained multiple times to the local govt. about the problem of drainage but there isn't any positive response as per the leader of the community.

**Water Source:** The problem of water is also a major one. There is only a single govt. installed motor pump for the entire community living there and sometimes the connection is irregular. Then they have to go far to fetch water from a public water tap, which is 300 meters away, even in the time of summer.

**Sanitation:** The congested living space and accumulation of flies also hinted at the poor sanitation in the slum. There are spread of diseases like fever, diarrhea, skin infection etc in this slum and this spread has become even normal for them due to the overflowing dirty waters from the drains. For treatments they usually visit Nalanda Medical College and Hospital.

**Other observations and remarks:**

1. Initially, he was very skeptic talking to us. As per him every year lot of people (either from government or from some NGO) come to them and gather lot of information but nothing happens. Also, it appears to me that he got a sense that we are Hindu and hence he was very reserved, given the fact that he was the leader of the community also.
2. The fact that they have roof on their head gives these residents a political space and includes them in the mainstream local politics. Now they can raise their voice and talk about their problems in an organized and powerful way. The leader seems to have a very good political connection, which benefits his family's overall well-being a lot.
3. The Anganwadi center was allocated for that area but the school shifted a little far from the place as the staffs were reluctant to work with Muslims.
4. Many people from the nearby Hindu Ambedkar colony protested against the construction of shelters for this people and curfew orders had been issued to tackle the situation. This place still is a sensitive zone in the whole Patna city. Since 1994, no more extra shelters have been provided by the Govt. and as this people stay within the boundary wall built for them, it has become congested day by day.

5. Aga Sahib's daughters have completed IA equivalent education in madrasah and one of them is pursuing vocational training of sewing alongside with his daughter-in-law who has also completed IA. But apart from that, we did not even find a woman to talk to me without the permission of the leader and it seemed to us that the position of the women of this community is limited behind the veil of household chore and rarely in the case of extreme poverty sometimes helping their husband in the sale of steel utensils in exchange of old clothes. Even it occurred to me that women are not even allowed to go for work or interact with people other than their own community without the permission of their father/husband/ leader (male) of the community. The position of women in terms of educational attainment / vocational training is better for the daughter of the leader than other girls/ women belonging to that community.

#### **9.1.5. Rajbansi Nagar Slum:**

This slum is located at the periphery of the city and surrounded by a well-recognized locality. Though it is amidst the affluent residential area, but it was unnoticed for a long time from the sight of local govt. We did our survey for 14 households here.

**Location:** It is near DAV Public School & M.S. Dhoni Academy, Patna and surrounded by government quarters. Entire slum is on the government land, beside a large and wide drain and there is a proposal of building a road on this land in near future

**History of the slum:** The entire area was forest 50-60 years ago and only 2-3 huts were there at that time and slowly people start coming to this place and also existing family grew with time as well. Currently there are around 200 huts in this slum.

**Caste and religion of the residents:** People from different caste such as Thakur/Hajam (OBC), Paswan (SC), Kurmi/ Mahto (OBC), Sao/Halwai (OBC) live in this slum. There isn't any single Muslim households in the entire slum.

**Native place of residents:** Most of the residents are living in this slum from past 3-4 decades and their native villages are Darbhanga, Samastipur, Sitamadhi, Muzaffarpur etc. Few of them have some land and own house in their native village too. Reason of migration is the lack of job opportunity and low wage rate for daily wage labourers. As some young man from this slum said "*Bhaiya, gaon me roti hailekin paisa nahihai our paisa to sab kochahiye naislie humbug koidharaanapartahai*". Most of the residents go to their native village twice or thrice in a year on some special occasions and festivals.

**Major Occupation:** Unlike other slum that we have surveyed most of the residents of this slum are self-employed which includes rikshaw/thella Puller, E-Rikshaw/Auto driver, vegetables/fruits vendor, gumti shop (only one in the entire slum), barber(Thakur). Some of the residents are daily wage labourers too which includes painter, helper, domestic workers (Especially women of the slum).



**Household status:**The structure of jhuggis of this slum is similar to that of Shivpuri and Indrapuri. Unlike Shivpuri and Indrapuri here jhuggis are not demolished in a routine manner by the administration so they spend little more money in making jhuggis. There is a television in each family. We also found one household which has water purifier. Those staying single do not have a television. There is electric meter in every household and they pay the bill. Most of the households have a gas cylinder either big one or small one . Few of them have MittikaChulha also. Almost everyone has voter card and ration card. According to our conversation their ward member is a good man who has applied for old age pension for those who are eligible but not getting it. They send their children to a government school which is inside the slum. In fact this is the only slum that has a school in its premises.

**Drainage and toilet/bathrooms:** Like every other slum drainage of this slum is also open and clogged. Most of the residents defecate in nearby open field and few of the households have their own toilets on the open drainage only. Men and children take bath near public water tap in open and women take bath in enclosed area inside their own house.

**Water Source& Sanitation:** Local government authority (ward commissioner) has installed one motor in the slum and there are several taps where government water is being supplied. This slum is better in terms of cleanliness and sanitation as compared to other slums that we have visited.

**Other Observations and Remarks:**Few days back there was a case of theft in nearby government building and police arrested few of the residents of this slum in this case. So, residents were quite upset about this incident and were very cautious while talking about this event with us. Some of them told us that before this incident almost every day some outsiders (local gundas and badmas) used to gather in the temple premise (which is the part of this slum) and have fun, which had a bad influence on the young man of the slum but after this incident no-one used to come, now children play there in the evening. Most of the people didn't want to talk about that as they had the fear that they will get caught up unnecessarily in the police investigation.

## **9.2. Case study:**

### **9.2.1. Caste study I:**

Name: Kaveeta

Location: Indrapuri slum

We heard about Kaveeta on our first visit to the slum while discussing about the educational advancement/progress among the girls of different ages in the slum. Everybody instantly told us about Kaveeta and her achievements till date which also gives hope for every girl children and encourages them to be like Kaveeta di. Kaveeta is a 19 years old girl who lives with her family of her father-mother, one brother. She also has a married elder sister who doesn't stay with them. Their native place is Mokameh where they were *Mallah* for generations and worked as fishermen and boat driver. But after coming here in Patna, her father has started working as daily labour

and her mother as maid like others in the slum to support her family. Her father and mother both have tried to run the household smoothly but the expenses in city have made it tougher for them day by day. Then Kaveeta also joined them as a cook working in the girls' hostel nearby at very young age in order to help them make ends meet. She still works as three times a day cook in the girls' hostel and earns Rs.3000 per month. Coming to the fascinating story of how she started her education and still is continuing upto class twelve, it seems unbelievable at first just hearing it. When we first heard it from her, it made our individual efforts to achieve whatever we have till date nothing before her own struggle to reach where she is now. She did not even start her education from class one. When she first started working as cook in girls' hostel, she felt that she should also go to school after looking the girls in the hostel. She started to go to school from class four and also learnt alphabet in her mother tongue from class four only. In her own words, "the teacher at first did not want to take admission in class four as he felt that it was too late for her but she urged and cried to just to allow him to at least study upto class five-six so that at least she could write her name". The unstoppable desire of this girl to study gets reflected through her own recollection about how desperately she wanted to study back then. As a girl child living in slum, it was also not always easy for her to continue her studies alongside helping her mother in household chores, fetching water, taking care of her brother etc. but she never lost her interest in studies and continued. She passed tenth board exam from Bihar board by securing second division. Now she is studying in class twelve in govt. school. In school as it is a senior secondary school they have to pay Rs.45-47 per month as fees for electricity etc and get mid-day meal daily. Alongside her hard work she took private tuition for her tenth board exam and also still takes the help of a private tutor in her studies where tuition costs her Rs. 500 per month. She is now studying economics, some business course and vocational course on bakery etc and she wants to continue to study and complete her graduation. She also helps the children in the slum in studies and also inspires them to study further. When I talked to Kaveeta about her plan to work for other children specially girl children of the slum, she told me that she wants to work for them through some vocational training. About the hygiene during menstruation, she has also talked to the girls in the slum to stay clean and preferably use clean clothes and sanitary napkins only. Kaveeta appeared to us as a fresh air among all the gloomy congested turns/alleys of the households and livelihood of women/people living in slum. She turns out to be a ray of hope and inspiration for all the girl children and a idol of pride for the women, in this grey environment of slum along the railway line, who themselves have failed at some point of time in their life.

### **9.2.2. Case study II:**

Name –Suraj

Location-Shivpuri slum

Caste - SupanBhagat (Dom) MahadalitHarijanTolaMaghaiya

They are old residents of this slum of family size ten of four Brothers & four sisters & parents. (Every child is unmarried). Their monthly income is about 8-10k per month. He dropped out after class three due to financial crisis. He usually works as manual scavenger cleaning streets (including dead animals). All the tools used in cleaning, have been provided by local government but they don't use it. According to them shoe length is inappropriate, and water goes inside the

shoe when they enter inside drainage. Before entering they do the calculation what exactly is needed inside the drainage and accordingly they decide whether they need to use safety gadgets or not.

Usually they go inside the manholes after having alcohol but these days they used to take weed or bhang after Bihar became dry state. Due to increased focus of local government on the cleaning of city from past 4-5 years, these guys are getting better job opportunities and earning decent amount of money. But there is no increment in salary of these residents who work in private apartments on day to day basis but those who work in government (on contract) are getting higher wages. His uncle works (cleaning work only) in nagarnigam and he made him work in nigam from his sources and contacts. There is no place of corruption or commission in between them and they get the govt. contract purely based on their social networks and contracts.

He has his bank account, but his father doesn't have one. He gets his salary from nigam in his bank account directly monthly in timely basis (without any delay).

He actually belongs to Paliganj (Harara) Bihta (near Saharsa, Madhepura). His grandparents, uncle and aunts still live in the native village. They have farm land in his native village where uncles do the framing and also weave soops (used in villages as a large container to put vegetables and other stuffs)

While living in the slum, some of the nearby residents (same caste) have pigs as pet and the market price of one pig is around 10-12k and per kg cost of pig meat is Rs200. They used to buy pigs from R Block and at this place only pigs are killed. Only people of this community eat pigs. Seller of pigs used to buy pigs from forests and from lands of other people. In weddings and other family occasions they used to serve pigs and also there is some kind of religious sentiments associated with pigs for this caste. They offer pigs to their God. They used to eat pigs once in a week (usually on Sundays) and frequency increases in winters as pigs give lot of heat and acting as only cheaper source of protein for them.

For any festivals or occasion, they go to their native place or invite their neighbours too, but people of their caste only come to visit them. They have very limited interaction with Yadavs who live nearby to them.

There is lot of problems of water. One hand pump is there nearby (installed by their own caste people) but not working properly. Bring water from nearby government installed hand pump but they face problems while fetching water from there. Upper caste residents (Yadavs) have dominance over this government's water source.

He is living here in this slum for past 8-9 years. His father came first here to live here. Before living here in this slum, they used to live in a rented house in Patna only. His uncle told them about this land. (Family networking worked here). The cost of making a hut from scratch is around 10-15k.

They shifted Patna from their native place to avail better job opportunities and to accommodate increasing family size in their native village (as large family size leads to family quarrels and other complication related to ownership of assets and land and also skewed distribution of income and responsibilities of family). Major source of employment in rural India is agriculture related daily labor work, which is shrinking with time with low yield from agriculture and hence these people are forced to migrate to urban areas for good earning and better job opportunities.

His father has 5 brothers and one 'Kattha' land in their village for all the five brothers. They usually earn 50-60k from farmland in native village per year.

As per as the assets they have, there is two cycles in the house.

They have colored second hand TV (Rs2500) and dishtv (250 per month) in the house. 5-6 years back, his house (only this house in the slum) caught fire on the day of Diwali due to crackers and the entire house got burnt including all the assets and clothes. They received no compensation from government. No media coverage from local press or newspaper was there. The whole matter got resolved by the slum residents only. They all have voter ID card (Mukhia helped in making the voter ID card) but got no ration card. They get ration of PDS from their native village. They have illegal electricity connection.

Each year government officials and workers come here to clean the drainage and tell these residents to vacate the government land. They vacate their houses when they come and after their departure they build their huts again on their own. During their period of stay, these residents live on the railway track and cook their food on railway track only. Situation of these slums get worse during rainy season, almost water enters each one of the huts and stay there for days, which makes them very vulnerable from lot of diseases. Also during storm, houses get destroyed. They have two mobile phones (One with Suraj and other one with the father) in the house.

Also residents are also very vulnerable to accidents caused by the train due to crossing of trains (twice a day). Very young kids (below 4-5 years) can come anytime on the track and parents need to be very cautious about this.

They have seen a lot of advantages after ban of alcohol. As per him, 'Harijan' people used to drink more and after drinking they used to create problems in their homes. Few of the people still drinks (get alcohol from Digha). Ganja, charas, afeem are becoming very popular among addicts after alcohol ban. Among these, Ganja is easily available (around Rs.50 per packet around 10-20gm). They are used to have ganja with their colleagues.

Before alcohol ban, lot of youngsters after evening use to drink alcohol on railway tracks and these slum residents used to lock their houses after evening and stay inside only (specially the women of the house). Residents felt helpless as they can't say much to these youngsters as the railway track was not their property.

They use LPG gas cylinder (14 ltr) for cooking fuel. Mukhiya helped them to get this cylinder and the refill cost is around Rs700-800 per cylinder. One cylinder lasts one month only.

When asked about marriage and kind of girl he likes, he said "*these days girls of Patna have become very demanding, they want to visit malls and want to eat outside very frequently and demands lot of stuffs*". As per him if a guy goes outside with his wife or his sister people will say that "*Dekho maal ghuma raha hain (See he is out with a woman)*". "*Hum log koi sab nahi chahiye, apna ghar me raho, je chaahiye bolo...chowmin, singahra, chaat..sab la ke denge ( We don't want that here, (women) stay at home...tell me what you want...chowmin,samosa,chaat...I will bring those for you...)*". His sister is also allowed rarely to go outside from the house, once in a week that too in nearby mall or shops. His two sisters dropped out from studies due to increasing work load of house and other two girls are admitted in nearby government school and get tuition at home only. Tuition costs Rs.300 per month per person. Suraj dropped out after class three due to the need of money as his parents became ill. And to help his father to run the household, he also joined his father back then.

He also gave positive feedback of Lalu Yadav governance and criticised Nistish governance for his 'Development raaj'. His respond was "*Nitishji Kate hai Gandagihatao...unko ye sab gandagidikhaie de rahahaibhaiya.....?*" (in sarcastic tone) ("*Nitish is telling that we should promote clean Bihar, but has he really turned blind to this dirt of slum when it comes to look*

out for us.....?") For him, Nitish government's idea of development is very different from Lalu Yadav's governance. Current regime of development somehow excludes these urban slum dwellers. They are not becoming the part of the glorified development process of Indian economy.

### **9.3. Questionnaire:**

#### **CONSENT FORM**

We would like to interview you and some members of your family about some socio-economic aspects. This study is conducted by students of Department of economics, University of Delhi and will be used solely for academic research works. If you decide to answer some or all of the questions, then we will preserve the data collected with anonymity. If you are not willing to respond to the questions, then also we will respect your decision in all way.

If the household agrees, Sign/Thumb impression of the interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Slum No: \_\_\_\_\_

Location type of the slum: a) Along railway line b) Along canal/drain c) Along River  
d) Beneath flyover e) On the roadside f) Near factories  
g) Near construction site

Address of the slum: \_\_\_\_\_

Date & Time of the interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of interview (outside/inside of the house): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Religion of interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Group of interviewee: SC/ST/OBC/GEN

Caste of interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any caste reservation certificate? \_\_\_\_\_

Household size: \_\_\_\_\_

No of adult members: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Household Level Details:**

Sl. No.	Name	Relation ship with self	Sex	Age	Education (Govt./Pr	Education Continuin g or Not	Reason of Droppi	Occupati on Contract	Occupatio n How	Monthly Income
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					ivate) Which Class?		ng out	ual (Y/N)	long?	
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**Details of education level of children:**

*No. of children going to school:* \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the school:

If children are attending Govt.school, then *follow up questions should be attended:*

Do they receive midday meal at school? Yes/No

If yes, then how often? a) daily b) often but not daily c) rarely

Do they receive ST/SC/OBC stipend as financial support for studies? Yes/No

Do they get free uniform and free books from school under 'SarvaSikshaAviyann'? Y/N

Spending on the education of children (monthly): \_\_\_\_\_

*Distance to Primary school:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Distance to Secondary school:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Distance to College:* \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been staying here? \_\_\_\_\_

Why did you move to Patna? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you come to stay in this neighborhood (name of the slum)? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you know someone before coming and living in this slum? Yes/No

If yes, then type of relation?

*Proficiency in Hindi: High/Medium/Low*

*Language / dialect spoken at home*

What was the last occupation in the native place? \_\_\_\_\_ *Is it caste based?* \_\_\_\_\_

Have they changed the occupation after migrating? Yes/No

If yes, then why? \_\_\_\_\_

By changing how much more/less they are earning? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there anyone in the family availing pension scheme? Yes/No If yes, then how much? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any land anywhere other than this slum? Yes/No

If yes, where is it? \_\_\_\_\_

how much of land: \_\_\_\_\_

current use of land: \_\_\_\_\_

If interviewee has land back in their native place and uses land for farming, then ask the question below:

Does any family member go back to village for seasonal farming activities? Yes/No

If yes, then how often? \_\_\_\_\_

Total earning from the crop: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you share this earning with anyone back in your native place? Yes/No

If yes, then with whom? \_\_\_\_\_ -

**Asset ownership:**

Assets	Quantity	Quality (Local made/branded, new/old etc)
Television		
Mobile phone		
Bicycle/Motor cycle		
Sewing machine		
Electric fan		
Tube light/Bulb/CFL		
Others		

Do you have ration card? Yes/No

If yes, then which type? a) Priority Households(PH) b)Antyodaya (pink/red)

Do you avail PDS? Yes/No

If no, then why?

Type of cooking fuel: a) Firewood b) Kerosene (from PDS) c) kerosene (market) d) LPG

If LPG, then are you availing LPG from 'PradhanmantriUjjawalaYojna'? Yes/No

Do you have any bank account? Yes/No      Do you avail insurance? Yes/No

Are you aware of 'Jan DhanYojna'? Yes/No

Are you aware of 'Pradhanmantri Suraksha BimaYojna'? Yes/No

In case of illness who do you contact:

Distance to nearest health center: \_\_\_\_\_ Distance to nearest hospital: \_\_\_\_\_

Have children of your family got vaccination upto 12 years from govt. health center? Yes/No

Do all the 18+ members in your family have voter card? Yes/No

If Yes, then who helped you in making voter id card?

If No, then how many of them do not have? \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you cast your vote in the city before (those who have card)? \_\_\_\_\_

How often you get to communicate with your local councilor? a) often b) rarely c) never

How do you get to know about the benefit schemes by Govt.? a) TV b) Radio c) Local municipality  
d)Newspaper e) Others

Are you a member of any political party or any social group? Yes/No

In case of any problem who do you contact for help?

On any house function who all do you invite and who all come?

Any further Comments by the

Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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