THE FUTURE OF THE YOUNG CHILD MUST BE BUILT TODAY

Mobile Creches
Women Need Creches
A Study on Women’s Participation in Paid Work and Childcare Arrangements in India
Why this Study?

The Context

- Low Female Labour Force Participation.
- Unpaid care work
- Descent work, Social protection, and Public provision for childcare
- Demand generation for childcare
- Public Financing for childcare
- ‘Quality’ an issue
- Intersection of Women rights (reducing and sharing caregiving responsibilities, gender equality), Labour rights (descent work and social protection), and Child rights (Right to ECD).
Objectives

• To examine the **perceived needs for childcare facilities and creche** among women from the informal sector.

• To examine the **interlinkages between access to childcare, women and child wellbeing, and women’s ability to engage in paid work**
What sets this Study apart?

Method and Process

- **Location**: 4 States (Gujarat, Jharkhand, Odisha, and Karnataka)
  - District: 8 Districts (Ahmedabad, Anand, Ranchi, West Singhbhum, Bengaluru, Tumkur, Rayagada, Kalahandi)
- **Region**: Rural and Urban (57 villages and 56 urban localities)
- **State partners**: (Saath, LEADS, Patang, and Sparsha)
- **Women participants**: EAC, ENAC, and NE (unorganized sector)
- **Men participants**: Partners of EAC women
- **Tools to capture ‘voices’**:  
  - **Survey** with EAC, ENAC, NE (Odia, Hindi, Gujrati, Kannada, English)
  - **FGDs** with EAC women, Partners (Men) EAC women, ENAC, NE.
  - **Key Informant interviews** (caregivers, NGO functionaries, creche-in-charge, thematic experts, and government officials).
- **Orientation and Training**: National Orientation, State-level training
## Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women having Children 0-6 years</th>
<th>Gujarat</th>
<th>Jharkhand</th>
<th>Odisha</th>
<th>Karnataka</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Employed (NE)</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed and NOT Accessing Creche (ENAC)</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed and Accessing Creche (EAC)</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>285</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>1128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sample Weightage

- **NE**: 57%
- **ENAC**: 43%
- **EAC**: 20%

### Rural/Urban Sample

- **Rural**: 57%
- **Urban**: 43%
Limitations of the Study

• North Indian state not represented due to elections
• No strict classification of rural and urban districts was followed
• Difficulty in finding functional creches
• Challenges in data collection due to pandemic
• Implication of NEP 2020 was not explored
Who are these Women?
Whose ‘voices’ the study represents?

- Impoverished and low-income households
- Earning a livelihood OR caring for a child
- No toilets at home: 41% do not have toilets at home
- No source of drinking water at home: 89% do not have source of drinking water (tap at home)
- Illiteracy and low levels of Education: One in two women have not completed secondary education. One-fourth have never attended a school.
- Low Income: Average family income 5000-10000/month AND average income of working women between 1000-3000/month
- Unorganized Work: Farming, Domestic help, Sanitation work, Construction work, and Tailoring.
- Engagement in Seasonal Work and Need-based Work
- Average working days in a month is 20 days.
- Difficult working conditions: Long hours of Work-related travel: 1-4 hours a day for work (Some take children at worksite).
Key Findings
KEY FINDING I. 59% women in paid work adopted unsafe and compromised childcare arrangements

- 43% of respondents are staying in Small family (0-2 adult members),
- 40% staying in Medium family (up to 4 adult members)
- High proportion of respondents had children in highly dependent (0-3 years) and moderately dependent (4-6 years) age group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of children</th>
<th>Highly dependent children</th>
<th>Moderately dependent children</th>
<th>Less dependent children</th>
<th>Least dependent children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One fifth (19%) take their children along to worksite. (Children are mostly small children 0-3 years) (FGD)

**ENAC – with access to creche**

“hume ghodiyaghar pe bharosha nahin hai” (GU-3B)

“hamara bacha dusre bachho ke saath jake bigad jaiga” (GU -3B)

“No body can take care of the child like a family does” (OU-4 Gr2)

“The elders in the family may not agree to it as they want the children to stay at home. Elders of the family do not like to be left alone in the house” (JH-1A)

**ENAC – no access to creche**

“Children are neglected in the current arrangement, and they are always worried about them”

“I am ready to send my child to a child care facility, will you convince my husband” (KU -2B)
KEY FINDING II. More than 60% women not using creches were unaware of the facility

Lack of awareness leading to poor demand from communities, resulting in state not perceiving the need for creches

5500 creches shut down due to budgetary allocation changes (BAJSS supported by CSWB)

Bureaucrats scrapped creche scheme citing duplication of services by Anganwadis
• Low demand leading to weak negotiation space for civil society

• Budget cuts leading to shutting down of creches

The graph below captures how over the years the number of functional crèches under the 'National Creche Scheme for the Children of Working Mothers' have seen a sharp decline.

KEY FINDING III. Childcare a barrier to women seeking paid work

Barriers to Women’s Paid Work

- Child to care for (40%)
- Household work (16%)
- Work not available (11%)

49% NE women had left paid work after childbirth

35% EAC women joined paid work after they had access to creche

Percentage of women with different reasons for NOT working

- Work not available: 11%
- Young children to look after: 40%
- Household work: 16%
- Husband is earning: 8%
- Time not suitable: 9%
- Distance to travel: 6%
- Family do not support: 3%

Percentage of NE women who agree that childcare is a main reason for not able to work

- Yes: 89%
- No: 6%
- Can't Say: 5%
KEY FINDING IV. Creches enable women to join paid work

Enablers for women to work:

- 35% of EAC women joined paid work after having access to creche
- 97% women (EAC, ENAC, NE) perceive a good quality creche as an enabler for women to join paid work.
- Availability of work opportunities near home (7.1%, 2% ENAC, 1% NE)
- Family support (4.1% (EAC+ ENAC) and 3.3% NE
• ‘Earlier we used to hit our children when they engaged in mischief, but now such situations do not arise. There are fewer quarrels with wife as well’ – Men (GR-1B).

• “Men and women are now sharing financial responsibilities, and together they are working towards improving their family's standard of living” (KU-1B).

• “Earlier older children were engaged in paid work due to low family income” (JR-1A).

• Some women said creche has enabled children’s smooth transition to schools as they have picked up different academic concepts.
KEY FINDING V. Creche contributed in enhancing income and opportunities

35% (N=78) of the respondents started working only after using creche

The range of income for these respondents was 1000-6000.

For the remaining respondents, the average increase in income was 108%

Jharkhand = 142%
Gujarat = 88%,
Karnataka = 83%,
Odisha = 108%

Percentage of EAC women who reported income improvement after accessing creche

- Income Improved: 88%
- Remained Same: 12%
Creches opened up new avenues for women

- Enhanced mobility – visit banks, hospitals
- Additional paid work – selling vegetables, collecting firewood, gathering forest produce etc,
- Participation in SHG meetings, block meetings etc.

Women from Odisha (Urban) reported stitching their own clothes, thereby saving money. They are able to travel further, seek better paying jobs, run small shops in addition to regular paid work, thereby increasing their income.
KEY FINDING VI. Women want free childcare services (creche)

Average Family income for 64% of the women is between Rs. 5000- 10000 / month

67% of EAC women have opted for creche due to free services.

Only 47 respondents are currently paying a token amount (<Rs.50) for using the creche facilities.

Only 28.6% women are ready to pay for a child care facility, but the amount they can pay ranges from INR 30 to INR 2000 per month.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Jharkhand</th>
<th>Gujarat</th>
<th>Karnataka</th>
<th>Odisha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ready to Pay</td>
<td>37.85% (N =106/280)</td>
<td>43.85% (N = 125/285)</td>
<td>19.28% (N =54/280)</td>
<td>13.4% (N =38/283)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount willing to Pay monthly</td>
<td>50-500 (Average= Rs. 191.19)</td>
<td>30-500 (Average= Rs. 112.46)</td>
<td>100-2000 (Average=610.37)</td>
<td>100-1000 (Average=276.92)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Are NE women ready to access childcare facility and join paid work?

Percentage of women who would like to join paid work if good quality creche is available

- Yes: 89%
- No: 11%
What do we take forward from here?

Directions for Action
National Strategy on Care Economy
Decent work and ‘workers’ rights to women workers engaged in public ‘childcare’ services
Gender responsive and gender transformative policies in the areas of care, labour, and social protection
Public provisioning and increased budgetary allocation for expansion of quality childcare services
Awareness building for institutional childcare facilities and demand generation
Ecosystem approach towards inclusive and quality childcare to make childcare a collective responsibility
Perspectives from Partner Organizations!

*(please watch the video clip from State partner organizations)*