



Report
Rapid Assessment on child labour situation during COVID Lock Down
Madhya Pradesh
JUNE 2020



I left my studies due to family pressure and started working. Family creates pressure and children come out in search of work. Now I am known as a waste picker and moves from one area to another.

I realized the importance of education but unfortunately unable to access it.....

A respondent from Bhopal

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Overview: It is not very difficult to estimate the situation of children around us in the time of COVID-19 crisis and its shattering impact on children. Although children are less impacted by the virus directly in terms of infection, symptoms and mortality, indirectly they are facing multidimensional risks and being impacted severely due to job loss, income loss and economic insecurity among their families. All sorts of incidences of child rights' violation such as Child Labour, Child Trafficking, Child Marriage, Malnutrition, loss of education, sexual abuse, exploitation and violence, teenage pregnancy and many others tends to increase as a result. It is also a fact that, if death toll rises due to COVID, many children may become orphan and devoid of fulfilling their basic needs even. The children are more prone to the risks and these risks are enormous.

The civil society and media are regularly keeping eyes on the risks that this pandemic created. Governments need to act urgently to protect from violation the rights of children during the pandemic, and also see take decisions to minimize such impact on children in long term. In-migration in villages also created situation more critical and need an active vigilance from CSOs and CBOs to address the vulnerabilities of children.

In Madhya Pradesh CACL network already initiated the processes with CSOs to strengthen the voices of children. The rapid assessment will derive a frame work of strategies that the network will take to address the concerns of children during this crisis.

Rapid assessment

CACL network in Madhya Pradesh facilitated a rapid round of an on-line survey from the districts to assess the situation of children during the lock down period announced due to COVID pandemic. This assessment was planned with the objective of understanding the field realities and views of children as well as their parents. What impact this pandemic created on the lives of children as well as their families is also assessed through this on line interaction medium. The rapid assessment also focused to take responses from district administration and key stakeholders of child protection institutions i.e. CWC, Labour department, DCPU, SJPU and other stakeholders.

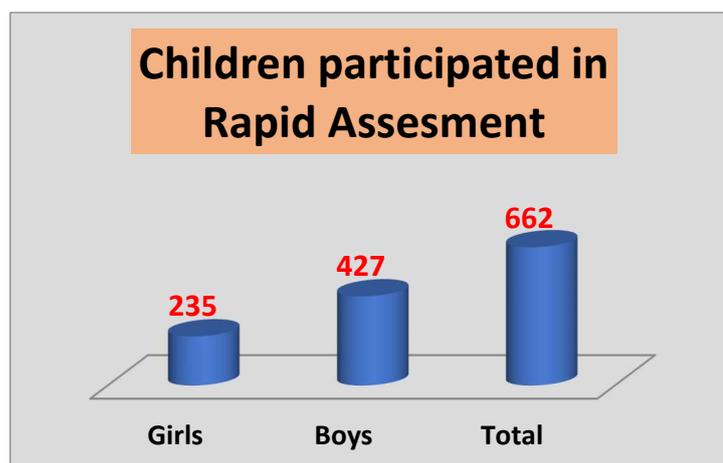
The assessment processes are organized with the support of local partners working at grass roots during the period of 30 May to 6 June 2020 through google survey format. List of districts and partner organization is enclosed in Annexure 1.

The Responses

Children and youth from the districts joined the process actively. Their responses and key observations are analysed as follows;

A. Child Participation:

A.1 Coverage: Total 662 children from 23 districts of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh participated in the study by filling the Google forms. 21 districts are from Madhya Pradesh and rest 2 districts are representing Chhattisgarh. Partner organization of campaign against child labour conducted and facilitated the study in their respective districts of operations.

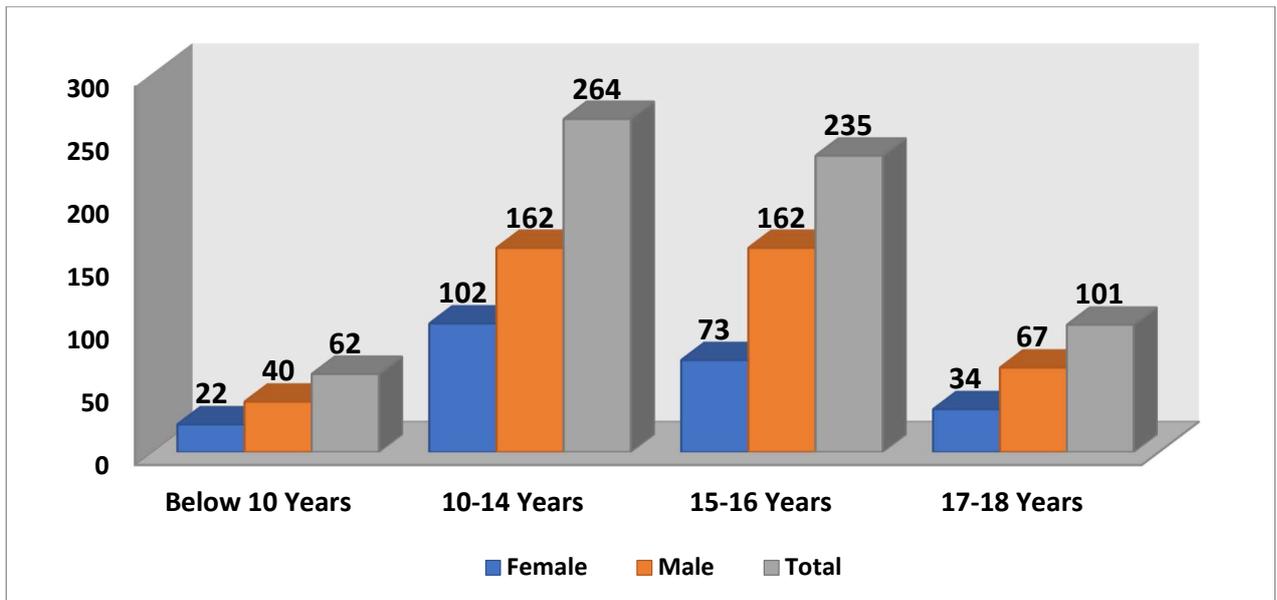


A.2 District wise participation of children in assessment - Following table shows the district wise children participation to give responses on the rapid assessment. The district wise details of total 662 children are;

Name of district	Number of children	Name of district	Number of children
Alirajpur	34	Anuppur	07
Barwani	63	Betul	32
Bhopal	50	Chhindwara	23
Datia	37	Dindori	35
Hoshangabad	27	Harda	23
Jhabua	21	Jabalpur	28
Khargone	25	Khandwa	26
Mandla	24	Morena	27
Raisen	25	Rewa	24
Shajapur	23	Shahdole	34
Sarguja (CG)	04	Vidisha	24
Korba (CG)	46		

A.3 Age group of children- Children participated in the survey process represents all age group segments. Numbers from the age groups of 11-14 and 15-16 are comparatively higher than the age groups of below 10 and 17-18. Data reflects that maximum participants belong the age group of 11years to 14 years. It indicates that this age group of children in more actively engaged in the process and keeping eyes on the scenario of children during lock down. One more indication that can be derived from this that since this assessment is also supported by local partners, these partners also have major work with this age group of children.

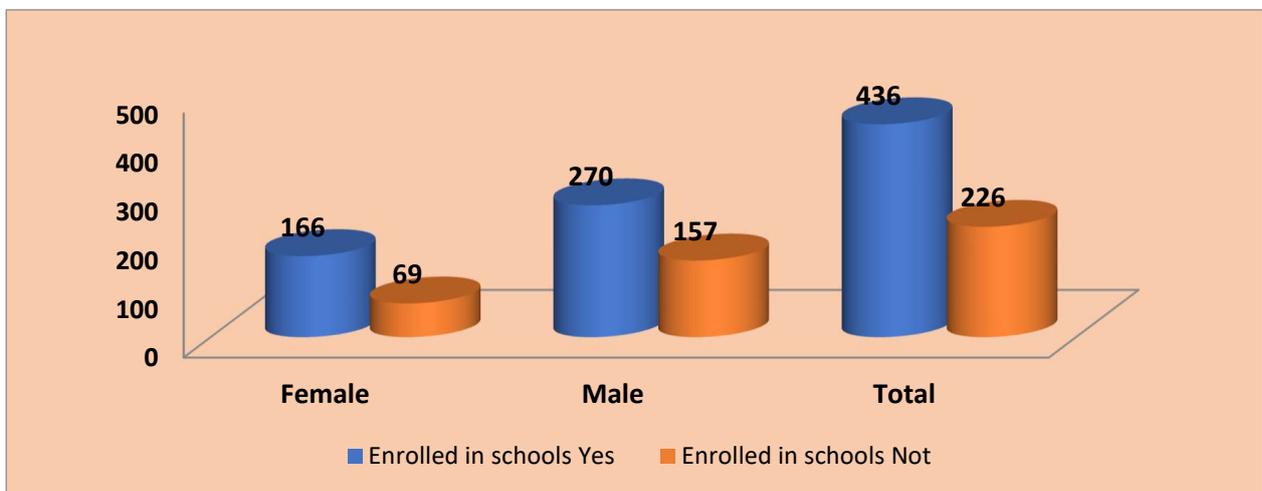
: Age wise participation of children



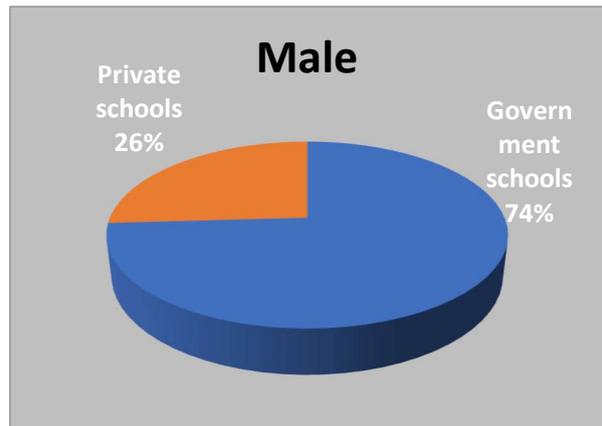
B. Child Development:

B.1 Educational Status - The children also asked to response on the status of children enrolment in schools. The children asked whether they were going to school or not before the announcement of countrywide lock down? Response indicates that only 70% of the female respondents and 63% of male respondents were going to schools before lock down. It indicates that even after the 10 years of Right to education act 30 % of the girls and 27 % of the boys are out of the education net. This also indicated to review the school enrolment status of children because these numbers are less than reported figures of enrolment status in schools. This also indicates that it is not very easy for the children from under privileged community to manage work and school in a similar time.

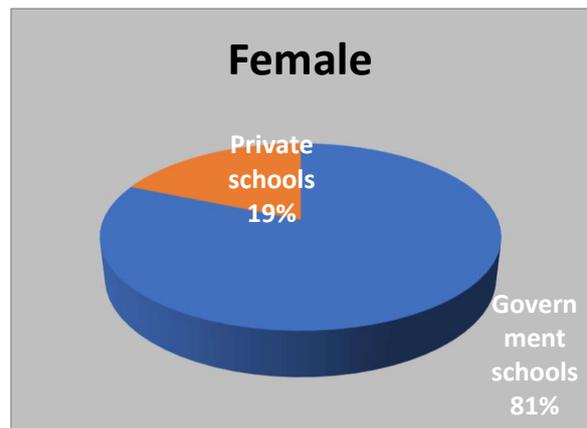
: Education status



B.2 Category of schools- The category of school selection depends on the purchasing power of the communities. Majority of the responses came from the children studying in Government schools. It indicates that children from economic weaker sections are studying in government schools because they are not able to access the private school system due to many reasons. The gender lens of our school education system also indicates the prevalence of discrimination in communities.



Responding to the type of school and their enrolment, total 335 children out of 436 school going respondents are enrolled in government schools and rest 101 are studying in private schools. Analysing the responses from female participants, their participation in private schools is very less. Only 31 girls out of 166 girls, who were going to schools, are enrolled in private schools. This is about 19% of the respondents but the comparison with total female respondents of the survey, the percentage will be going very low. It will be about 13%. This number also shows the discrimination and barriers in our communities.



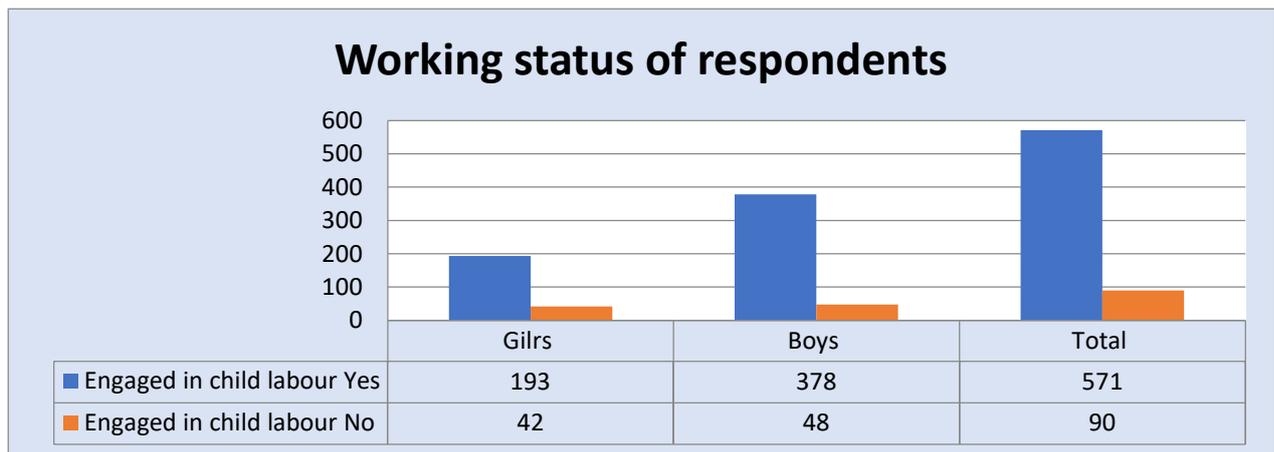
The directives of ensuring admission of minimum 25% children from economic weaker sections under RTE act may be one significant contributor for accessing the children to private schools from vulnerable communities.

B.3.Standard: Children have been asked regarding standard they are studying during the survey process. Total 140 participants are studying in the primary schools, 196 are in middle, 153 are in high school and other 43 are enrolled in higher secondary schools. This number is already indicated in the age wise analysis of the respondent that the children studying in middle school level has given more responses.

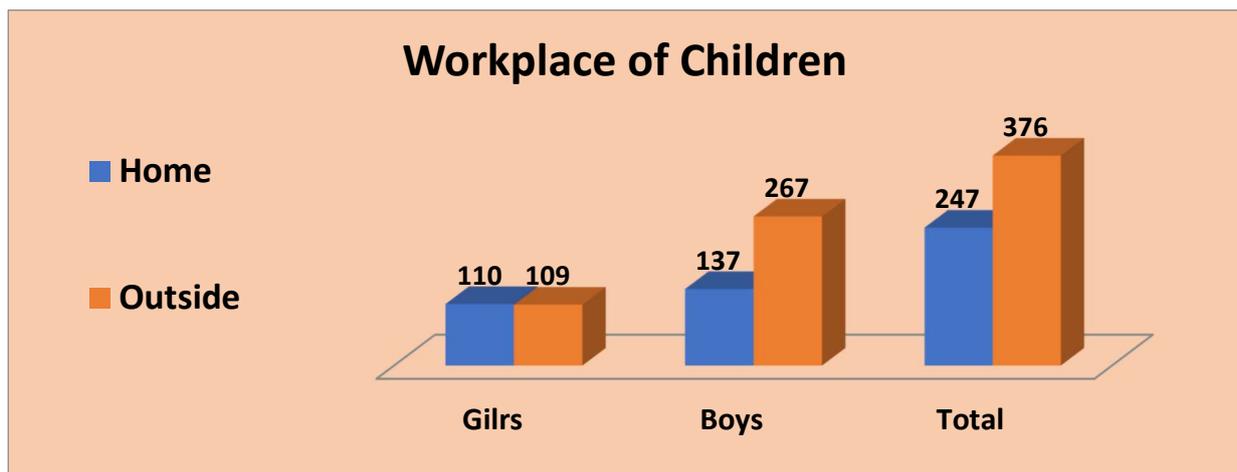
	Primary	Middle	High school	Higher secondary
Girls	66	47	44	21
Boys	74	149	109	22
Total	140	196	153	43

C. Child Protection:

C.1. Working status- When we asked the children about their working status, many of them answered the question positively. 86% of the respondent answered that they are working in any type of economic activity to earn money. Total 88% boys or 378 out of 571 are involve in child labour activities. Though the girl's responses are less but the number of girls is also significant i.e. 82%. Details of the working status of respondent children is given below -



C.2. Workplace - The children also responded regarding their workplace. Where they are working- in home situation or outside the home? The graph below shows the responses received from children. The responses from girls indicates that number of girls working in homes and going outside for work is almost equal. 110 girls working in homes and 109 said that they go outside for work. But the situation of boys is very different. Number of boys working from home is 137 but the numbers of boys who go outside is 267. Some children did not give their response.



C.3. Occupation- What are the main sectors where children work? The responses indicate that there are variety of work children are doing to either support family livelihood or earning their own livelihood. Responses also indicates that every economic activity in the unorganized sector is not happening without the presence of children. Children are working in domestic help but we can see them in factories also.

They are working in each type of construction labour. They are also working in brick making industry, selling newspapers, supply of LPG Gas, garage, animal care, agriculture, hotels and restaurants, shops, coal picking, marriage garden, motor mechanic, tent house, bands, rag picking, selling plastic goods and many more. Many of those activities are gender neutral like construction work, agriculture work, rag picking, brick making and coal picking. But many of those seems gender specific as per the responses of children in this survey. Activities like working in hotels and shops, factories, marriage gardens, motor mechanic, cycle repairing, work in temple, selling newspapers, supply of LPG Gas, work in garage and street shops and being done by boys only and we cannot see girls in these occupations. Similarly, some works are being done by exclusively girls like stitching, embroidery etc. Working in coal collection and picking is mentioned by children from Korba districts of Chhattisgarh only.

Occupation	Domestic	Construction & Bricks	Animal care	Agriculture labour	Work on Shops	Work at hotel	Coal collection	Street wander
Female	46	69+13	15	47	49	13	33	13
Male	88	32+8		46	2		13	
Total	134	101+21=122	15	93	51	13	46	13

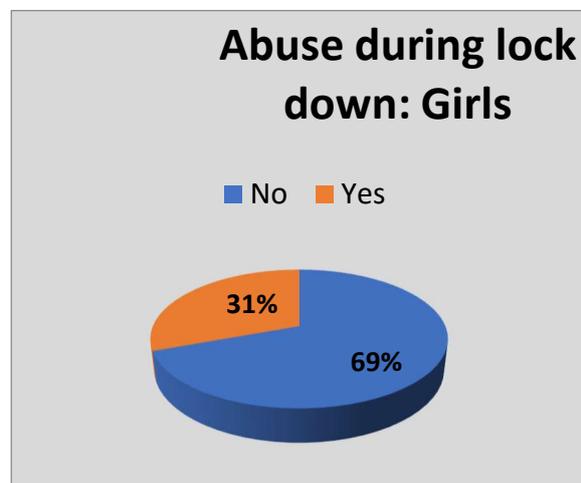
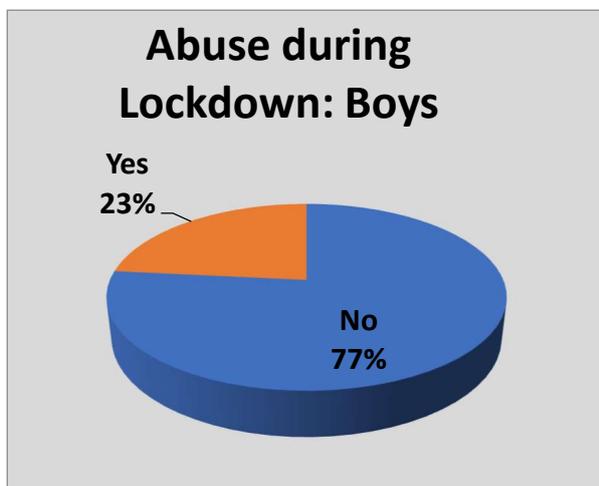
C.4. Management of study and work- This process also reflected that how children manage their time and conflict between work, study, home work and play. Their responses were very mixed and give us a nutshell of the problem of working children. It is not easy them to manage their time for study and playing after completing the work. The responses reflect that children are engaged in work for more than 6 hours in a day. So, it is not easy to play or doing study after the work. But many of the children said they try to manage these processes. Some of them make schedule of the day time to manage their timings. Some of them go to school first and after returning from school they use to go for work. After completing the work, they do their school home work. But this is very hectic and we can assume they cannot play. But even this is not being possible for many other children. Nature of the work like rag picking or working in brick making does not permit them to go to school. These children often dropped out from schools. Some children said that they try to play while they are at work. This is not possible for most of the children as the employer do not permit. Thus, the education and play are being compromised due to the situation of child labour.

C.5. Reason behind engaging in child labour- Why children go to work? This question has different answers and different dimensions. We asked the children that why they are working as a child labour? Some options to facilitate this question is also given to the children like economic condition of the family, addiction, family pressure and for their own shake. Most of the children responded that they have to work because the economic condition of their families demands. The respondent profiles indicate that most of the children are from unorganized sector workers family. Wages

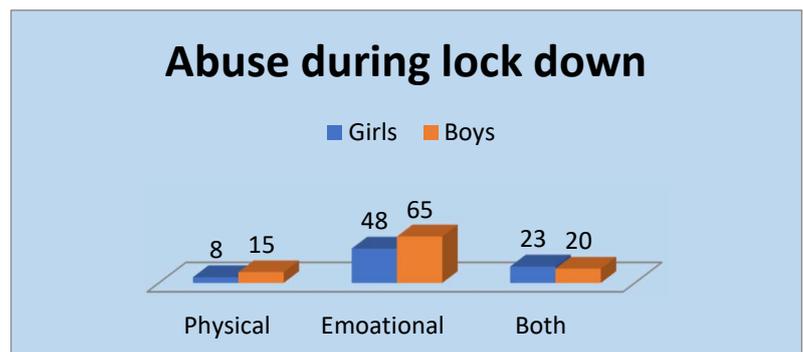
in this sector are very low and not fulfil all necessary needs of the family. So, all the members have to work for earning breads. Some children work because they do some addiction like chewing tobacco or Gutkha pouch and cannot take money from their families for this purpose. Some children are out of school due to the corporal punishment or less interest in study and they are doing work. The reasons and responses from children are tabled as;

Reason	Economic condition	Addiction	Family pressure	For own shake	Other
Female	156	3	21	11	21
Male	266	5	35	22	37

C.6. Abuse during lock dawn- Many reports are showing that the number of abuses against children and women is increasing in the period of lock dawn. Child line foundation also noticed the huge numbers of complaints in this period regarding the issues of child protection. When we asked the question from children in this survey, they also answered in the same line. Total 79 girls and 100 boys said that they have phased any type of misconduct or abuse during the period of lock dawn. This is a significant number in a limited group of respondents. Thus, the majority of girls and boys have not witnessed any type of such incident during this lock dawn. The number of those children is 156 girls and 327 boys. Rest children did not responded the question.



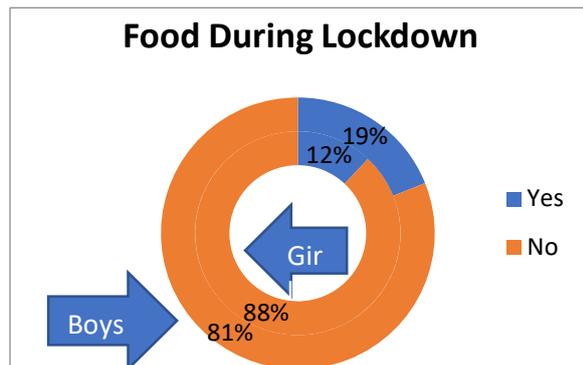
C.7. Type of abuse or misbehaviour- The graph shows that 31% of girls and 23% of boys from total respondents accepted that they have faced any type of abusing situation or misbehaviour during the lock dawn. When we asked them



about the nature of this misconduct, and children also shared about the physical violence or abuse. 8 girls and 15 boys admitted the incidences of such abuses. About half number of girl child and two third of male child admitted that they have faced emotional misbehave during the lock dawn. 23 girl and 20 boys faced both type of abuse during this period.

D. Survival:

D.1. Food and nutrition during lock dawn-

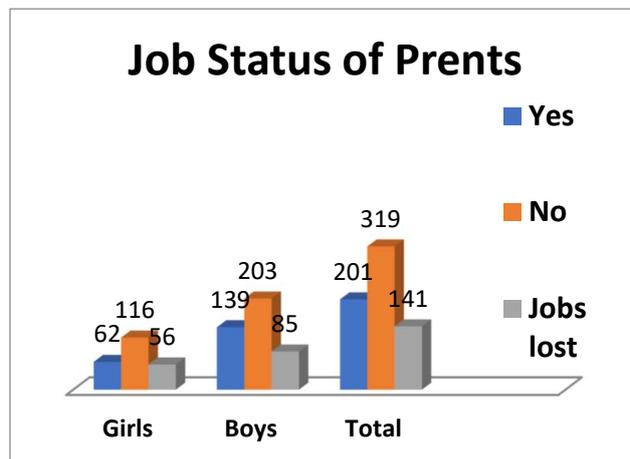


Food and nutrition in the families of respondent is remained crucial. Most of families of unorganized sector workers are facing the crisis of ration during the lock dawn period. Government and many civil society organizations provided ration for them but it was very inadequate, not only in the term of quantity but many necessary items were missing. Only 79 boys and 30 girls said that they do not faced scarcity of food during this time. Rest 84 % of the

children witnessed the problems of nutrition and food during this period.

E. The Family:

E.1 Job status of Parents-



201 children said that their parents were working in the time of lock dawn. Some sectors like agriculture, animal husbandry, vegetable selling and grocery selling were continuing during the lock dawn period also. But 319 children stated that their parents were not working in this period and 141 children said that their parents have been lost their jobs in the period of lock dawn.

E.2. Managing Essential Needs:

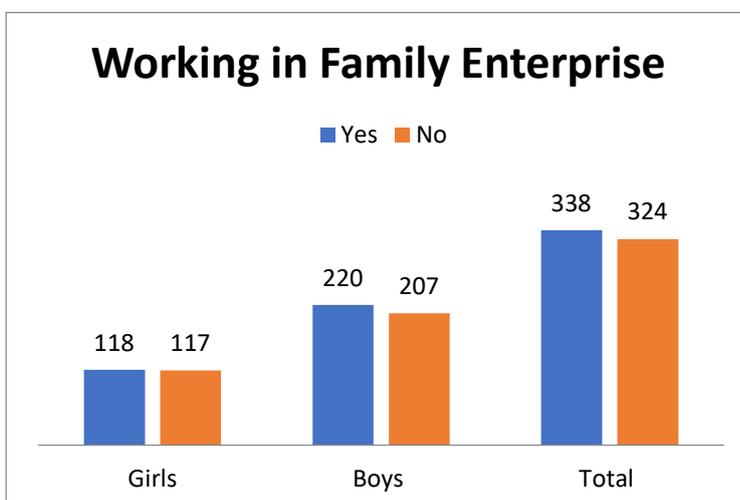
If the parents are not working and not earning money than how families is managing the essential need? The reflections of this questions by children are as under;

- 144 children did not answer this question.
- 22 children said that their families are using their savings for essential needs.
- 78 children said that government has provided the ration support and managed.
- 22 children said some civil society organization supported their family to overcome the problem.
- Parents of 17 children engaged themselves in agrarian labour and parents of 106 children managed to take any other physical work after losing their previous occupation in the rural area.
- 40 children said that they are managing the crisis with the support of their relatives and neighbors.
- 17 children stated that their families have been managing the essential requirements by taking loan from private person.
- 9 children said that no idea is working and their families are not in the position to handle it.
- 3 girls informed that they are eating less food as sufficient food is not available.

E.3. Working in family enterprise-

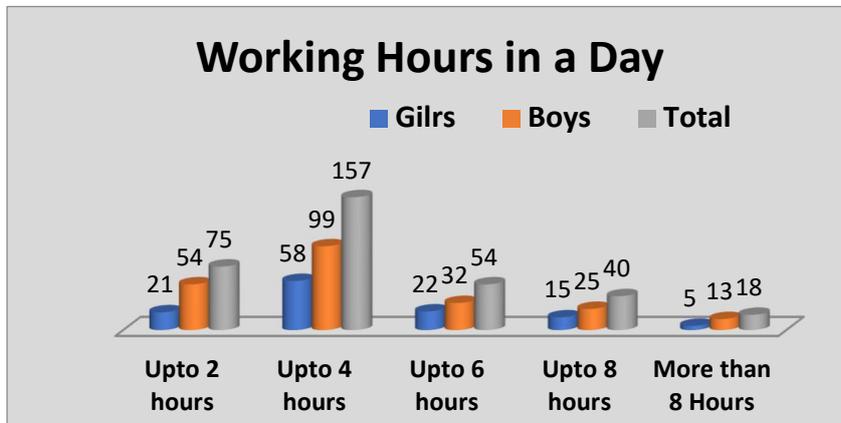
Working or Helping (?) in family enterprises is a big issue when we talk about the child labour as it is permitted with some restrictions in CLPRA. The responses from

children indicates that almost 50% of the children are working in the activities conducted by the family itself.

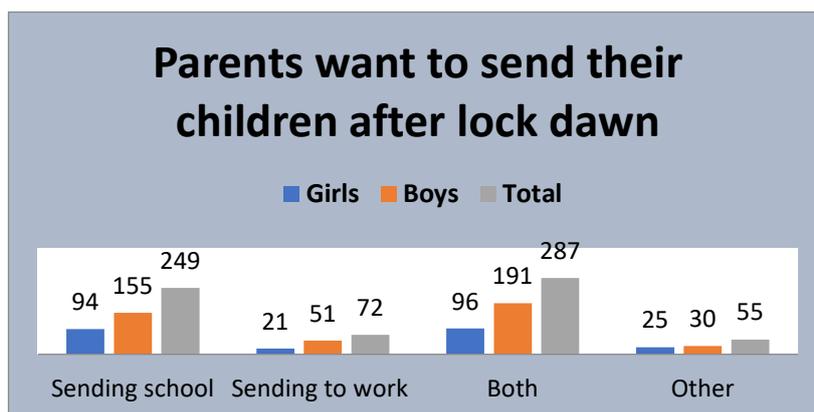


E.4. Working time - The time which have been spend by children for earning money is another big concern because they have to work for many hours and they have been deprived from education due to that. We have received the answers from children of their own time spending and it shows that maximum numbers of children work less than 4 hours in a day but one third of them work for more than 4 hours per day. Some of them said that they work more than 8 hours in a day. It reflects that going school is not possible for the children working for 8 hours a day. Due to the nature of work,

they have to work in very hard and even they cannot play. Rag picker children have to wake up early in the morning. Many of the children cannot enjoy the play and other activities due to their working time or nature of the work.



E.6. Post Lock down and Work preference- The children also shared their point of view and the opinion of their parents also. Total 361 children said that they would like to go on work after the lock down also because their families are in need and they have to help the family. But 232 children are not interested to go to work after the lock dawn. We also asked them that what their parents think about their work in the post lock down time. 249 children said that their parents are willing to send them to school but not to work. Parents of 72 children need the support of children for earning money in the opinion of children. Rest parents of 191 children are in the favour to send their children to school but they think child should has to work also to help the family.



Responses from representatives of government institutions

In order to understand the conditions of child labor during the lock down, the opinions of representatives of various departments in all the districts included in the study were also invited. The departments those have been contacted for this purpose are Labor Department, Child Welfare Committee, DCPO, Women and Child Development Department etc. But out of the total 23 districts included in the study, the response of the representatives of the departments was received only from 19 districts. These include Child Welfare Committee from 15 districts and representatives of Labor Department from 4 districts.

In response to the questions that were asked from these representatives through Google Form, the answers were received as follows-

1. Did you register a case related to child labor during Lockdown- In response to this question; everyone said that during this period, they have not registered any case related to child labor. They do not have enough time to go to field for rescuing the child labour and registration of cases.

2. How do you see the status of child labor after Lockdown?

Answering this question, 12 government representatives expressed the apprehension that the opening of the lock-down will increase child labor in the society. 3 representatives feel that there will be a decrease in child labor, while 4 representatives feel that the situation of child labor will remain the same in the future.

3. Whether the state government has made any plans to tackle child labor after Lockdown?

While addressing this question, most of the representatives said that no plan has been made to deal with child labor after Lockdown while the representatives of the labor department of Alirajpur and Datia answered yes to this question, meaning that they feel that the government has a plan to deal the child labor problem after Lockdown.

But while answering the next question i.e. what is planned, both the above-mentioned representatives said that the schemes are already being operated by the government to tackle child labor. These will continue even further. That is, no specialized plans are created during lock down.

4. Recently, labor laws have been amended in various states. Therefore, an attempt was made to understand from the participants whether the government is planning to deactivate any law related to child labor for the benefit of employers.

In response to this question, most of the government representatives said that they are not aware about such amendments. While a representative related to the labor department said that the amendments made in the labor laws will not have any effect on child labor. They are related to only adult workers.

What should be the government's priority for children, now and later on this issue?

A number of opinions were found in the answer to this question, which are mostly in the form of suggestions such as -

- Government should provide ration and THR for every child through anganwadi for the full period of Lock down. There will be specific budget for every child.
 - Continuous monitoring of child labor will be necessary after lock down. Action and awareness programs on child labor will have to be done in coordination with all departments.
 - There is very less child labor seen during lock down. Thus, efforts should be done for insuring that no child returns to child labor.
 - Children should go to school with caution.
 - It is anticipated that the number of child labour will increase after closing the lock down period. Remedial process has to be adopted to stop this process. Social organizations will play an important role.
 - Dignified arrangements for food and education should be done by government for all children. They should be kept stress-free.
 - Appropriate steps should be taken for child protection, child development and overall child welfare.
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Annexure 1: List of Organizations supported in rapid assessment

Sr. No	District	Name of the CSO
1	Shahdol	Sankalp Samajik Vikas Samiti
2	Bhopal	NIWCYD- Bachpan
3	Khandwa	Akshat Manviya Welfare Society
4	Shajapur	Kanchan Welfare and Educational Society
5	Reewa	Volunteer
6	Raisen	NIWCYD
7	Harda	Synergy Sansthan
8	Datia	Swadesh Sanstha
9	Jabalpur	Nagrik Adhikar Manch
10	Vidisha	Prasoon
11	Badwani	Save the children & NIWCYD
12	Morena	Dharti - Child Line
13	Alirajpur	Asra
14	Jhabua	Adivasi Chetna Siksha Samiti
15	Betul	Adivasi Seva Sanrachna Samiti
16	Khargone	Pahal Samajik Vikas Sansthan
17	Anuppur	Center for Social Justice
18	Hoshangabad	Gram Sewa Samiti
19	Chhindwara	Jan Mangal Sansthan
20	Dindori	NIWCYD
21	Mandla	Child Line NIWCYD
22	Korba	Mitwa Mahila Kalyan Samiti
23	Sarguja	Sarthak

