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Decent work in Ahmedabad: An integrated approach

Darshini Mahadevia

June 2012



DWT for South Asia and Country Office for India

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Preface

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is devoted to advancing opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work. It promotes rights at work and encourages decent employment opportunities, enhanced social protection and strengthened dialogue processes in handling work-related issues. As countries in the Asia-Pacific region continue to recover from the global economic crisis, the ILO Decent Work Agenda and the Global Jobs Pact provide critical policy frameworks to strengthen the foundations for a more inclusive and sustainable future.

Given the importance of Asia's rapid urbanization, the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific has commissioned a series of research papers on decent work opportunities and challenges in Asia's cities. This paper, written by Darshini Mahadevia of the Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT) University in India, analyses the urbanization trends in Ahmedabad, India's seventh-largest city, and the policy challenges related to urban development and decent work.

This paper is part of the *ILO Asia-Pacific Working Paper Series*, which aims to contribute to our knowledge of the issues, stimulate their discussion and encourage knowledge sharing and further research that will promote decent work in Asia and the Pacific.

Alcestis Abrera-Mangahas
Officer-in-Charge
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

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Abstract

Ahmedabad, the seventh-largest city in India with a population of 6.35 million in 2011, has grown by 3.5 per cent on average per year during the past decade. Cities are the centres of economic growth and innovation. However, rapid urbanization can pose formidable challenges to such aims as reducing urban informality and creating decent and productive jobs, reducing the urbanization of poverty and social exclusion, the adequate provision of social services and sustainable development and environmental protection. This paper examines the recent history, political economy and trends in urbanization in Ahmedabad and discusses a number of integrated policies and strategies for supporting sustainable urban development and decent work in regard to governance, social protection and quality employment creation, among others.

About the author

Darshini Mahadevia (PhD) is a Professor of the Faculty of Planning and Public Policy, and Member-secretary of the Centre for Urban Equity, both at the Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT) University, Ahmedabad. CEPT University is imparting education in Built Environment in India. The Centre for Urban Equity acts as a National Resource Centre of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation of the Government of India.

The responsibility for opinions expressed in articles, studies and other contributions rests solely with their authors, and publication does not constitute an endorsement by the International Labour Office of the opinions expressed in them, or of any products, processes or geographical designations mentioned.

Acronyms

BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BMS	Bandhkam Mazdoor Sangathan (Construction Workers' Union)
BPL	Below the Poverty Line list
BSUP	Basic Services to Urban Poor housing
CAA	Constitutional Amendment Act
CEPT	Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology University
CMSLB	Cloth Market and Shops Labour Board
CWWB	Gujarat Construction Workers' Welfare Board
FSI	floor space index
GDI	Gender Development Index
GDP	gross domestic product
GSDP	gross state domestic product
GUWWB	Gujarat Unorganised Workers Welfare Board
HDI	Human Development Index
ILO	International Labour Organization
SEWA	Self Employed Women's Association
SNP	Slum Networking Programme
TLA	Textile Labour Association
UPSS	usual principal plus subsidiary status

1. Context of a high-growth economy

This paper describes the situation and the integrated approach to decent work in Ahmedabad, the seventh-largest city in India (population 6.35 million).[1] The city is frequently cited in good practice or innovative project discussions on urban development in India – it is considered one of the most active developmental cities in the country. The most well-known project is its Slum Networking Programme. The city also has the largest bus rapid transit system, which also has won many national and international awards. Other national awards include the Economically Weaker Section Housing under the Basic Services for the Urban Poor component of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission. The city was declared as the "best city to live in" in India, based on an opinion poll conducted by the *Times of India*.[2] Ironically, that survey also highlighted the fact that despite the title "best city", Ahmedabad actually only had an "average" rating, indicating a long way to go towards improving the city's liveability.

Ahmedabad is a city of interesting and politicized history. On the positive side, it was the base of India's freedom struggle, with the father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi, setting up his ashram in Ahmedabad with the support of indigenous capitalists. The first trade union of self-employed women, the Self Employed Women's Association, or SEWA, organized there in 1972 as a philanthropic capitalist class whose influence, combined with the Gandhian influence, led to the formation of many non-government organizations that subsequently forged partnerships with the local and state government for development purposes. On the negative side, Ahmedabad is known for repeated spates of communal violence against the largest minorities, the Muslims, since 1969 (Patel, 2002; Concerned Citizens' Tribunal, 2002); and it is a city with a clear segmentation along economic class (Mahadevia, 2002a) and religious lines (Mahadevia, 2007).

Ahmedabad is the main commercial and business city of Gujarat, which is considered a model state in India from the perspective of economic development and economic freedom (Debroy et al., 2011). Indeed, Gujarat is among the fastest-growing economies of the country, surpassing the national average for almost three decades (excluding a few years of deviation). Since 2004–05, India has registered a high economic growth rate – an average of 8.4 per cent per annum (table 1). In this period, Gujarat's growth rate was higher than the national average in all but one year, with an average growth rate of 10 per cent per annum. Such growth earned the state the nickname "India's Guangdong".[3]

[1] Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs: *Provisional population totals paper 2 of 2011* (New Delhi, 2011), http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/paper2/data_files/india2/Million_Plus_UAs_Cities_2011.pdf (accessed 31 Oct. 2011).

[2]. "Ahmedabad best city to live in, Pune close second", in *The Times of India*, 11 Dec. 2011, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-12-11/india/30504461_1_cities-ahmedabad-kolkata (accessed 26 Dec. 2011).

[3] "India's Guangdong", in *The Economist,* 7 July 2011, http://www.economist.com/node/18929279 (accessed 26 Sep. 2011).

Table 1: Real gross domestic product growth rates (% per annum)

Fiscal year	India	Gujarat state
2004–05	7.5	8.9
2005–06	9.5	15.0
2006–07	9.6	8.4
2007–08	9.3	11.0
2008–09	6.8	7.0
2009–10	8.0	10.2
Avg. 2004–05 to 2009–10	8.4	10.1

Source: Planning Commission, Government of India, http://planningcommission.gov.in (accessed 31 Oct. 2011).

Gujarat's annual growth fluctuations are attributed to constant sputters in the agriculture sector (table 2), which nonetheless registered a higher overall growth rate from 2004 to 2010 than the sector did for the whole of India. This was also true for the secondary as well as tertiary sectors. The tertiary sector growth in Gujarat was far higher than it was for India overall in the same time period, with the state registering a 15.3 per cent per annum growth rate compared with the national 9.3 per cent per annum. Gujarat's manufacturing sector growth rate was 10.2 per cent per annum against 8.6 per cent per annum for all of India in the same period. In fact, all sectors of Gujarat's economy registered higher growth rates than the respective sectors of the national economy.

Table 2: Composition of growth, India and Gujarat state (at constant prices) (% per annum)

Fiscal year	India				Gujarat state			
	Agriculture	Secondary	Manufacturing	Tertiary	Agriculture	Secondary	Manufacturing	Tertiary
2004–05								
2005–06	5.5	11.2	8.5	12.8	24.1	11.8	13.7	7.0
2006–07	4.1	10.1	12.9	10.3	-1.3	10.9	10.6	7.9
2007–08	6.3	10.4	9.2	10.7	8.8	15.4	7.0	36.6
2008–09	-0.6	9.5	4.0	5.4	-9.0	13.1	4.8	10.3
2009–10	-0.1	9.7	8.3	7.0	-0.1	11.6	15.0	14.8
Avg. 2004–05 to 2009–10	3.1	10.2	8.6	9.3	4.5	12.6	10.2	15.3

Source: Reserve Bank of India, *Handbook of statistics on Indian economy* (Delhi, Government of India, 2011), http://rbidocs.rbi.org.in/rdocs/Publications/PDFs/0HBSF15092011.pdf (accessed 2 Nov. 2011).

Registering a high growth rate in Gujarat from 2004–05 to 2009–10, the tertiary sector's share in the gross state domestic product (GSDP) increased to one-half in that period, on par with the increase of 4 percentage points increase in the tertiary sector's composition in the whole of the Indian economy (table 3). The difference between the national economy and that of Gujarat is that more than one-third of the state's gross domestic product derived from the secondary sector, whereas it was less than one-third, at 29 per cent, on the national level (and remained unchanged) during that same time period. However, the secondary sector was relatively more capital intensive in Gujarat when compared with the whole country. Employment in the secondary sector in Gujarat by 2010 was just 19 per cent and its GSDP share was 37 per cent, in contrast to the sector's share of 20 per cent in employment and 29 per cent in GDP at the national level.

Table 3: Structure of economy and employment, Gujarat and India (%)

Fiscal year	India				Gujarat			
	Agriculture	Secondary	Tertiary	Total	Agriculture	Secondary	Tertiary	Total
GDP composition*								
2004–05	16.5	28.8	54.7	100.0	17.7	35.6	46.7	100.0
2009–10	12.6	28.7	58.7	100.0	13.0	36.7	50.3	100.0
Employment composition (principal status workers)								
2004–05**	49.3	21.0	29.7	100.0	44.5	26.6	28.9	100.0
2009–10***	45.5	20.3	34.2	100.0	42.1	18.9	39.0	100.0

Sources: *Reserve Bank of India, *Handbook of statistics on Indian economy* (Delhi, Government of India, 2011), http://rbidocs.rbi.org.in/rdocs/Publications/PDFs/0HBSF15092011.pdf (accessed 2 Nov. 2011).
**NSSO, 2006.
***Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2010.

At 3.1 per cent per annum, Gujarat is one of only two high-income states (along with Haryana, at 3.7 per cent) that have an urbanization rate higher than the national average. Haryana's high urbanization is on account of its proximity to Delhi and thus because the new economic activities are located in the towns and cities of Haryana, such as Gurgaon and Faridabad. Up to 1991, Gujarat experienced a slower annual rate of urbanization than the national average, at an average of 3.5 per cent in the 1980s and 2.9 per cent in the 1990s compared with the national average of 3.8 per cent and 3.1 per cent, respectively (table 4). However, after 1991, while the urbanization rate of India slowed down (as already mentioned), that of Gujarat has picked up to 2.9 per cent per annum and 3.1 per cent per annum during the 1990s and 2000s respectively. In 2011, 42 per cent of the state's population was residing in urban areas, making this paper of great relevance to the state.

Table 4: Compounded annual growth rate of population (% per annum) and Ahmedabad urban agglomeration population

Period	Ahmedabad urban agglomeration population	Ahmedabad urban agglomeration growth	Gujarat urban growth	India urban growth
1971–81	2 548 057*	3.5	3.5***	3.8***
1981–91	3 312 216*	2.7	2.9***	3.1***
1991–2001	4 519 278**	3.2	2.9***	2.7***
2001–11	6 352 254**	3.5	3.1**	2.8**

Note: Ahmedabad urban agglomeration population represents the population at the end of the period.
Sources:
* Mahadevia, 2002a.
** Office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, "Provisional population totals paper" (Delhi, Ministry of Home Affairs, 2011), http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/paper2/prov_results_paper2_indiavol2.html (accessed 15 Oct. 2011) and:
http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_Data_Online/Population.aspx?cki=Oa9Ky1pFlVC (accessed 15 Oct. 2011).
*** Sivaramakrishnan et al., 2005.

As indicated in table 3, Gujarat's manufacturing sector is highly capital intensive in comparison with the national situation. Consequently, employment continues to depend on agriculture but is also expanding reliance on the tertiary sector. The state tertiary sector's share in income was 50 per cent and in employment was 39 per cent, while the national average was 59 per cent and 34 per cent, respectively. This means that output per worker in the tertiary sector was higher in India than in Gujarat in 2010. Gujarat's tertiary sector labour had lower productivity than the national average, indicating a large presence of informal or residual workers. Gujarat's economy is unbalanced, and this is a major issue regarding the state's development path. There are segments of the economy that are highly productive and of international standards, but there is also a very large segment of the population working in low-productivity sectors. In 2007–08, Gujarat was ranked first among the 20 major Indian states in terms of fixed capital investment, second in terms of total invested capital and

fourth in terms of the total number of factories, but ranked 18th in the labour-capital ratio (Hirway and Shah, 2011: 60).

In urban Gujarat in 2004–05, there was a slightly larger proportion of workers in the informal sector than on average across the country, at 72.8 per cent compared with 72.2 per cent nationally. By sex, the averages were slightly greater in the state, at 74.1 per cent (73.9 per cent nationally) for males and 66.4 per cent (65.4 per cent nationally) for females (table 5). Thus, desspite of the high economic growth, employment quality in Gujarat is poor.

Table 5: Percentage of workers employed in the informal sector, 2004–05

	Male	Female	Persons
Urban India	73.9	65.4	72.2
Urban Gujarat	74.1	66.4	72.8

Source: NSSO, 2007, p. 78-80.

Something of great concern for the state and which has great impact on well-being is the communal violence committed against the Muslims, the largest minority community.

The state's first Human Development Report (Hirway and Mahadevia, 2005) pointed out that: i) the agriculture sector, which employed half the population, had been stagnating since the early 1980s;[4] ii) large parts of the state were prone to drought; iii) there was high urban-rural inequality; and iv) the state lagged behind in human and gender development – ranking sixth in the Human Development Index (HDI) and in the Gender Development Index (GDI) in 2001[5] among the 15 largest Indian states. Since 2001, the state's standing in health indicators, particularly regarding infant and child health, has deteriorated.[6] The state is in an alarming category in the hunger index, at the 13th position among the country's 17 largest states (Menon et al., 2009). An earlier study found high inequality between the metropolitan cities and small and medium-sized towns in terms of income (Mahadevia and Mukherjee, 2003). The *National Human Development Report of India 2011* (Institute of Applied Manpower Research and Planning Commission, 2011) gauged the state's HDI rank at 11 among 23 states, a notch worse from the previous year (Planning Commission, 2002). The state's poor ranking on the HDI is on account of its poor performance in the health sector. In particular, the state has a poor record in terms of the functioning of the public health facilities; as a result, only 54.7 per cent of urban children and 40.1 per cent of rural children were vaccinated in 2005–06 (which actually was not that much different from the national averages, at 57.6 per cent and 38.6 per cent, respectively) (Institute of Applied Manpower Research and Planning Commission, 2011: 307).

The state has a high incidence of rural poverty, at 39.1 per cent in 2004–05, according to the Tendulkar Committee (an experts group mandated in 2009 to assess the poverty estimation methodology). While that is certainly a proportional decline from the 43.1 per cent in 1993–94, it is an absolute increase in the numbers of rural poor, from 12.1 million to 13 million (Government of India, Planning Commission, 2009). According to an earlier estimate of the Planning Commission, when the incidence of rural poverty overall reduced from 22.2 per cent in 1993–94 to 19.1 per cent in 2004–05, the absolute number of poor increased in rural Gujarat, from 6.22 million in 1993–94 to 6.35 million[7] in 2004–05 (Government of India, Press Information Bureau, 1997 and 2007). This

[4] There has been some revival in this sector, and in 2009–10, only 42 per cent of workers depended on agriculture.
[5] The data in this paragraph are from Hirway and Mahadevia, 2005 unless specified.
[6] D. Mahadevia: "An all too inhuman index", in *Tehelka Magazine*, Vol. 4, No. 48, 15 Dec. 2007, http://www.tehelka.com/story_main36.asp?filename=Ne151207inhuman.asp (accessed 16 Apr. 2011).
[7] Consumption base on uniform recall period.

indicates that the economic growth is not trickling down and that the high level and rate of urbanization is not adequately benefitting rural areas.

The same cannot be said for urban areas, where the incidence of poverty declined, from 27.9 per cent in 1993–94 to 20.1 per cent in 2004–05 (Government of India, Planning Commission 2009), and the absolute number of urban poor also declined, from 4.3 million in 1993–94 to 2.7 million in 2004–05 (Government of India, Press Information Bureau, 1997 and 2007).

Gujarat's growth story is marred by the poor and declining performance on human development indicators[8] (Hirway and Mahadevia, 2005; Institute of Applied Manpower Research and Planning Commission, 2011) and continuing high rural poverty. This situation is linked to the very poor labour conditions in terms of workers' rights, protection and social security, emanating from the state's own development paradigm (Hirway and Mahadevia, 2005). The growth model, in particular in the past decade, has been highly distorted, as it has been overall in the country – but with a difference: "The distortions in Gujarat are very conspicuous because the state has a rich, enterprising population and a government committed to supporting the corporate sector" (Hirway and Shah, 2011: 65). Labour is considered a factor of production to promote economic growth; hence the lack of policies for the redistribution and promotion of human development. This is the macro context of Ahmedabad city, the geographical subject of this paper.

Structure of this paper

This paper presents various facets of the integrated approach to decent work in Ahmedabad, an Indian city located in a high-growth economy and rapidly urbanizing state, as Section 1 has pointed out. While Ahmedabad has certain common issues with other metropolitan cities in the country, it also has its own specificities rooted in its history and political economy. However, the political economy of the city has changed over time, from being a more inclusive city to a segmented and exclusive city, in the specific context of globalization processes, which Section 3 explains (following an introduction to decent work and the integrated approach in Section 2); the context of the city's political economy is characterized in the section as not too separate from that of Gujarat overall. Section 4 returns the discussion to the demographics of the city before moving on to work and wages in Ahmedabad in Section 5. The enforcement of labour laws and social security schemes in Gujarat are featured in Section 6; the ensuing three sections look at three facets of the integrated approach to decent work in Ahmedabad: shelter security, labour-intensive growth and urban access to welfare programmes. Section 10 is a brief overview of issues around labour associations and participation in Ahmedabad city. The last section reflects on the possibilities for achieving greater policy coherence in the city on decent work.

[8] See: i) "India Human Development Report raps Gujarat, praises UP and Bihar", in the *Times of India*, 21 Oct. 2011, http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/India-Human-Development-Report-report-raps-Gujarat-praises-UP-and-Bihar/articleshow/10446060.cms [accessed 22 Oct. 2011]; and ii) "Gujarat fares poorly on malnutrition and hunger", in *Outlook*, 21 Oct. 2011, http://news.outlookindia.com/items.aspx?artid=739066 (accessed 22 Oct. 2011).

2. Conceptualizing an integrated approach to decent work

2.1 Concept of decent work

It is now well known that the majority of people who are poor in the developing world already have work. But it is predominantly in the informal economy, with low wages, no labour protection and without adequate social security. The concept of decent work and its relevance to all workers thus encompasses the availability of work and its future prospects, safe and healthy work and living conditions, moving children out of the workforce and into school, gender equity and enabling women to take control of their lives and make choices for themselves, and having a voice in the workplace and community.[9] At the centre of it all are people's own aspirations because the term "decent" ultimately is a subjective assessment of each person's work and life. For the International Labour Organization, decent work means:

1. **Creating jobs**, which addresses the issue of quantity and which deals with an economy that generates opportunities for investment, entrepreneurship, skills development, job creation and sustainable livelihoods.
2. **Guaranteeing rights at work**, which has been the core concern of the ILO for many years and deals with the recognition and respect for the rights of all workers. All workers, and in particular disadvantaged or poor workers, need representation, participation and laws that work for their interests so that they gain freedom of association, freedom from forced and child labour and freedom from discrimination.
3. **Extending social protection** to promote both inclusion and productivity by ensuring that women and men enjoy working conditions that are safe, allow adequate free time and rest, take into account family and social values, provide for adequate compensation in case of lost or reduced income and permit access to adequate health care.
4. **Promoting social dialogue** by involving strong and independent workers' and employers' organizations, which is central to increasing productivity, avoiding disputes at work and building cohesive societies. Social dialogue represents participation in and ownership of democratic processes. Because the term "work" encompasses all types of work, the organizations for association would extend beyond a workplace to other forms of community-based organizations necessary for collective bargaining. Social dialogue is different from electoral democracy, which requires the willingness of the State to enter into dialogue with the population or facilitate dialogue of contending parties and provide instruments and institutions for dialogue.

The term "social protection" has a wide definition. It deals with both the absolute deprivation and vulnerabilities of the poorest and also with the need of the currently non-poor for security in the face of shocks and life-cycle events (Nortan et al., 2001: 7). Social protection thus refers to "the public actions taken in response to levels of vulnerability, risk and deprivation which are deemed socially unacceptable within a given polity or society" (Nortan et al., 2001: 7). Broadly, the social protection concept in developing countries means reducing human deprivations and eliminating vulnerabilities (Ahmad et al., 1991: ix). In common terms, these measures include labour market interventions, social safety nets and pensions, along with interventions for enhancing the "normal living conditions and dealing with regular and often persistent deprivations" (Drèze and Sen, 1991: 3).

[9] G. Rogers: *Decent work as a goal for the global economy* (Geneva, International Labour Organization, undated), http://www.world-governance.org/IMG/pdf_Rodgers_-_Decent_Work_as_a_Goal-3.pdf (accessed 22 Oct. 2011).

Drèze and Sen (1991), laying the foundation for the concept of social security in developing countries, state that there are two aspects: "promotion" and "protection". The latter is concerned with the prevention of decline in living standards in general and in the basic conditions of living in particular. The promotional aspects of social security, according to Drèze and Sen (1991: 3), are towards "enhancing the normal living conditions and dealing with regular and often persistent deprivations". The authors find that the promotional aspect of social security is more ambitious in wanting to eradicate the problems that have survived through centuries. Hence, the decent work concept needs to include the issues and opportunities of development regarding low-income workers.

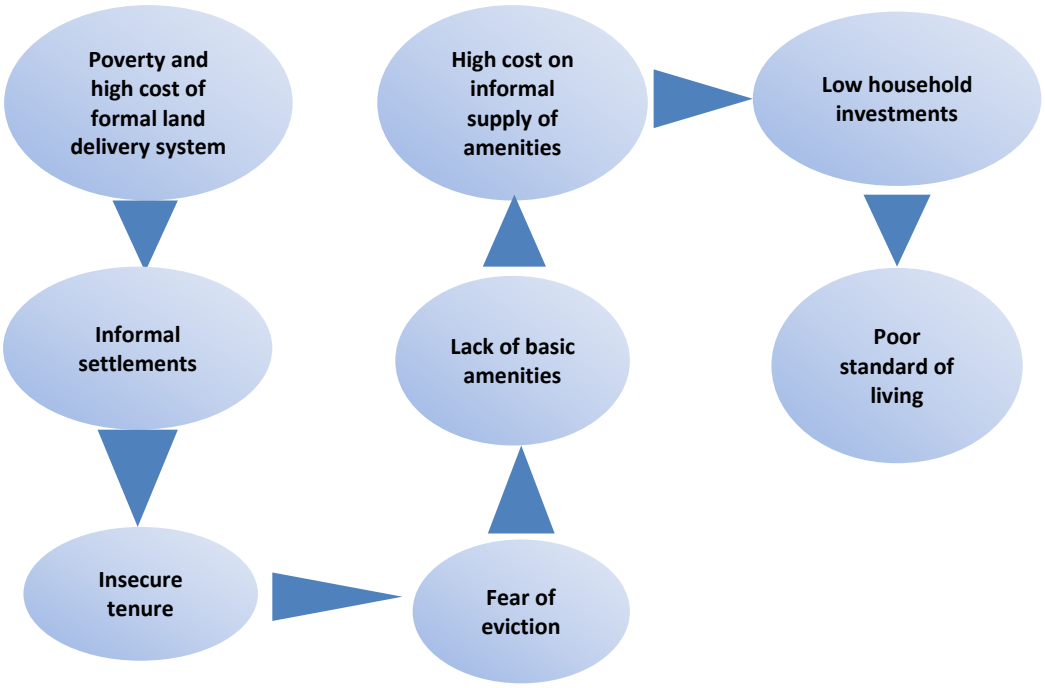
In the context of Gujarat, Hirway and Shah (2011: 65) have supported the idea of decent work for inclusive and sustainable growth: "Providing a just share to labour by ensuring workers minimum (or fair) wages, safe working conditions and minimum social protection will have several positive macroeconomic effects on the economy. Apart from ensuring the well-being of workers, which has its own intrinsic value, these policies will expand the domestic market and promote growth in the state; promote labour-intensive growth since this growth will expand the markets for wage goods; and ensure an equitable growth that is socially and politically sustainable. ... a fair deal to labour will be an important strategy for improving the quality of growth."

2.2 Shelter security and land policy

Shelter security is the basis for social protection in urban areas. However, shelter security depends solely on the land policies in a city; thus there has to be an integration of land policies and shelter policies. One important land policy for slum dwellers speaks to tenure security. Time and again, it has been reiterated that legal tenure to residents of slums and informal settlements would result in their making significant investment to upgrade their housing. This was reaffirmed at the World Urban Forum III in June 2006 in Vancouver. Twenty years back, in the 1976 World Habitat Conference also in Vancouver, the importance of land tenure was stressed as next only to food and water in urban areas (Oberlander, 1985). The other arguments in support of shelter security are: i) it addresses the question of multidimensional poverty, ranging from reducing shelter deprivation (including access to water supply and sanitation) to improving the health status and income for home-based workers; ii) it leads to capital formation among the poorest of the urban population, something economists view as the penetration of capitalism to the bottom of the pyramid; iii) it also protects households in times of hazards and risks of inclement weather; iv) it acts as collateral security for microfinance; v) it gives the urban poor an address, which is necessary for accessing entitlements; and vi) above all, it is an essential component of redistributive policies and hence an important input in urban equity. Shelter security thus strongly supports the promotional aspect of social protection.

In most developing countries, empirical observations indicate there is a vicious relationship between the insecurity of housing tenure and poverty. Shelter security leads to increased access to basic services, such as housing, water and sanitation, electricity, education, health and employment. All these together have vital weight in the overall development and improvement of the quality of life of poor people. Providing access to these services in particular leads women to increase their time spent on income generation, which improves household income. Also, improvements in health lead to a reduction in expenditures on one hand and higher labour productivity and greater participation in the labour market on the other hand, all leading to increased income and savings. Thus land tenure has a very significant link with poverty reduction.

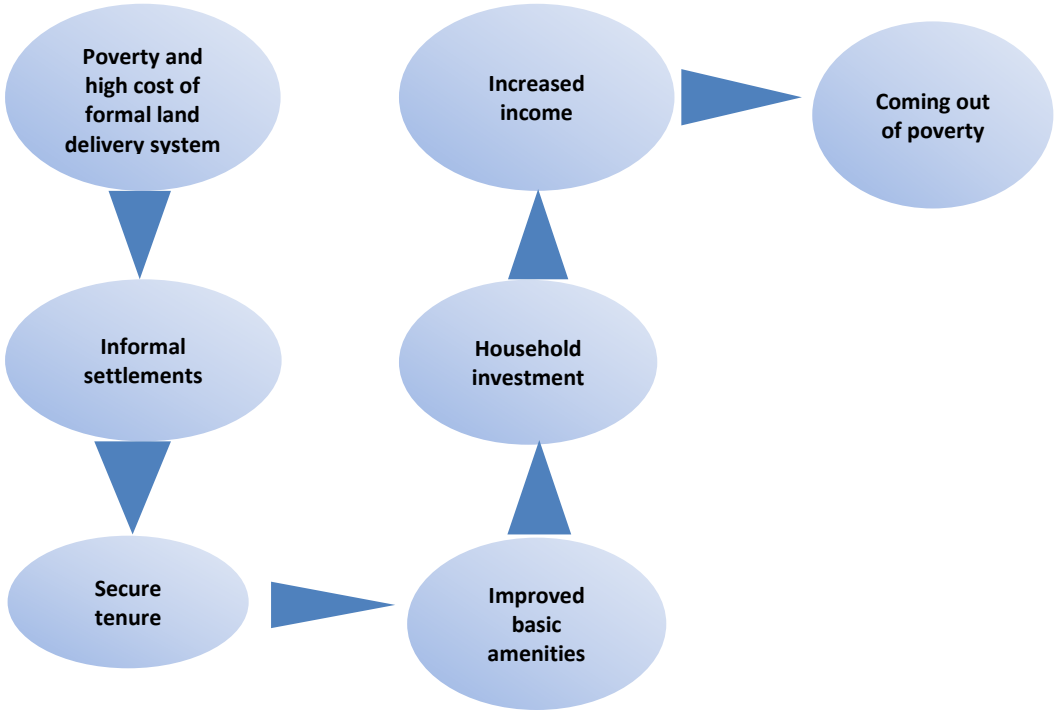
Figure 1: Vicious cycle of tenure insecurity and poverty



Source: Mahadevia and Shah, 2009.

Shelter security is an outcome of land tenure extension, which has to do with land policies. In cities, land is used as a resource to generate finances for infrastructure projects; however, it is viewed as a marketable commodity and not a public good. This typically results in land assigned uses that fetch higher prices, which in essence pushes the poor to the urban periphery. Tenure security cannot be extended in situations in which land is only a commercial good and not a public good. Thus there is a need now to integrate land policies with shelter policies to ensure social protection for the urban poor.

Figure 2: Virtuous cycle of tenure security and rising out of poverty



Source: Mahadevia and Shah, 2009.

2.3 Employment – shelter links through affordable transport

To ensure social protection for the urban poor requires putting into place inclusive urban land and shelter policies, addressing the issue of informal housing and tenure security, an urban planning paradigm that promotes mixed land use and an affordable transport plan that encourages walking and cycling to work. Pushing the urban poor from the central parts of cities to peri-urban locations destabilizes the shelter-work relationship and increases their poverty (the further the poor live from where they work, the higher the cost to work). Ahmedabad has become a city along economic class lines, with the working class living in the eastern segment and the high-income households filling the western segment (Mahadevia, 2002a); the inequality has deepened with the increase in the global links to the city (Mahadevia and Brar, 2008). Many low-income women find work in western Ahmedabad but they live on the east side, which requires they spend long hours commuting.

2.4 Work at adequate wages and social security measures

It is no longer adequate to have work. The work has to be at adequate wages, for which, the local government should have appropriate regulations, mechanisms for enforcing them and the will to follow through. At the same time, the local state government also should put into place social protection measures, such as social security schemes, social assistance schemes, shelter security programmes and education and health support programmes.

2.5 Labour-intensive growth path

As Hirway and Shah argue (2011), sustainable development in the context of Gujarat state would require a labour-intensive growth path in place of the capital-intensive growth path that exists today. In the context of Ahmedabad, this would mean promoting employment programmes by engaging local groups or collectives in the managing of waste, city greening projects, managing public spaces and urban planning that allows the use of streets for informal trade.

2.6 Inclusive citizenship

At the core of these issues are questions of citizenship: Who is a citizen of a particular city? How is the citizenship defined? What are the processes for acquiring urban citizenship? And is there any proactive local state process to extend citizenship to new residents of a city? Citizenship, after all, should ensure entitlements to shelter, social security and employment.

Urban citizenship in Ahmedabad is a complex notion. It is attained through a variety of ways by the poor, while the non-poor simply attain it by purchasing or renting a legal abode and in so doing acquire a legal address. Low-income migrants do not easily obtain citizenship rights in a city upon their arrival but acquire them through a gradual process of accretion. Because low-income migrants cannot afford to purchase or rent a legal dwelling, they tend to find shelter in informal housing. They begin their urban life by squatting on vacant land, which is either a government property or where the squatting is invited by the private landowner.[10] They may also share a house with their relatives and friends from back home and pay them rent. The initial settlements of the poor, which are called

[10] If land is to be acquired for public purpose under a city's master/development plan, according to the three-decade-old Urban Land Ceiling and Regulation Act, or is excess land to be notified for acquisition, the land owners sell off the land parcels in the informal market and thereby invite squatting.

squatter settlements, are not demolished on their formation because they typically have some political leader's protection. There is also tolerance to informality by the local authority, given that there are no other options for the poor. Such informal settlements expand and thus populations living in them increase.

Gradually, the households in those settlements acquire some legal document. The first and easiest to obtain is an electoral card, which India's electoral democracy facilitates. A large settlement attracts the attention of local politicians who are keen to build their vote banks and thus willing to help residents acquire an electoral voter card. This card contains a photograph of the individual and residential address, even though the housing may be illegally located (for example, the address can be Riverfront, Ahmedabad, and a letter addressed this way will reach the household). The households then make arrangements to obtain a ration card, which carries the names of all household members. The ration card application comes after a lag of residency in the city, and many people do not opt to obtain one if they realize that they have to surrender the ration card from their home village. If they do obtain a ration card, then they next seek to have their name entered into the list of households living below the poverty line, known as the BPL list. All the current social security and assistance schemes are linked to a ration card in the BPL category.

The settlement, if not physically obstructing any infrastructure or land development project, survives and finds a way to link to basic services. Residents on land that is suddenly needed face eviction and are forced to start again elsewhere. Often and due to residents' will power or housing rights activists, as in the case of demolitions in Ahmedabad,[11] or an infrastructure project funding agency's conditionality, "rehabilitation" benefits are offered to affected residents. Various proof of identity is then used for establishing eligibility as a beneficiary.

Otherwise, if the local government is financially flush, as in Ahmedabad, it extends basic services to the settlement – water supply, sewerage and storm water drains, roads and street lights. Individual households obtain an electricity connection on their own. In Ahmedabad, the private electricity company, Torrent Power, has a scheme of connecting slum households with an electricity meter for a token amount (Mahadevia et al., 2010a). Thus each household in large informal settlements receive an electricity bill, which also carries their address.

The extending of access to some services by the local government infuses households in the receiving settlements with the perception that they are safe from demolition. This is called "de facto tenure security" status in housing studies. Gujarat does not have tenure regularization legislation; hence the slums do not receive de jure (legal) security.

[11] A public hearing on demolitions in Ahmedabad was arranged by the Our Inclusive Ahmedabad in December 2009, and the comments were considered by the Gujarat High Court when deliberating a judgement on the Sabarmati Riverfront Development affected households. The report of the public hearing is available at: http://www.spcept.ac.in/cue.aspx (accessed 31 Oct. 2011).

3. Ahmedabad's political economy

Ahmedabad is the premier city of Gujarat state, housing the corporate sector offices and residences of their owners and the executives who work there. The specific characteristics of Gujarat's economy come together in a concentrated way within the city. The recent distortions in the city's development policies under the guise of turning Ahmedabad into a "world city" are an outcome of the immense power of the upper economic strata. As noted previously, the driving force of the state's economy is the capital-intensive industries, and their owners are fully supported by the state's political class. The state's high economic growth also means that a certain segment of the population has acquired tremendous wealth. Ahmedabad has attracted large numbers of those tremendous-net worth individuals. A first glimpse of the city, mainly the locations where the economic elites live, leaves a strong impression of a wealthy city.

Historically, this was a rich city, becoming in more modern times characterized as the "Manchester of India" because of the cotton textile industry dominating the economy. The early investments in the cotton textile industry came from local entrepreneurs; the city developed a market economy based on contracts, with indigenous systems of banking and insurance. There was a high level of commercial morality and machinery for settling disputes through Mahajans and Seths, and the dominant ethic of hard work, frugality and money making suited the rigours of modernization (Gillion, 1968: 76).

The city previously developed its own method of wealth redistribution, based on the philanthropy of the early capitalist era. The philanthropic activities were instrumental in setting up the first university in the city in the 1920s and health facilities, including large public hospitals that are still operating. The health facilities were eventually transferred to the municipal government, which is now the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation. The nationalistic capitalists living in the city invited Mahatma Gandhi to start the national independence movement from there, which inevitably brought Ahmedabad under the influence of Gandhian philosophy of trusteeship and negotiation. In response to workers' strikes, at the initiative of Gandhi, the Textile Labour Association (TLA) trade union was formed in 1920, on the Gandhian principles of arbitration and conciliation, non-violent struggle and constructive welfare. At that time, the capitalists were regarded as trustees of the wealth generated by the workers, and in return, the workers were taken care of by the capitalists. This balance began to disintegrate as the cotton textile industry declined, from late 1980s onwards. Mumbai was also a cotton textile centre and had experienced a very prolonged strike in the early 1980s by mill workers in response to the modernization and the threat of labour retrenchment. Mumbai was then confronted with militant trade unions with the backing of the leftist political parties. In contrast, the TLA, which was the largest trade union in Ahmedabad, took a conciliatory approach towards the closing of the mills; no militant workers' movement ever developed in Ahmedabad.

From early on, the TLA participated in politics. Tracing the contemporary institutional history of Ahmedabad, Spodek (2002) reports that the TLA fielded one industrial worker for municipal elections in the 1920s, not long after it had formed as a union. The worker, by caste a Harijan (Scheduled Caste), won the seat unopposed. Spodek notes that representation of the TLA in the municipality increased steadily to five by 1936 (citing Banker, 1965: 218) and to 17 in the late 1940s (citing Lakha, 1988: 116).

As highlighted previously, there are many firsts and unique trends in Ahmedabad's contemporary development history. This was the first city to issue tax-free municipal bonds worth 1 billion rupees in 1998; the city has subsequently issued bonds many times to collect revenue. Another first in the city was a partnership-based slum improvement programme, the Slum Networking Programme, or SNP

(see Acharya and Parikh, 2002; Joshi, 2002; Dutta, 2002). The city imposed a property tax in the slums beginning in 2001 and now nearly all the slums, with pucca or semi-pucca[12] structures, are assessed for property tax, which also gives a sense of tenure security to the slum dwellers. Ahmedabad was the second Indian city (after Delhi) to introduce the rapid bus transit system; it now has the largest network of all Indian cities. The city has the largest rehabilitation programme of all India's metropolitan cities for persons displaced from settlements.[13] The city has received the second largest per capita amount of funding among all cities under the national flagship urban development programme, the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (Kundu and Samanta, 2011: 60). The city received the award for the best basic services for the urban poor projects from the national Government for the past two years.[14]

Until recently, the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation was perceived as engaging in good governance practices; the city was praised for adhering to all 18 functions recommended by the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1994.[15]

There is now, however, a big break from the past. There has been increasing centralization of decision-making in the state and thus the erosion of local autonomy in the past five years. This has to do with the state's political economy. As pointed out earlier, the state's economic focus is only on growth through a large corporate sector, with every other sector secondary. Such a power centre has pushed the state government to develop its cities as "world cities" or "global cities"; the so-called unique selling points are capital-intensive projects, such as the riverfront or lake development, wide roads and new recreational spaces (Mahadevia, 2011a).

The state government's narrow development ideology and emerging intolerant streak of a right-wing government (economically and politically) has led to regression in Ahmedabad's autonomy and to non-participatory governance. The city has not yet formed the now-required ward committees (Mahadevia, 2010a) and so does not have any forum of participation and negotiations. The participatory governance reform of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, such as with the Community Participation Law, has been weak (Mahadevia, 2010a). No mandatory consultations for the preparation of development plans under the Urban Renewal Mission have taken place. In the past few years, the dialogue with the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation officials has more or less broken down because they do not participate in any dialogue processes initiated by civil society organizations. If the city leaders do engage, they present their own promotional materials rather than any serious dialogue. The regression in governance is very severe. Private consultants now manage the development programmes. Trade unions no longer participate in the city's elections, and the trade unions provide the only platform for any city-level discussion. The state government has co-opted the city-level decision-making process. The line of argument is that it is acting in the interest of the city.

[12] A pucca structure is one constructed with permanent materials and a semi-pucca structure is one with mix of permanent and temporary construction materials.

[13] Despite the praise it receives, the programme would not be in place without the Gujarat High Court intervention requiring the city government to implement it.

[14] Daily News & Analysis: "Best city in implementation of BSUP' award for AMC", 11 Dec. 2011, http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_best-city-in-implementation-of-bsupaward-for-amc_1624345 (accessed 24 Dec. 2011).

[15] The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act (CAA) was enacted to decentralize the urban governance and ensure mandatory elections in the city. The law was enacted because many states had superseded the urban local bodies and governance was taken over by state government departments; the urban local bodies lost autonomy. The state government and not the urban local bodies were performing the urban service delivery functions. The 74th CAA was to rectify the centralization trends in the states. Additionally, the 74th CAA requires the formation of ward committees for local level development decisions and the formation of ward sabhas (which are citizens' forums at the ward level) for participatory governance.

For decades, the Textile Labour Association provided a forum for interaction among the working class, which, according to Varshney (2002), was important for controlling the ethnic (communal violence). The decline of the textile industry[16] led to a decline in the power and effectiveness of the TLA, creating an organizational vacuum in the city. Consequently, since the 1980s, there has been an escalation of communal riots in the city. Ahmedabad was one of the most riot-prone cities in the country during the 1950–95 period. The violence escalated in 2002, reportedly leaving 1,000 people dead (Concerned Citizens Tribunal–Gujarat, 2002, 2002a and 2002b and Vardarajan, 2002). After 2002, the city became clearly divided along religious lines, with nearly no Muslim living in Hindu localities and vice versa (Mahadevia, 2007).

During the past three decades, conservative elements led several movements or agitations in the state as well as in the Ahmedabad (Patel, 2002: 4832). For the past 20 years, with the exception of a few intermittent periods, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has controlled the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation. The BJP administration replaced the "welfare politics" with "developmental politics" (big urban development projects to fit the vision of a world city). The state government likes to be seen as a "developmental state" like those in East and South-East Asia, without the investment and facilitation of human development.

The urban poor have been reduced to force the implementation of policies in their interest through public interest litigation.[17] For example, the urban poor have filed cases for the implementation of the National Street Vendor Policy,[18] for rehabilitation (proper relocation) of evictees of a riverfront project and for rehabilitation of the evictees of other projects, such as road widening and lake development. The judgements in all except the first were favourable to the affected poor. Still, it should not have taken a court case to push the city or the state government to follow through on legislated or policy commitments.

The once-inclusive city, thriving on philanthropy, voluntary organizations and participatory efforts for development, has become an exclusive and excluding city. Social dialogue has ceased, and partnerships between the state government and civil society have fallen apart; there is now more state civil society confrontation than cooperation. The industrial working class has lost its collective voice in the decision-making processes. Residents in the eastern and western sides of the city do not know each other or talk among themselves. The city is articulating the interests of those who are linked with and benefitting from globalization. Globalization has probably brought about a schizophrenic development in India's cities, one part forging ahead and one part struggling to survive – what Friedmann calls "economic space over life space", with a superimposition of communal space over life space (Mahadevia, 2002b).

[16] The closing down of the textile mills and retrenchment of labour started in 1982. But the major retrenchment occurred in 1988. By 1997, 67,000 organized workers of the textile mills were retrenched. Data from the Textile Labour Association suggests that in the early 1980s there were 170,000 full-time mill workers in the city; by 1995, 100,000 of them were retrenched, thus affecting 550,000 of the 3 million residents (18 per cent) of the city (Jhabvala, 1995).

[17] The Indian Constitution gives citizens the right to approach a High Court of a state or the Supreme Court in cases of gross violation of their fundamental rights. Citizens can file public interest litigation or a writ in these courts for seeking remedial justice. Often, the public interest litigation case laws set the policy. When a policy has been set through public interest litigation, it is enforceable.

[18] This was a public interest case filed by SEWA.

4. Ahmedabad's demographic and economic base

4.1 Demography

The Ahmedabad Urban Agglomeration,[19] as the city technically is known, had a population of 6.35 million in 2011 (table 6), registering an annual growth rate of 3.5 per cent, higher than the state of Gujarat's urban population growth rate of 3.1 per cent and the country's urban growth rate of 2.8 per cent, from 2001 to 2011. The fast population growth is partly attributed to the increase in the jurisdiction of Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, from 198 to 450 km^2 in 2006. Among the country's ten largest metropolitan cities, Ahmedabad registered the third-highest population growth in the decade after 2000, after Surat and Bengaluru urban agglomerations (table 6). Delhi's growth rate has slowed, and the urban agglomerations of Mumbai and Kolkata have been experiencing net outmigration of population over the past two decades. Pune and Hyderabad attracted information technology enterprises and associated services companies in the past decade but not many people. In Gujarat, Surat is the fastest-growing urban agglomeration on account of it having the highest investment density and a port.

Table 6: Population of select metropolitan cities in India and their population growth rates (in millions)

Urban agglomeration	2011	1991–2001	2001–2011
Brihad Mumbai	18.41	2.70	1.14
Delhi	16.31	4.34	2.39
Kolkata	14.11	1.82	0.67
Chennai	8.70	1.92	2.86
Bengaluru	8.50	3.28	4.07
Hyderabad	7.75	2.83	3.04
Ahmedabad	6.35	3.17	3.45
Pune	5.05	4.19	2.99
Surat	4.59	6.35	5.01
Jaipur	3.07	4.34	2.84
Nagpur	2.50	2.50	1.61
Vadodara	1.82	2.84	2.00

Source: Office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, "Provisional population totals paper" (Delhi, Ministry of Home Affairs, 2011), http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/paper2/prov_results_paper2_indiavol2.html, (accessed 15 Oct. 2011) and for 2001 and 1991 from the relevant population census report.

The literacy rate in Ahmedabad has improved (table 7), from 84 per cent in 2001 to nearly 90 per cent in 2011 for the whole population. The male literacy rate reached 94 per cent in 2011, while the female literacy rate was about 10 percentage point behind. Ahmedabad district is only slightly behind the urban agglomeration rate. The juvenile sex ratio (age group 0–6 years) has significantly improved, from 792 in 2001 to 850 in 2011. The overall sex ratio has also improved, from 885 in 2001 to 897 in 2011. There is no other latest data on other human development indicators at the district or city level.

[19] "Urban agglomeration" is a concept that takes into account the population of all the contiguous outgrowths of the main city and hence it is more a functional definition than an administrative definition.

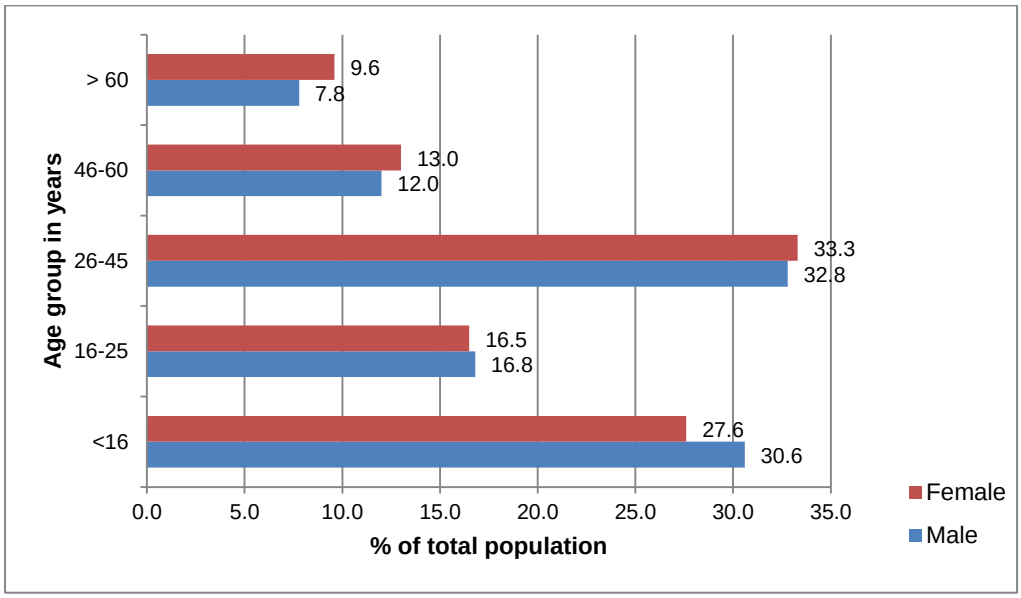
Table 7: Sex ratios and literacy rates, 2001 and 2011

	Literacy rate (%)			Sex ratio	
	Persons	Male	Female	Overall	Age 0–6 years
2001					
Ahmedabad district	79.5	87.3	70.8	892	836
Ahmedabad city	84.2	90.2	77.5	885	792
2011					
Ahmedabad district	86.7	92.4	80.3	903	859
Ahmedabad city	89.5	94.0	84.5	897	850

Note: Sex ratio is the number of females per 1 000 male population.
Source: From Office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs: i) for 2011: http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/paper2/prov_results_paper2_indiavol2.html, (accessed on 15 Oct. 2011) and ii) for 2001: http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_Data_Online/Population.aspx?cki=Oa9Ky1pFlVC, (accessed on 15 Oct. 2011).

Bias in favour of male children appears evident in the age and sex composition (figure 3), wherein 30.6 per cent of children up to age 16 years among the total population is male, while it is 27.6 per cent for females. A further disaggregation shows 9.7 per cent of children aged 0–5 years are male and 9.5 per cent are female. However, as table 7 shows, there was significant improvement in the juvenile sex ratio in 2011 as compared with 2001. Just 7.8 per cent of men and 9.6 per cent women, as a portion of the total population, lived longer than 60 years as of 2010.

Figure 3: Age and sex composition of the population, Ahmedabad, 2009–10



Source: NSS data, 2009–10.

The earliest available data on the social composition of Ahmedabad's population dates to 2001, according to which, 9.5 per cent population was categorized as Scheduled Castes, only 0.8 per cent was a member of a Scheduled Tribe[20] and 12.4 per cent were Muslim (Directorate of Economics and Statistics, 2008). Due to the history of communal violence, the Muslim population is concentrated in a few pockets of the city. The largest Muslim town in Ahmedabad is Juhapura. After the 2002 violence, it had a population of about 250,000, which represented 33 per cent of the city's Muslim population (Mahadevia, 2007). About 17 per cent of the Muslim population of the urban agglomeration lived in another ward, Dani Limda, in 2001.

[20] Office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_Data_Online/Population.aspx?cki=ro9HIeFYPuY (accessed 31 Oct. 2011).

4.2 Economic base

From the Manchester of India, with the largest share of employment in cotton textile industry, Ahmedabad has shifted to a base for pharmaceutical, automobile and engineering, agro and food processing, textile and apparel, chemicals and dyes and information technology industries, and in the past five years, a centre for education and health tourism. The industries are located in or around Ahmedabad city (within Ahmedabad district) and have significant impact on the city's economy. There are 11 special economic zones in Ahmedabad district, 12 industrial estates and 10 industrial parks.[21] In the past five years or so, new large-scale industries have located in the city's hinterland. Ahmedabad is also a major financial centre, with city residents historically investing in capital market instruments. The city is expected to benefit from the mega infrastructure Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, which passes through one part of Ahmedabad district.

The latest economic census available is for 2005 (table 8), although it is available only for Ahmedabad district and not the whole city. However, Ahmedabad city's economic structure is presumed to largely influence the district's urban situation. The city economy's reliance on the tertiary sector is evident in the distribution of economic enterprises in the urban areas of Ahmedabad district. Of the total economic enterprises in the district in 2005, for instance, nearly 80 per cent were in the tertiary sector; of them, nearly 46 per cent were in retail trade. Secondary sector enterprises represented only 20 per cent. Of the total employment in the enterprises, nearly 29 per cent were in the secondary sector while 71.1 per cent were in the tertiary sector.

Retail trade was the largest employer in the tertiary sector, employing nearly 31 per cent of the district's total workers, with just an average of 1.85 persons employed per enterprise. Other economic enterprises with a similar small number of employees per enterprise were transport (primarily) and storage. However, the transport sector employed only 3.4 per cent of the district's total workers in enterprises. The number of workers per enterprise was lower in the tertiary sector than in the secondary sector. In the tertiary sector, public administration, defence and social services had the highest per enterprise employment, at an average of 12.86 per cent; in the secondary sector, the largest enterprise employment was in electricity, gas and water, which had an average of 14.46 employees per enterprise. Most of the tertiary sector enterprises were small in size, with the exceptions of public administration, defence and social services, as noted, and financial intermediation activities and education. Smaller enterprises mean informal work. Thus, if the employment in these six sectors (public administration, defence and social services; electricity, gas and water; financial intermediation activities; education; restaurants and hotels; and health and social work), which had on average a medium-sized to large workforce per enterprise, are deducted from the district's total employment record, the remaining 85 per cent of the employment was in small-sized enterprises. The enterprise data therefore indicates that there was a very large informal economy in Ahmedabad as of 2005.

[21] Industries Commissionerate: *Ahmedabad*. From a document prepared for Vibrant Gujarat Summit, Jan. 2013, http://www.vibrantgujarat.com/documents/profiles/ahmedabad-district-profile.pdf (accessed 6 Nov. 2011).

Table 8: Distribution of non-agricultural enterprises in urban areas, by type, 2005, Ahmedabad district[22]

	% of enterprise	% employment	Persons per enterprise	Females as % of total employment
Mining & quarrying	0.1	0.1	2.36	9.0
Manufacturing	19.6	27.4	3.82	8.3
Electricity, gas & water	0.2	1.0	14.46	6.7
Construction	0.4	0.5	3.05	10.2
Secondary sector	**20.2**	**28.9**	**3.91**	**8.2**
Sale, maintenance & repair	3.8	3.6	2.60	3.7
Wholesale trade	4.6	4.5	2.66	7.4
Retail trade	45.8	30.9	1.85	7.9
Restaurants & hotels	1.3	2.0	4.17	5.4
Transport & storage	5.3	3.4	1.77	7.0
Posts & communications	1.8	1.6	2.40	9.0
Financial intermediation activities	1.5	3.4	6.19	14.3
Real estate, banking & service activities	2.9	2.9	2.73	11.2
Public Administration, defence, social service	1.1	5.1	12.86	16.1
Education	1.0	3.4	8.89	43.8
Health & social work	2.7	4.2	4.34	31.3
Community & personal services	7.9	6.0	2.09	14.3
Other activities	0.0	0.0	3.00	11.1
Tertiary sector	**79.7**	**71.1**	**2.44**	**12.2**
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**2.74**	**11.1**

Source: Economic census data from the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Gujarat, 2005.

[22] The district data is used as a proxy for the Ahmedabad city analysis because no other data was available below the district level.

5. Work and wages

5.1 Participation and quality of work

This section discusses Ahmedabad's employment structure, with comparisons to the state level wherever necessary.

The work participation rate (the usual principal[23] plus subsidiary status,[24] or UPSS) for males in Ahmedabad was lower than that of urban Gujarat in all the National Sample Survey years. This is also true when Gujarat's work participation rate over the years is compared with that of Ahmedabad, with the exception of 1987–88; Ahmedabad was the only metro city in that year, and the city and state work participation rates were equal. In the four years analysed (1987–88, 1993–94, 2004–05 and 2009–10, the male worker participation rates (UPSS) for urban Gujarat was 51 per cent, 51.9 per cent, 57.8 per cent and 56.3 per cent, respectively; for metro Gujarat, they were 49 per cent, 55.3 per cent, 59.5 per cent and 56.1 per cent, respectively, all of which were higher than for Ahmedabad. The city had a very low proportion of male workers employed as subsidiary workers, and the unemployment rate remained quite low from 1994 to 2010. There was high unemployment in the city in 1987–88, which corresponded to the decline of the textile industry along with a severe drought in 1986 and 1987 (in Gujarat as well as the whole of India) that likely led many rural workers to migrate to the city, despite the city's own period of distress. Thus the lower work participation rate in Ahmedabad than in both urban and metro Gujarat is attributed not to the lack of work but to a smaller proportion of population in the labour force.

The male work participation rate in Ahmedabad improved up to 2004–05, before declining in 2009–10 to its lowest point in years, similar to the rates for the country and the state. The compounded annual growth rate of male workers in 2004–05 to 2009–10 is 6.36 per cent, even though the work participation rate had declined. There was a simultaneous reduction in unemployment rates as well, indicating that the labour force shrunk, likely due to three reasons: more young males going for higher education than before, males leaving the labour force because there was no work available on a continual basis and some of them taking up unpaid or casual work that may not have been reported.[25]

Among the women, the work participation rate (the usual principal plus subsidiary status) in Ahmedabad increased consistently over time, except in 2009–10, when a sudden drop was registered. But the male work participation rate declined with the decline in the usual status unemployment rate. The usual status unemployment rates among the females began declining in 1993–94. There was an increase in 2009–10 in the proportion of females working in the subsidiary category, indicating that more males than females had moved out of the labour force or had not reported that they were in the labour force on account of either non-availability of work on a continuous basis or their casual work or unpaid work was not captured in the statistics.

[23] The "usual status" relates to the activity status of a person during the reference period of 365 days preceding the date of a survey. The activity status on which a person spent relatively longer time (such as major time criterion) during the 365 days preceding the date of survey is considered as the "usual principal activity status" of the person.

[24] A person whose usual principal activity status was determined on the basis of the major time criterion could have pursued some economic activity for a shorter time throughout the reference year of 365 days preceding the date of a survey or for a minor period, which was not less than 30 days, during the reference year. This is called "subsidiary activity status".

[25] From Chandrashekhar, 2011 and Chowdhury, 2011.

Table 9: Work participation and unemployment rates, Ahmedabad over time

	Work participation rate (principle + subsidiary status)	Work participation rate (principle status)	Work participation rate (subsidiary status)	Usual status unemployment rate
Male				
1987–88	49.0	48.7	0.3	7.32
1993–94	51.5	51.4	0.1	4.52
2004–05	56.9	56.0	0.8	2.62
2009–10	54.4	54.4	0.0	1.30
Female				
1987–88	9.6	7.4	2.2	1.62
1993–94	13.3	11.6	1.7	13.79
2004–05	16.7	15.6	1.1	2.78
2009–10	13.7	11.1	2.6	1.24
Persons				
1987–88	30.0	28.8	1.2	6.49
1993–94	33.2	32.3	0.9	6.45
2004–05	38.6	37.6	1.0	2.65
2009–10	36.0	34.8	1.2	1.29

Source: National Sample Survey Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation: *National sample survey reports* (New Delhi, various years).

The female work participation rate (UPSS) for urban Gujarat for the four years analysed (1987–88, 1993–94, 2004–05 and 2009–10) was 11.2 per cent, 14.2 per cent, 15 per cent and 14.3 per cent, respectively. For metro Gujarat it was 9.6 per cent, 12.9 per cent, 15 per cent and 14 per cent, respectively. The rates for females in Ahmedabad was lower than that of both urban and metro Gujarat for all the years except 2004–05. The compounded annual growth rate of female workers during 2004–05 to 2009–10 period was -1.4 per cent per annum, indicating that a large number of women dropped out of the labour force in that period.

The female work participation rates fell across all the age groups across the country (Chowdhury, 2011). One reason is that as income increases, women tend to drop out of the labour force. It seems that a segment of women whose household incomes could have gone up in the wake of the reforms actually moved out of the labour force; with the exception of 1993–94, their unemployment rates were low in all the analysed years. It is also likely that females whose employment was not certain and were casually employed on and off and those employed in unpaid home-based work may not have reported themselves as "workers". There was a significant increase in home-based work in Ahmedabad, among males as well as females (discussed further on), and it is likely that younger household members who could have reported as workers may not have done so.

There was a consistent increase in self-employment among the males in Ahmedabad city, from 34.7 per cent in 1987–88 to 53.6 per cent in 2009–10. A sharp increase in the proportion of male self-employed among the total workers was observed in 2009–10, and this was a 17.2 percentage point increase (table 10). The regular employment among the males declined in the same period by 15.3 percentage points. Interestingly, in the first 15 years of reforms, up to 2004–05, the working males in regular employment share increased, resulting in a decline in casual labour among them. In 2009–10, even the proportion of casual labour declined by 1.9 percentage points, although there was an increase in self-employment.

The proportion of self-employed females in that time period fluctuated; it increased in 1993–94, just after the closing of a large number of cotton textiles in Ahmedabad, when even female unemployment had increased because more women were willing to work to fill the income shortage in the household on account of male members losing their regular employment. In 2009–10, once again, self-employment among women increased, by 9.7 percentage points, in relation to 2004–05, by nearly 50 per cent. At the same time, the proportion of regular employment females also marginally increased,

to 30.9 per cent in 2009–10 from 30 per cent in 2004–05. Casual labour among females drastically decreased in the latter five years of the analysed period, thus indicating that whenever self-employment increased, casual labour decreased and vice versa.

Table 10: Nature of employment, Ahmedabad, over time

	Self-employed	Regular employed	Casual labour	Total
Male				
1987–88	34.7	44.9	20.4	100.0
1993–94	35.2	51.2	13.5	100.0
2004–05	36.4	53.1	10.5	100.0
2009–10	53.6	37.8	8.6	100.0
Female				
1987–88	38.2	29.5	32.3	100.0
1993–94	43.6	27.3	29.1	100.0
2004–05	38.9	30.1	31.1	100.0
2009–10	49.2	30.9	19.8	100.0
Persons				
1987–88	35.2	42.5	22.2	100.0
1993–94	36.8	46.7	16.5	100.0
2004–05	36.9	48.5	14.6	100.0
2009–10	52.9	36.6	10.5	100.0

Source: National Sample Survey Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation: *National sample survey reports* (New Delhi, various years).

Table 11: Distribution of workers by sectors, Ahmedabad, over time

	Primary	Manufacturing & electricity, gas & water	Construction	Trade, hotel & restaurants	Transport, storage & communication	Finance, business, real estate, etc.	Public admin., health, education, etc.	Total
Male								
1987–88	1.2	44.4	3.2	23.5	11.6	12.1	4.1	100
1993–94	0.4	28.6	6.7	23.6	16.0	3.3	21.3	100
2004–05	0.3	41.0	7.9	23.4	11.1	6.8	9.5	100
2009–10	1.0	28.5	5.6	24.3	12.6	12.6	15.3	100
Female								
1987–88	14.2	33.8	1.5	9.6	3.4	10.6	26.7	100
1993–94	1.0	23.8	3.3	18.6	2.7	2.7	47.9	100
2004–05	0.0	39.6	17.9	11.3	0.0	2.3	28.9	100
2009–10*	5.8	32.0	0.0	17.6	0.0	10.2	34.3	100
Persons								
1987–88	3.2	42.8	2.9	21.3	10.3	11.9	7.6	100
1993–94	0.5	27.7	6.1	22.6	13.4	3.2	26.4	100
2004–05	0.2	40.8	9.9	21.0	8.9	5.9	13.3	100
2009–10	1.8	29.1	4.7	23.2	10.5	12.2	18.6	100

Note: * There was no employment of female workers in the construction sector in 2009–10, which could be on account of a small sample size.
Source: National Sample Survey Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation: *National sample survey reports* (New Delhi, various years).

Why did self-employment increase for both sexes? It seems attributable to the shifting of manufacturing activities to self-employed workers in the 2004–05 to 2009–10 period (tables 12 and 13). Self-employment in manufacturing means the outsourcing of the manufacturing work, most of which can be done at the household level, especially because the low-income population does not have access to any workspace outside the home. In the circumstance of home-based work, shelter security becomes a very important aspect of social protection because shelter demolition or displacement would also jeopardize livelihoods.

Improvement in regular employment among the men as well as women in 2004–05 in Ahmedabad was due to an increase in manufacturing sector employment. The proportion of male workers in the sector increased to 41 per cent in 2004–05, from 28.6 per cent in 1993–94 (table 11). Prior to the closure of the textile mills, 44.4 per cent males were employed in this sector. The rate among females

also rose in 2004–05, to 39.6 per cent from 23.8 per cent in 1993–94. Even a third of the females in the workforce in 1987–88 were employed in this sector.

Manufacturing employment is largely regular employment because the infrastructure created lasts a long time. It seems that new manufacturing employment activities emerged in Ahmedabad as a consequence of reforms. However, in the case of the male workers, regular employment in manufacturing declined, from 70.8 per cent in 2004-05 (table 12) to 44.7 per cent in 2009–10 (table 13). Instead of an increase in casual labour in manufacturing, however, self-employment increased, from 23.6 per cent in 2004–05 to 48.4 per cent, a doubling of the share of self-employed men.

Among the females employed in manufacturing, a third had self-employment status in 2004–05, which became 91 per cent in 2009–10. Is it that the manufacturing in Ahmedabad is of the type that operates through subcontracting, wherein women are more suitable as workers than men? It seems so, considering that such employment is typically informal. Some 5.8 per cent of the female workers in Ahmedabad were in the primary sector in 2009–10, all in the self-employment category. A rough estimate indicates that 70 per cent of the women were informally employed in 2004–05, which increased to 80 per cent in 2009–10; the proportion increased from 55 per cent to 67 per cent among males.[26]

Table 12: Nature of work by sector of work, 2004–05, Ahmedabad

Work sector	Self-employed	Regular employed	Casual labour	Total
Male				
Manufacturing	23.6	70.8	5.6	100.0
Construction	40.7	0.5	58.8	100.0
Trade, hotels & restaurants	57.5	38.7	3.8	100.0
Transport, storage & communication	38.8	46.7	14.5	100.0
Finance, real estate & business	27.4	56.8	15.9	100.0
Public administration, education, health & other services	37.9	62.1	0.0	100.0
Female				
Manufacturing	32.1	47.6	20.3	100.0
Construction	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Trade, hotels & restaurants	81.5	18.5	0.0	100.0
Transport, storage & communication	-	-	-	-
Finance, real estate & business	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Public administration, education, health & other services	50.7	31.5	17.8	100.0

Source: National Sample Survey Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation: *National sample survey reports* (New Delhi, various years).

[26] Those regularly employed in manufacturing, public administration and other services and finance and real estate services are considered as formally employed along with half the regularly employed in trades, hotels and restaurants and transport, storage and communications. Regular employment in construction, however, is considered as informal work.

Table 13: Nature of work by sector of work, 2009–10, Ahmedabad

2009–10	Self-employed	Regular employed	Casual labour	Total
Male				
Manufacturing	48.4	44.7	6.9	100.0
Construction	16.2	4.8	79.0	100.0
Trade, hotels & restaurants	78.7	20.6	0.7	100.0
Transport, storage & communication	74.9	25.1	0.0	100.0
Finance, real estate & business	64.4	34.6	1.0	100.0
Public administration, education, health & other services	7.7	79.9	12.4	100.0
Female				
Manufacturing	91.1	8.5	0.3	100.0
Construction	-	-	-	-
Trade, hotels & restaurants	57.5	40.4	2.1	100.0
Transport, storage & communication	-	-	-	-
Finance, real estate & business	24.9	75.1	0.0	100.0
Public administration, education, health & other services	4.5	39.1	56.4	100.0

Source: National Sample Survey Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation: *National sample survey reports* (New Delhi, various years).

Despite the expanding tertiary sector and a severe decline in the proportion of male workers employed in manufacturing in 2009–10, the sector had the largest share of male workers in that year (table 12). The second-largest employment sector in Ahmedabad for men was trade, hotel and restaurants, which accounted for 58 per cent of the self-employment capacity in 2004–05 and as much as 79 per cent in 2009–10. The share of that sector for male employment remained nearly constant over all four of the National Sample Surveys. Two sectors experienced significant increase in the proportion of male workers: i) finance and real estate; and ii) public administration and social services (health and education). The finance and real estate sector employed more than half of the male workers regularly in 2004–05, but this also changed in 2009–10, with 64 per cent of the male workers moving to self-employment. Some 62 per cent of the men in the public administration and social sector were regularly employed in 2004–05, which increased to 80 per cent five years later. This sector has great relevance for improving governance and social development.

The largest employer of women in Ahmedabad was the public administration and social services sector, with 34.3 per cent of the female workers in 2009–10. This was the dominant sector in 1993–94 as well. In the years when manufacturing employment was available, women tended to shift to it, resulting in a decline in the share of employment in public administration and social services. Women tend to return to public administration and social services when manufacturing work becomes scarce. This is because the work in public administration and social services is a casual labour type (56.4 per cent of them were casually employed in 2009–10). Thus whenever manufacturing work was available, which used to be regular employment but became self-employment type work, women preferred it to casual labour. Women were not present in some years in transport, storage and communications; when they were, it was a small proportion of them. Trade, hotels and restaurants were the third-largest employers of female workers, wherein more than half in 2009–10 and more than four fifths in 2004–05 were self-employed.

5.2 Wages and income

The state has set minimum wages at much lower rates than the central government rates as well as those in the neighbouring state of Maharashtra, which is also a highly industrialized and urbanized state (table 14). This is true for most of the occupations cited in table 14, with the exception of hospitals, nursing homes, hotels, restaurants and eating stalls.

Table 14: Comparing minimum wages of Gujarat with central Government and Maharashtra, 2011* (rupees per day)

Trade or occupation	Skill level	Gujarat (1 April 2011)	Central (1 April 2011)	Maharashtra (from 1 July 2011)
Automobile repairs and garage work	Unskilled	172.3	-	241.7
	Semi-skilled	173.4		253.7
	Skilled	174.5		269.7
Bakeries	Unskilled	172.7		226.2
	Semi-skilled	174.1		246.2
	Skilled	177.0		266.2
Construction and building maintenance	Unskilled	174.9	247	261.3
	Semi-skilled	177.0	273	265.3
	Skilled	180.7–189.4	301–327	269.3
Dispensary of medical practitioner, pathological laboratory staff	Unskilled	175.0		257.7
	Semi-skilled	180.5		253.7
	Skilled	183.7		249.7
Hospitals and nursing homes	Class IV	175.7		161.3
	Class III	178.8		165.3
	Class II	181.5		169.3
Hotels, restaurants and eating stalls	Unskilled	174.5		161.3
	Semi-skilled	175.9		165.3
	Skilled	177.0		169.3
Shops and establishments	Unskilled	175.1		260.5
	Semi-skilled	178.1		244.5
	Skilled	181.1		228.5
Stone breaking and crushing	Unskilled	172.4		245.4
	Semi-skilled	173.7		225.4
	Skilled	175.9		213.4

Note: * Selected as applicable for Ahmedabad.
Source: "Minimum Wages India – Current Minimum Wage Rate India", Paycheck.In website (Ahmedabad, Indian Institute of Management), http://www.paycheck.in/main/officialminimumwages/ (accessed 5 Sept. 2011).

The state has set very low minimum wages, indicating its attitude towards labour welfare. For regular workers, wage/salaries are dismal, an average of 306.58 rupees for urban males and 221.35 rupees for urban females, placing the state at 22nd for males and 21st for females among 22 large states in 2009–10 (table 15). Regarding wage rates among casual labour, the state's ranking is better, but, once again, in the bottom quarter, at 119.02 rupees for urban males and 66.32 rupees for urban females, which are far too low to survive in an urban area. Gujarat is now the third most industrialized state of India and is one among only two states that have registered a higher rate of urbanization in comparison to the previous decade among all the states in India; but it is in the bottom quarter in terms of ranking of the states in wages/salary.

Table 15: Per day per person wage/income (rupees) in Gujarat and state's rank in wage/income per day, 2009–10

	Regular workers	Casual labour other than public works
Average wage per day (rupees) – Urban male	306.58	119.02
Rank among 22 states – Urban male	**22**	**15**
Average wage per day (rupees) – Urban female	221.35	66.32
Rank among 22 states – Urban female	**21**	**19**

Source: NSSO, 2011.

Average wage data are not available for the city or for all or a few trades of the city. However, a survey of slums in 2009 in Ahmedabad's Vasna ward, which is a middle class ward, found that the average income of a household of 5.9 people was 4,965 rupees per month, which would amount to about 85 rupees per day when the work participation rate of the community is 39.4 per cent (Mahadevia et al., 2010a). In another study in the city but in the industrial ward of Amraiwadi, the average income of a household of 5 people was 3,248 rupees per month in the same year (Mahadevia et al., 2010b), which would represent an average daily wage of 104 rupees. The actual wages are indeed very low in the city compared with the minimum wages prescribed.

The past two years of high food inflation has tremendously impacted on households' survival strategies. Women coped with inflation by adopting one or more of the following strategies: i) increased their working hours in the case of home-based work; ii) took children out of school to work, either with them or outside the home; iii) shifted children from private school to municipal school, the latter being of much inferior quality than the former; iv) reduced on meals, sometimes eating only once a day; v) went to public health care facilities rather than private dispensaries; and vi) ignored the routine of prescribed medicines for illness due to unaffordable medicines. The food price inflation has been accompanied by increases in rent as well as electricity charges. For home-based workers, there has been a double whammy: the price of inputs has also increased. On the whole, the situation has worsened for a segment of the urban population.

6. Labour legislation and social security schemes

6.1 Overall situation

An important aspect of the Decent Work Agenda is the framing of labour legislation and social security schemes and the application of both. In Gujarat, these processes are the jurisdiction of the state government's Labour and Employment Department, which has three divisions, Labour, Employment and Training. The Labour Division has a labour commissioner who monitors the enforcement of the minimum wage and workers' safety and a chief inspector of factories who monitors the compliance with the Industrial Dispute Act within industrial establishments and all activities for labour welfare, including the social security schemes. There are city-level offices for each division. Social security schemes are managed through the welfare boards, which also have a city-level office.

The Directorate of Industrial Safety and Health within the state Labour and Employment Department is responsible for enforcing various legislation designed to protect the organized as well as unorganized sector workers. A recent study on the enforcement of labour laws in Gujarat found that enforcement had declined considerably in the past two decades. The Directorate is stifled due to severe staff shortages currently. Hirway and Shah (2011: 61) point out that per ILO norms, there should be 232 labour officers (one officer per 150 factories, and there are 34,860 factories). In reality, there are 154 sanctioned posts (Class I and II), which is two thirds the requirement. Of them, 46 posts (30 per cent) have been vacant for the past year or more (2010). There is also a severe shortage of Class III and IV staff, with 30 per cent of the sanctioned posts vacant. According to Hirway and Shah, one senior officer explained their job "is now 'fire fighting' and 'crisis management', not enforcing labour laws." In some areas, there is no full-time labour officer. The Hirway and Shah study also found that regular inspections were dismal due to the amount of legislation and hence the efficacy of the laws was very weak. On account of such a dismal situation of the Labour Division and the lack of political will, the minimum wages set in the state are far lower than the neighbouring state of Maharashtra, which is also an industrialized and urbanized state, and surprisingly lower than that of the central Government (table 14).

The poor conditions of the Labour and Employment Department stem from its meagre budget in the past few years (table 16). In the 2011–12 state budget, the outlay for the Labour and Employment Department was just 3.3 million rupees – 0.9 per cent of the total budget. In comparison, 107 million rupees, 28.9 per cent of the budget, was allocated for mega irrigation and water harnessing projects (such as the Narmada dam, Kalpasar project and water supply) and 30 million rupees, or 8.2 per cent of the budget, for urban development.[27] The welfare boards within the Labour and Employment Department also do not have adequate budget to maintain regular staff for implementing their schemes. Overall, the Department's total expenditure in the past three years was just 0.005–0.006 per cent of the state GDP, when it should be at least 1 per cent and ideally around 2 per cent.

[27] Data in this paragraph derives from Finance Department, Government of Gujarat, http://financedepartment.gujarat.gov.in/ (accessed 31 Oct. 2011).

Table 16: Expenditures and budgeted outlays for social security schemes, Gujarat (million rupees)

	2007–08 AE	2008–09 AE	2009–10 AE	2010–11 RE	2011–12 BE
Social security for unorganized rural labour under different schemes	77.74	120.55	117.94	109.67	166.66
Social security for the unorganized urban workers	0.00	1.47	1.67	10.84	2.29
Gujarat labour welfare board	15.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Gujarat Rural Workers Welfare Board	7.29	17.50	23.62	31.65	24.75
Welfare of bidi workers	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Implementation of Child Workers Prohibition Act	0.61	0.33	0.34	0.44	0.39
Welfare of the salt pan workers	10.06	2.63	1.40	1.33	4.07
Total on social security of workers	110.69	142.49	144.96	153.93	198.16
Social security as percentage of GSDP	0.005	0.006	0.005	-	-

Note: AE = Actual expenditure, RE = Revised estimates and BE = Budgeted estimates
Source: Finance Department, Government of Gujarat, http://financedepartment.gujarat.gov.in/ (accessed 31 Oct. 2011).

Large corporations appear to wield considerable influence in state governance and this has affected the political will to enforce the labour legislation. The miniscule budgeting indicates that, at least currently, there is no interest in expanding social security protection to all workers.

However, an Unorganised Sector Social Security Board was set up in December 2011, as required by the national Unorganised Sector Workers' Social Security Act, 2008 and under the order of the Gujarat High Court in response to a public interest litigation case.[28] Whether this new board can influence the expansion of social security to all workers is unclear for now. The government has merged two non-statutory boards (for rural workers and urban workers) with the new board,[29] which will be chaired by the state labour and employment minister. Members will be drawn from organizations representing labourers. The local governments, such as the panchayats and the urban local bodies, will register and issue smart cards to eligible unorganized sector workers, although the board, under the Labour and Employment Department, will manage the welfare schemes.

6.2 Welfare boards for social security of unorganized workers

There are two welfare boards in the city for the specific trades of the unorganized sector. These are the Gujarat Unorganized Workers Welfare Board (GUWWB) for Ahmedabad, Surat and Jamnagar municipal corporation areas and the Cloth Market and Shops Labour Board, Ahmedabad, (CMSLB). The former is a non-statutory board and is registered under the Societies Registration Act and the Public Trust Registration Act, 2007. A non-statutory board is dependent on the will of the government for its funding and hence its functioning becomes ad hoc. The latter was set up in 1980 under the Gujarat Unprotected Manual Workers Act, 1979 and is a statutory board, which means it has dedicated funding as stipulated in the law. In addition, there is the Construction Workers' Welfare Board (CWWB), which is also a statutory board, constituted under the Building and other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Condition of Services) Act, 1996. The following gives a brief assessment of each of these three boards' operations.

[28] On 14 July 2011, the Gujarat High Court ordered the state government to set up this board. The Hindu Business Line: "HC tells Gujarat to register unorganised workers", 15 July 2011, http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/economy/article2230643.ece (accessed 24 Dec. 2011).

[29] "Govt forms body to bring 'unorganised' workers in safety net", in *Indian Express*, 23 Dec. 2011, http://www.indianexpress.com/news/govt-forms-body-to-bring-unorganised-workers-in-saftey-net/891210/ (accessed 24 Dec. 2011).

Gujarat Unorganised Workers Welfare Board, Ahmedabad

The Gujarat Unorganised Workers Welfare Board (GUWWB) covers nine occupations: agarbatti rollers, rag pickers, street vendors and hawkers, catering services, kite makers, readymade garment makers, independent sweepers, roadside stall vendors and workers of mandap-making (temporary structure erected for special occasions) business. The workers receive an identity card for free in exchange for registering with the board every year. The registration numbers fluctuate considerably from year to year; in fact, if SEWA or another trade union does not assist workers in registering, many are likely not to know to do it or have difficulty physically registering because they must go to the central office some distance away and lose a day's wage while spending for the transport. That the board is registering workers through trade union assistance is a positive sign.

Table 17: Registration with the Gujarat Unorganised Workers Welfare Board in Ahmedabad, 2007–11

Occupation	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
Agarbatti rollers	3 686	3 117	755	785
Rag pickers	4 058	2 971	718	1 482
Street vendors & hawkers	3 786	5 682	3 599	2 408
Catering services	0	985	3 305	4 334
Kite makers	0	443	384	434
Readymade garment makers	0	3 123	4 870	3 831
Independent sweepers	0	530	238	536
Road side stall vendors	0	39	94	134
Workers of Mandap making business	0	27	37	56
Total	11 530	16 917	14 000	14 000

Source: Gujarat Unorganised Workers Welfare Board, Ahmedabad.

The registration in the GUWWB is very small, at 14,000 in 2010–11 (table 17); but only 2,609 workers were registered with the Cloth Market and Shops Labour Board. Combined, only 16,609 workers were registered with a welfare board. Since 2007, a total of 25.6 million rupees[30] were spent on the registered workers, amounting to 476.50 rupees per worker.

The schemes of the Gujarat Unorganised Workers Welfare Board from 2007 to 2011 were very limited and consisted of:

i) skills development and training (extended to 15,019 workers at a cost of nearly 13 million rupees, or about 860 rupees per worker);
ii) assistance of a tool kit (extended to 19,947 workers at a cost of 8.4 million rupees, or 422 rupees per worker); and
iii) medical aid of 1,200 rupees per hospitalization and health check-up (extended to 722 workers at a cost of 0.09 million rupees).

The welfare board has provided benefits but not on a scale that would have any lasting effect on workers' welfare or the macro economy. Certainly members of organizations have benefitted, particularly SEWA members. The board also depends greatly on organizations like SEWA to reach out to the target group. SEWA mobilizes the beneficiaries, assists with the formalities for obtaining an identity card and informs workers about welfare schemes or available training programmes. Although it has been advantageous to involve workers' organizations, in Ahmedabad this practice has kept the state government's welfare boards from developing any other mechanism to reach workers not associated with an organization and hence, a low coverage. The skills development scheme has very limited content. Due to limited funds, not all registered workers can take advantage of all the schemes. For example, a worker who participates in the skills development scheme cannot receive a tool kit. Registered workers have to wait till an available spot opens, and the schemes are not available to their

[30] The figure is not adjusted for inflation.

family members. As well, the skills training provided is not linked to any market requirements, thus there is considerable mismatch between what the board does and what workers need. Overall, the functioning of the board is rigid and not keeping pace with the market.

Cloth Market and Shops Labour Board, Ahmedabad

The Cloth Market and Shops Labour Board (CMSLB) is a small entity that collects levies from employers at the rate of 8 per cent of the remuneration paid to each worker. A total of 2.1 million rupees were collected from 2009 through 2011 and 3,730 beneficiaries received medical aid of up to 2,000 rupees per worker per annum and an educational kit for their children. Registered female workers received a maternity benefit of 500 rupees for the first child, 400 rupees for the second child and 250 rupees for all children born thereafter. Coverage, however, is minimal. The geographic jurisdiction of the board is limited to the municipal boundaries, which until 1986 was 98 km^2; it was extended in that year and then again in 2006 to 450 km^2. Many new markets have opened up in the city since 1981 that are not included in the board, which further limits the coverage. For example, SEWA alone has about 3,500 members who are head-loaders but only 2,618 are CMSLB members. The board operates with little funds.

Construction Workers' Welfare Board

The enforcement of the national Building and Other Construction Workers' (Regulation and Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996 and the Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Cess Act, 1996 is lax in Gujarat. The Gujarat Construction Workers' Welfare Board (CWWB) was set up as a mandatory statutory board under the legislation. As of September 2011, 54,697 construction workers were registered and had received an identity card across the state, from the total 58,323 applications received. The board had collected taxes of 1.9 billion rupees as of January 2011. These figures are low, given that the state has been investing heavily in infrastructure, which should be employing a large number of construction workers. There are about 1.5 million construction workers in the state, according to the Bandhkam Mazdoor Sangathan (BMS), a union of construction workers.

The registration of workers is so low because workers have to prove that they have worked for 90 days, with proof from any of the following: i) the talati (president) of a village; ii) contractor; iii) rural labour commissioner; iv) labour commissioner; or v) the Directorate of Industrial Safety and Health. The documents required for registration are the certificate, residential proof, three photos, proof of age and domicile certificate of Gujarat. These are not typically easy to acquire, however. First of all, contractors try to avoid their obligations under the Contract Labour Act or the Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act and thus do not want to give proof of someone working on their site for a long period. Also, the tenure of work differs for different types of workers. The skilled workers do not work for a long period, while the unskilled workers have longer periods of employment; thus the skilled workers would not be able to show proof of working on a particular site for the requisite 90 days. Third, the onus is on the worker to show proof of working on a site and to register themselves – the state government has no responsibility in this process. Fourth, many of the contractors are not licensed and cannot issue a certificate to workers. Fifth, there is no workers' representative empowered to register them or assist them with the registration process. Sixth, the inter-state migrants are immediately disqualified because they have no domicile certificate for Gujarat. Last, recent migrants likely have no proof of address (as previously explained).

The construction sector, and in particular its unskilled jobs, attract new migrants who would not have residential proof. By the very design of the eligibility criteria, a large proportion of construction

workers are excluded. Thus the domicile certificate requirement is in contravention of the Supreme Court directives that make it mandatory for all construction workers to be registered with the Construction Workers' Welfare Board.

The state has not given any right to the trade union to register a worker, except for a short duration in 2008. At that time, the registration of workers increased from 750 to about 50,000. The BMS (Construction Workers' Union) alone helped file 36,000 forms. After that, even government officials became proactive and went to construction workers' sites to register workers. But then fearing an increase in the power of the workers' unions, the state's chief minister forced the withdrawal of the rule. Had he not, about 200,000 workers likely would be registered by now.

The Construction Workers' Welfare Board schemes offer registered workers:

- Education scholarships ranging from 250 to 20,000 rupees for the children of construction workers from class 1 to post-graduation level.
- Stipends of 1,500–5,000 rupees for teachers teaching construction workers' children.
- Accidental death compensation of 200,000 rupees and 100,000 rupees compensation for disability due to a work-related accident.
- Medical aid up to 100,000 rupees for workers suffering from heart disease, kidney ailment, asthma, tuberculosis or AIDs.
- Maternity aid up to 3,000 rupees per delivery, up to two pregnancies.
- Aid for house construction up to 20,000 rupees.

The CWWB is not very active. For example, there were 155 deaths reported on construction sites across the state from 2008 to 2010, but only the families of two workers received the allotted compensation. Of the two, one was a BMS member and was registered with the CWWB through the efforts of the BMS. In Ahmedabad alone, an average of 14 workers die every year on construction sites,[31] and rarely does family receive the CWWB compensation. As of early 2011, the total CWWB welfare benefits dispersed amounted to a little more than 17 million rupees, just 0.91 per cent of the 1.9 billion rupees collect in tax (table 18). The CWWB provided education scholarships to 8,357 children, maternity benefits to 57 women, cremation aid for 10 workers but medical aid to no one.

Table 18: Extent of welfare distribution by the Construction Workers' Welfare Board, Gujarat

Welfare scheme	Number of beneficiaries	Benefits given (rupees)
Children Education Assistance Scheme	8 357	16 693 347
Maternity Benefit Scheme	57	1 170 000
Funeral Benefit Scheme	10	20 000
Medical Benefit Scheme	0	0
Accidental Death Benefit Scheme	2	400 000
Training for skills upgrading and tool kit assistance scheme	0	0
Financial assistance scheme for purchase of building or house	0	0
TOTAL	8 426	17 230 347

Note: * The figure is for the entire state and not for the city of Ahmedabad alone. The city level figures are not available.[32]
Source: Labour and Employment Department, Government of Gujarat, http://labourandemployment.gov.in/ (accessed 31 Oct. 2011).

[31] According to Vipul Pandya, BMS General Secretary.

[32] It is now impossible to obtain any data from Gujarat government offices other than what is published on the state's official website. Information is highly controlled and not available on the pretext of media criticism of the lack of achievements.

The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation and the Ahmedabad Urban Development Authority are the tax collecting authorities, but they then pass the collected taxes to the state government treasury, from which the money is sent to the CWWB – and not directly as it should be. The CWWB receives the funds from the state treasury as a grant instead of the actual collected tax, which is considered its own funds. Thus the funds for construction workers' entitlements come to the board as a welfare disbursement. This is a problem because, according to the state government rules, an individual or a household can claim assistance from only one of the many state social welfare schemes. A large proportion of construction workers are either of a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe. If a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe worker has claimed assistance under another scheme, such as an education scholarship for a child, then that person cannot claim any benefit from the CWWB assistance. For example, the scholarship amount of the Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe board is only 100 rupees per child while the CWWB offers a minimum of 250 rupees, but a family has to choose only one scheme.

The Gujarat legislation has its drawbacks. The central act prescribes a pension scheme, which the Gujarat CWWB has not included in its schemes. According to the BMS, it is clear there is a need for more schemes targeting households living below the poverty line and for the construction workers as well. The Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, 2008 includes construction workers in the list of beneficiaries of the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana, which is the national insurance programme for BPL households.

Toshniwal (2010) visited four large construction sites in Ahmedabad in 2009–10 but did not find any worker registered with the CWWB. Even on the construction sites of the public agencies, no worker was found to be registered. A few other construction sites visited during 2011, which employed tribal workers from North Gujarat, in particular from the Panchmahals and Dahod districts, also had no worker registered with the board. Personal stories of some of these workers included as Annex 1 illustrate their exclusion from the CWWB. The migrant construction workers are casual labour and move from one work site to another and hence cannot be registered with the CWWB. They are unable to acquire any identity document in the city, which precludes a ration card or a BPL card. Even though they have a proof of domicile in Gujarat, they cannot register with the CWWB without a city address. With 80 per cent of construction workers in 2009–10 working as casual labour and which is an increase from 58 per cent in 2004–05), the state government would have to work out a new mechanism to register them and deliver entitled benefits to comply with the Welfare Act.

The city administration is unable to fulfil the first important requirement of the Decent Work Agenda, which is access to social security schemes. These schemes, implemented through the labour boards, are very limited in coverage, and there has been lack of political will to ensure that even the statutory boards function as they should. There are systemic weaknesses in running these boards, including the inadequate budget allocations. The net outcome has left nearly the entire workforce employed without social security measures, although the state sets comparatively low minimum wages.

7. Shelter security as an integrated approach to decent work

Several studies have found significant positive impact of de facto tenure security in Ahmedabad. In the Pravinnagar-Guptanagar slum and due to a programme in which an NGO partnered with the local government to extend basic services along with a ten-year "no eviction guarantee", or de facto tenure, certain improvements in social indicators were observed. The programme was intended to improve the physical infrastructure, and the study found that indeed the living conditions of the slum dwellers had improved. The facilitating NGO had collected household pre-programme data (in 1997) and post-programme data (2000), from which it found that (Joshi, 2002):

- total immunization of children increased, from 62 per cent to 80 per cent (p. 282);
- institutional deliveries of babies increased, from 69 per cent to 81 per cent (p. 283);
- literacy rate increased, from 30 per cent to 34 per cent (p. 285);
- the proportion of households in the lowest income bracket of per capita income of 1,000 rupees per month decreased, from 57 per cent to 30 per cent; and that in the highest per capita income range of 4,000 rupees per month, it increased from 2 per cent to 8 per cent at current prices (p. 287);
- unskilled and casual employment decreased, from 17 per cent to 8 per cent (p. 289);
- assets, such as refrigerators, motorized two-wheelers, sewing machines and the use of liquid petroleum gas for cooking purposes, increased (p. 290); and
- dwelling unit size and access to basic services increased.

Another study of Pravinnagar-Guptanagar and five other slums in nearby proximity presented a strong relationship of tenure security, with various development aspects (table 19): the higher the level of tenure security the higher the level of living standard and well-being of the household.[33] The tenure security of slum households living on government lands, which are required for other more valued purposes, is much weaker than the slum households living on private lands, where the owner may not be present or does not have the wherewithal to evict the slum dwellers. In this period of neoliberal globalization, in which the state is strongly supporting economic growth policies, and considering that the key to growth in urban areas is access to land, it has become extremely difficult to make land available to the poor for housing purposes (Mahadevia, 2009). Thus, to achieve shelter security through tenure security, an inclusive land policy is necessary.

Table 19: Impact of tenure security on household living conditions and well-being

Indicators	Strong de facto	Weak de facto	Insecure
% katcha houses	32	39	54
% pucca houses	42	39	24
% households with individual water supply from the local government	90	29	19
% households having individual toilet	94	86	69
% males literate	81	84	72
% females literate	58	59	55
Average per capita income per month (rupees)	908	895	744
% male employed as casual labour	51	58	82
% female employed as casual labour	34	41	41
% households saving	33	17	23
Average savings per month (rupees)	231	196	122

Source: Mahadevia, 2010b.

[33] For further discussion on the processes that would create conditions for de facto tenure security, please refer to Mahadevia, 2010b and 2011b.

A study by Shah et al. (2009) of Ahmedabad residents who were dumped on the city's periphery in 2006 after their houses were demolished for various infrastructure projects found that:

- the households had lost access to safe water supply and sanitation, which was available at the household level before the demolition;
- 2,000 households were forced to use 35 dry toilets or forced to squat on land that had no drainage facilities;
- defecation in the open had increased, from 36 per cent before the demolition to 60 per cent afterward;
- the proportion of children attending school had dropped, from 87 per cent before the demolition to 41 per cent; the reasons for dropping out of school were no school in the vicinity as well as inability to bear the transportation costs to school;
- there was no public health care centre and half of the households had shifted to visiting private practitioners and thus incurring higher expenditures than before, if not the risk of being treated by medical "quacks";
- food expenditure had increased by 20 per cent due to the lack of access to public food distribution and fair price shops.

The living conditions on the so-called rehabilitation sites were poor, as observed by the jury members during a public hearing (December 2009):

> The last site for the field visit was the relocation site of the Khodiyar Nagar Evictees, on the periphery of the city. This relocation site was an open, low-lying wasteland, marked by the presence of electricity transmission towers, a municipal solid waste dump in close proximity and bordering a solid-waste treatment plant of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation. Residents narrated to the jury members that they were brought here with their salvaged belongings from the demolition at Khodiyar Nagar and provided chalk-marked parcels of land that measured 10 feet by 15 feet. There were already several shanties in their hundreds that existed here, sheltering people evicted from several different development projects. They were all provided a municipal document marking out their parcel as a temporary relocation site. No more information had been provided to them on paper, such as the length of time they would need to stay here, whether compensation would be provided or whether they were permitted to build shelter. Verbally, municipal officials who came to collect municipal taxes from these residents assured them of moving them out into concrete houses in six months. After several months had elapsed, other assurances were made – providing water regularly, health services and schools, sanitation and even electricity. It was only after three to four years that some of these amenities were provided to a level that [the residents] described as bare minimum, and the members of the jury were shown evidence of these experiences, [as] guided by the residents.
>
> The jury members noted that this rehabilitation site looked like a new slum. The living conditions were abysmal. Basic facilities like water supply and sanitation were not adequate or common. At the time of the visit, most of the public water taps were not working. In absence of an adequate toilet facility, the whole settlement was stinking. The jury found it difficult to even stand there for few minutes. In the absence of internal roads, it was quite difficult to move within the settlement. The current residents told the jury members that they had to travel more than 5 kilometres every day for work, and those working as daily wage workers found it difficult to get any job nearby. This settlement is connected by only one bus route and buses are available at the gap of 40–50 minutes. It is forcing the residents to travel by auto rickshaws, which has resulted in extra expenditure on transport as well as time delays to work. Children do not have a school nearby, and the main highway to Vadodara is a safety risk for the children. The only service functional was the electricity connections, which have been given to each house. (Our Inclusive Ahmedabad: 2010: 27–28)

Many of the residents displaced because of development and city beautification projects have been enveloped into the Basic Services to Urban Poor (BSUP) housing. The BSUP housing is the largest

shelter programme in the city, under which the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation plans to construct 50,000 housing units,[34] 18,000 of which are completed and assigned to families. The largest slum rehabilitation programme ongoing in Ahmedabad is for those displaced by the Sabarmati Riverfront Development Project; a High Court order of September 2011 required that about 11,000 households that were displaced be assigned housing.[35] Many of the BSUP housing sites, however, are on the city's periphery and the slum dwellers are being pushed out of the city centre by being relocated there.

There is also a large number of affected households of the Sabarmati project who have not found any housing and have been sent to the same site where the jury of the public hearing regarding the Khodiyar Nagar evictees visited. The slum dwellers pushed to this site in 2006 were relocated into the BSUP housing, but the vacant site has since received another dumping of slum dwellers. The conditions remain dismal. Some children from the site were admitted to hospital in critical condition arising from gastrointestinal infections as a result of eating whatever they found due to their hunger.[36] The parents had lost their income due to the displacement, and households were experiencing severe hunger. The riverbank is being developed as a riverfront with large real estate and commercial projects and high-end public activities, such as a convention centre and places for water sports. Ultimately, the building of a "global" city has increased poverty and introduced hunger among the families adversely affected by the displacement.

Ahmedabad had two impressive programmes for upgrading slum areas: i) the 90:10 scheme, in which the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation contributed 90 per cent of the cost of individual household water and toilet construction; and ii) the Slum Networking Programme, which won the UN-HABITAT's Best Practice Award (see Acharya and Parikh, 2002; Dutta, 2002; and Joshi, 2002). As highlighted previously, an important part of the Slum Networking Programme is the extending of de facto tenure security to slum dwellers. So far, some 60 of a total of 700 slums and 13,000 households have been covered under the Slum Networking Programme.[37]

The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation discontinued both these programmes to shift to a market-based approach wherein private developers takeover the developing of slum in what is a public-private partnership approach. Whatever the name of the approach, it means that with 70 per cent of households consenting, the slum land is to be redeveloped into multistorey housing in which the slum dwellers are assigned a house of about 225–250 ft^2 for free. The developer receives a concession in the form of extra built-up space, as determined through the floor space index (FSI),[38] which can be sold. About 11 such schemes on slums located on high-valued lands are in various stages of consideration or development.

The families affected by the riverfront project would not have been assigned housing if a case on their behalf had not been filed in the Gujarat High Court in 2005. In the first interim order in 2005, the High Court required that there could not be any demolition without alternative accommodations. In

[34] As per the presentation by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation at a National Workshop on Approaches to Lands for the Urban Poor in India, organized by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India and CEPT University, Ahmedabad, 17 Apr. 2009.

[35] The author is a member of the Rehabilitation Monitoring Committee, which was set up by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, and has a copy of the said order.

[36] "Evicted, kids eat unknown fruit", in *Daily News and Analysis*, 23 Dec. 2011, at dailybhaskar.com, http://epaper.dnaindia.com/story.aspx?edorsup=Sup&queryed=1310005&querypage=5&boxid=28671990&id=1031&eddate=2011-12-23&ed_date=2011-12-23&ed_code=1310005&wintype=popup (accessed 24 Dec. 2011).

[37] Based on data obtained from Mahila Housing Trust and Saath, both NGOs implementing the Slum Networking Programme in Ahmedabad.

[38] The floor space index is a ratio of built up space permitted to the area of the plot. An FSI of 2 means on that particular plot, built-up of twice the plot area is permitted. Extra FSI means additional FSI than the permitted FSI as per the Development Control Regulations.

violation of the order, the Sabarmati Riverfront Development Company demolished slums in May 2011.[39] Subsequently, the High Court required speedy housing construction for the affected families. The new residence area originally was to be based on an outdated survey done in 2000–2002; the current orders of the High Court include families who had lived on the riverbank and can produce evidence of their having lived there. In the end, the provision of housing for these families is attributed to a High Court ruling and not to any concerned initiative of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation or the Sabarmati Riverfront Development Company.

An appropriate shelter policy needs to retain the close shelter-work link and intent to reach the poor. On this score, the Ahmedabad city leaders have not fared well. In the past decade or so, all Indian cities, including Ahmedabad, have expanded, and the land prices in the central locations have increased, which is why the BSUP housing has been forced to the city's periphery. The poor thus have to increase their expenditure on transport, with their transport expenses crowding out more often than not their health care needs and affecting the overall well-being of the household. It also has led to women dropping out of the labour force, something observed in the relocation sites.[40] The few transport studies available show that the poor tend to either walk or cycle to their place of work. A study in Ahmedabad (in the same slums referenced in table 19) found that 57 per cent of the surveyed population walked to work, another 12 per cent cycled, 15 per cent shared an auto rickshaw and only 6 per cent used a bus (Mahadevia et al., 2009). Many urban poor find the bus system unaffordable. Thus the shelter-employment link is extremely important for the urban poor. But this requires a shelter policy that makes it possible for the poor to remain in the central parts of a city and a land use policy that permits informal livelihoods in all locations. Ahmedabad previously had allowed the mixing of informal and formal housing and livelihoods, but that changed when it began pursuing different development objectives, which resulted in livelihood and habitat displacements.[41]

[39] The author witnessed the demolition.

[40] SEWA members spoke about this eloquently during the 13 December Workshop on Decent Work and Social Security, organized by Centre for Urban Equity, CEPT University, Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) and National Association of Social Security (NASS), at CEPT University, to present the first draft of this paper.

[41] For the details on displacements, see Our Inclusive Ahmedabad, 2010. This report is on the public hearing in Ahmedabad in December 2009. In the two years since then, the pace of displacements has only increased due to the number of infrastructure, city beautification and recreational projects, such as the riverfront development and Kankaria lake development.

8. Labour-intensive growth strategy

A labour-intensive growth strategy can be considered as part of an integrated approach to decent work. Two aspects of this strategy are discussed here: the street vendors' policy and its integration with town planning norms. This occupation is very important for Ahmedabad because it engages a large number of workers; it thus requires an enabling policy and legislation that also reconsiders human labour in solid waste management.

8.1 Integration of street vendors into urban planning

The street vendors in Ahmedabad are restricted and regulated by five laws, which means that they are by and large carrying out their trade in violation of one law or another and thus vulnerable to eviction, confiscation of their goods and continuous harassment at the hands of the police and the municipal officials. The laws that apply to street vendors are: i) the Bombay Provincial Municipal Corporation Act, 1949 that prohibits projections and structures on the streets, the right to the municipal commissioner to evict street vendors and their wares from the street as well as give permission and licenses for vending on the streets; ii) the Indian Penal Code, which allows the police to register a case of any obstruction to the public way; iii) the Motor Vehicles Act, which allows the policy that sets penalties for obstructing the free flow of traffic, iv) the Gujarat Police Act (formerly the Bombay Police Act); and v) the Gujarat Town Planning and Urban Development Act, which uses an instrument called town planning schemes to allot land for various uses in the city, including for commercial use and, with a broader interpretation, provision for street markets. The town planning scheme is a land pooling and readjustment mechanism under which 40 per cent of the private plot area is acquired by the public planning authority for the provision of public amenities, infrastructure and commercial sale. The last item allows the planning authority to recover the cost for erecting infrastructure. The plots earmarked for commercial use could be available for setting up hawkers' markets in such a way that attracts business. Some cities in Gujarat have used this provision while Ahmedabad has not yet done so.

The Government invoked a National Policy on Urban Street Vendors in 2009 to recognize street vending as an integral and legitimate part of the urban retail trade and distribution system. The centrepiece of the policy is the formation of a city or town vending committee and, if required, a ward-level committee for large cities to supervise the entire process of planning, organizing and regulating the vending activity. Each vendor is to register with the Town Vending Committee. The Committee largely includes representatives of street vendors along with members from the local resident welfare associations, market associations, trader's associations, police and municipal and planning authorities. These committees oversee the allocation and management of spaces, monitor the street vendors and address any grievances. The policy recommends that the municipal authorities provide street vendors a range of civic services, such as solid waste disposal, public toilets and electricity, water and storage facilities. Other important initiatives under the 2009 policy include access to credit and skills development for vendors. The policy also directs city administrators to frame spatial planning norms for street vending. Thus the street vendors' policy has to be integrated within the town planning mechanism. The policy calls for a demarcation of areas for: i) restricted free vending zones; ii) restricted vending zones; and iii) no vending zones. The policy includes the concept of a natural market, which is a market that develops on its own, depending on the needs of the local population.

However, the policy falls short of outlining what needs to be done if there are conflicts between existing legislation and the rights of the street vendors. The policy does not state clearly that the arbitrary evictions of hawkers in the name of "redevelopment" or "renewal" should not occur and if that is absolutely necessary, there should be relocation provisions, with adequate notice.

According to SEWA estimates, there are about 100,000 street vendors in Ahmedabad. Researchers in a study published in 2000 estimated that street vendors made up about 7 per cent of the total informal workers of the city.[42] If that is the case, then there are likely about 115,000 street vendors in the urban agglomeration.[43] The number is quite large, and if the street vendors' policy is fully implemented, about one-half million people would benefit.

SEWA filed a case[44] in the Gujarat High Court in 2006 to ask for the enforcement of the then National Street Vendors Policy, 2004[45] because the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation was ignoring it. The petition went through many twists and turns over a four-year period. The SEWA complaint cited sections 231 and 384 of the Municipal Corporation Act as *ultra vires* of the fundamental right to livelihood (Article 21 of the Indian Constitution), the right to equality before the law (Article 14), the fundamental right to trade (Article 19 (1) (g)) and the Directive Principles of state policy under (Article 39). The High Court refused to admit the complaint; subsequently in 2006, SEWA filed another complaint seeking enforcement of the National Street Vendors' Policy, 2004, which the High Court of Gujarat agreed with and asked the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation to implement.

In March 2009 after nearly a year of no response from the city officials, the High Court directed the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation to prepare a scheme and present it to the Court by March 2010. The city officials passed the task to an academic institution.[46] The first scheme submitted to the High Court was seriously flawed, according to SEWA, and the High Court asked the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation to incorporate SEWA inputs. SEWA then argued that the proposed scheme would adversely impact 129 of the 174 existing natural markets. The Ahmedabad municipal leaders did not heed to the suggestions, but the High Court accepted their final scheme in August 2010 – which showed no difference from the first draft.

The street vendors scheme framed by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, as per the High Court order, is the Street Vendor's Scheme, 2010. It lays out the functions and composition of the Ahmedabad Town Vending Committee; eligibility parameters and conditions to sell in the city and also the fee structure to attain a licence and vendor identity cards. It also provides for reservation of plots in the town planning schemes for vending activity. The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation has stated that it would reserve 2 per cent of the town planning scheme area for street vending, but as of December 2011, no area had been allocated for the street vendors, except for a market on the riverbank, which also was being rehabilitated under another High Court order.

[42] J. Unni: *Urban informal sector: Size and income generation processes in Gujarat: Parts I and II* (Delhi, National Council of Applied Economic Research, Reports 2 and 3, April and May 2000).

[43] Using 2009–10 WPRs, the number of total workers was estimated, from which the total informal sector workers were estimated. The figure of 7 per cent employed as street vendors from among the unorganized workers was used to arrive at this figure.

[44] The Indian Constitution, under Article 32, confers citizens the right to approach the Supreme Court of India for the enforcement of fundamental rights granted to citizens of the country. Under Article 226, citizens can approach the High Court of a state for the same purpose. These provisions have been repeatedly used by civil society organizations to either set a policy or to force the implementation of an existing policy.

[45] This was modified in 2009, as explained earlier.

[46] CEPT University, which has a course on the built environment.

The scheme outlines the types of vending zones and parameters to define the vending zones, including hours of operation. The vending zones are delineated as follows:

1. Green vending zone: Vendors are permitted in residential areas on roads less than 15 metres wide and can operate from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. on all days.
2. Amber vending zone: Vendors are permitted in commercial zones on roads more than 15 metres wide and can operate from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on all days; in institutional zones, there are restrictions on the products sold and the operating hours would be from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.; in heritage zones, vending is permitted 200 metres beyond any heritage site on all days.
3. Red zone: No vendor permitted on roads more than 30 metres wide, on roads with heavy traffic, within the radius of 200 metres of a heritage zone and in major commercial zones.

By confining vending within these zones, the policy completely overlooks the important features of allocation and demarcation of natural markets. According to SEWA, 38,908 vendors in 129 (of 174) natural markets would be adversely affected.

The eligibility criteria for a licence are quite insensitive to the needs of the street vendors. Applicants must be older than 18 years and should have an identity card, an election card or a BPL card. The license is valid for a maximum of three years but there is no mention about the renewal of the licence, rendering a vendor's status after three years uncertain. Contrary to the 2009 National Policy on Urban Street Vendors, the scheme sets an irrational caveat: applicants need to have resided in the city ten years before 31 December 2009, which thus excludes all vendors who moved to the city after December 1999. Only applicants for whom street vending is the only source of livelihood are eligible; however, vending is often a time-based activity, with, for example, vegetable vendors working only in early mornings and in evenings, thus vendors likely rely on other sources of income. If the scheme is enforced as such, it will deny a license to vendors with a secondary occupation and disregard their constitutional right to practise any profession or to carry on any occupation, trade or business.

The High Court case suggests a need to discuss whether right to life and livelihood, the fundamental right of Indian citizens, is a legal issue or a policy issue. Would legal processes entangle the issue further in the situation of a hostile local state government and lack of political will among the state policymakers and other leaders to take into consideration the rights of the poor in the development process? The rights of the poor cannot be defended only through legal instruments; there must be a political understanding and favourable local state governance to protect those rights.

8.2 Partnership with waste pickers

Another area of state action adversely impacting a large group of workers who are poor involves solid waste management. Women's self-help groups, formed under the programme Development with Women and Children in Urban Areas, have been given contracts for door-to-door waste collection in some cities in India (for case studies see Mahadevia and Wolfe, 2008). In Chennai, members of local collectives called Exnoras collect segregated waste, recycle the biodegradable material and market the bio-manure (Anand, 2000). Solid waste management provides a good opportunity for generating employment while improving the hygiene of a city, and it offers an avenue for partnerships between the local government, self-help groups and/or NGOs.

Such a partnership existed in Ahmedabad, albeit at small scale. In one part of the city, 366 women waste pickers were employed by the residential colonies to collect waste door to door. The system started in Vejalpur, which was then a municipality (but is now a part of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation). The local municipal council awarded the contract to a cooperative formed by the

women. In 2004, each woman earned about 1,500–2,000 rupees per month. When Vejalpur was amalgamated into the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation limits, however, the situation took a turn for the worse. The municipal corporation staff did not look favourably at the cooperative's work and did not coordinate well with them. SEWA officers approached the relevant officials to plead the cooperative members' case and presented a memorandum on behalf of the women waste pickers to the Standing Committee, which is the highest decision-making arm of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation. SEWA also mobilized support from the residents of the area where the cooperative was working.

All these efforts were in vain, and a private company was allotted the contract for door-to-door waste collection as a part of a mechanizing scheme for waste collection. The tenders floated by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation asked for a deposit and required that bidders own the equipment needed for the work, which precluded organizations such as SEWA. SEWA quickly filed for a stay order on the allotment of the contract to a private country with the Gujarat High Court's Registrar, which was granted.

The city planners, on their path to modernize and "globalize" Ahmedabad, do not consider such labour-intensive jobs as waste picking as befitting the desired image for the city. There is also an argument that such work is not dignified and the government should not support waste picking but should create better jobs for those women. But that has yet to happen; employment data shows that a large proportion of the population continues to engage in residual work to eke out a living. The livelihoods of the poor women could have been protected by policy, or they could have been assisted to shift to another livelihood, but they had to resort to litigation to protect themselves – the third instance of policy framing in Ahmedabad through litigation.

To meet the challenges of climate change and urban environmental degradation, local governments can generate considerable employment opportunities in environmental management and restoration activities. This, however, is not even being discussed.

9. Urban citizenship and access to welfare programmes

9.1 Attaining citizenship in Ahmedabad

The requirements for urban citizenship are fluid. In Ahmedabad, the slum dwellers were given a photo ID card in 1976, and the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation held on to this cut-off date for extending rights to slum dwellers. A slum household with such a card is protected against demolition and, in the case of eviction due to an infrastructure or development project, they are eligible for relocation. For slum dwellers not holding the ID card, citizenship criteria vary from scheme to scheme. For example, eligibility for relocation is specified in the Gujarat Regulations for the Rehabilitation and Redevelopment of the Slums, 2010. In that instance, an eligible slum dweller is one who is "not a foreign national and is the occupant of hutment for a period of minimum ten years and has a domicile of Gujarat for 25 years or his descendant".[47] For proof of occupancy, any two of the following documents are required: i) copy of ration card; ii) copy of electricity bills; iii) proof of inclusion in the electoral rolls; and iv) any other proof accepted by the prescribed authority. The key restriction here is a domicile of 25 years.

Social welfare and assistance programmes target the households living below the poverty line, and surveys to identify them are carried out by the local government from time to time. The last survey completed in Ahmedabad was in 2008, and the BPL list was issued in 2010. The following year, BPL cards were issued. However, as discussed in section 2, many of the beneficiaries had already registered to vote and had obtained a voter's ID card (called an election card) with their photograph and residential address.

The research surveys conducted for this paper revealed a very small proportion of households possessing a BPL card in Ahmedabad. In one industrial ward, Amraiwadi, only 14 per cent of the slum households had a ration card and 1 per cent had a BPL card (table 20). In contrast, the slum households in a middle class ward, Vasna, 81.5 per cent of households had a ration card, 19.3 per cent had a BPL card and 92.3 per cent had an election card. Availability of the ration card in the industrial ward of Amraiwadi was low probably on account of the migrant population; it was much easier for the households to obtain an election card than a ration card. But an election card does not allow a household to obtain the benefits of welfare programmes. Instead, they need a BPL card. For most households, an election card is a stepping stone to obtain a ration card and they then manage to get onto the BPL list through a political contact.

Table 20: Percentage of households holding different identity cards, Ahmedabad

Location	Ration card	BPL card	Election card
Amraiwadi ward*	13.9	1.1	17.0
Vasna ward**	81.5	19.3	92.3

* Mahadevia, Shah and Ankinapalli, 2010b.
** Mahadevia, Sharma, Shah and Ankinapalli, 2010a.

The seasonal migrants to the city find it the hardest to access ration cards, let alone the BPL card. The largest numbers of seasonal migrants in Ahmedabad work in construction sites and brick kilns on the periphery of the city. The seasonal workers typically remain in the city for six months before

[47] Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation: *Regulations for the rehabilitation and redevelopment of the slums*, (Ahmedabad, 2010), http://www.udd.gujarat.gov.in/udd/smPolicy.pdf (accessed 22 June 2010).

returning to their villages during the monsoon season to cultivate their fields. They tend to save money and send remittances home that are equal to about half their monthly income of about 8,000 rupees. Many of them leave their children behind in the villages with family elders; many single male migrants also come to the city. Most hold on to their home village identity documents and make no attempt to obtain an urban identity. They tend to live at their work site, with no housing expense. Because they do not have an urban ration card or a BPL card, they do not get subsidized health care from the city's public hospitals, so they tend to spend substantial amounts on health care if needed. Their children, if studying in village schools, claim scholarships there and do not claim any benefits available in the city. Many workers met during the field research for this paper had been working this way for more than 15 years. The children who came to the city with their parents consequently lost their opportunity to study and ended up hanging around with the parents in the unhealthy conditions on the work site.

The problems of the new migrants as well as short-term or seasonal migrants are compounded by the bias against them and the lack of support from government officials. Seasonal migrants are seen as a burden to the city rather than an asset. Such a mindset is an important barrier to accessing an urban identity.

9.2 Access to welfare schemes

There is inclusion as well as exclusion errors in the BPL list, which in Ahmedabad is based on the 2008 survey. Not all households living in the slums and in chawls (tenement buildings) fall within the BPL category. While 56 per cent of households in the eastern zone of the city, which is the industrial zone, lived in the slums or in a chawls in 2008, only 53 per cent among them were categorized as living below the poverty line (table 21). In the western zone, which is high-income zone, only 33 per cent of households lived in slums but among them, 52 per cent had a BPL card. It appears there are inclusion errors in both zones.

Table 21: Summary of households living below the poverty line, by zone, 2008

S. No	Zone	BPL households	Total households in slums & chawls	% BPL households to total households in slums & chawls	% households living in slums & chawls
1	Central	27 560	49 894	55.2	46.5
2	East	44 871	85 007	52.8	55.7
3	South	29 299	63 212	46.4	44.8
4	West	24 457	47 468	51.5	33.4
5	North	41 609	76 716	54.2	51.4
	City total	167 796	322 297	52.1	46.6

Note: BPL=below the poverty line. A chawl is a low-income settlement with dwelling units arranged in rows; it was the former industrial housing in the city, mostly now in a dilapidated status.
Source: Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, referencing population data from the Office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, http://www.egovamc.com/outline0506/T03P33.pdf (accessed 31 Mar. 2011).

In addition to inclusion errors, the coverage of the welfare and assistance programmes is extremely low. There are 121 social welfare and assistance schemes in Gujarat. Of them, 36 are available in Ahmedabad through either the district collector or the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation. In the past few years, however, the benefits have been distributed through "welfare fairs"(garib kalyan melas). The chief minister of Gujarat, ostensibly to increase the efficiency of the state machinery but in reality to promote his image as a "developmentalist" or "welfarist", hit upon the idea of the welfare fairs, or garib kalyan melas. In the fair, the welfare recipients are collected in one place and the welfare goods or assistance is distributed, based a prepared list. Some senior bureaucrats from the state government typically are present. Because state assembly elections are expected in 2012, the frequency of the fairs may increase.

Three fairs so far have been organized for the residents of ten wards of the south and north zones of the city where 70 per cent of the BPL households are located (calculated from table 21). The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation organized two such fairs in February 2010, while the district collector organized one as well that same month. A total of 4,439 beneficiaries were reached with welfare assistance totalling nearly 427 million rupees (table 22). The Dr Ambedkar Safai Kamadar Avas Yojana housing programme received the largest allocation, of nearly 415 million rupees. The state's development plan makes no reference to the distribution of pension schemes or other large assistance programmes.

Table 22: Welfare distribution through the garib kalyan melas (welfare fairs) by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (up to 20 February 2010)

1.	Urban community development	Sankat Mochan	Cheque of 10 000 rupees	189	1.89
2.		Ummeed	Training certificate	730	2.56
3.		Suvarn Jayanti Saheri Rojgar Yojana	Approval letter	30	0.40
4.	Solid waste management	Dr. Ambedkar Safai Kamadar Avas Yojana	House allotment letter	691	414.60
5.	Municipal school board	Spectacles distribution to children	Spectacles	655	0.07
6.		Scope	Training certificate	120	0.16
7.		Disable and health-related kit	Kit	55	0.11
8		Vidya Laksmi bond	1 000 rupees bond	15	0.02
9	Integrated child development services	Balika Sammruddhi	500 rupees worth fixed deposit	439	0.22
10	Family planning	Dikari Yojana	6 000 rupees worth National Saving Certificates	17	0.09
11	Zone-wise related engineering department	Nirmal Gujarat Shauchalay Yojana (West Zone)	Approval letter	769	3.46
12		Nirmal Gujarat Shauchalay Yojana (South Zone)	Approval letter	371	1.67
13		Nirmal Gujarat Shauchalay Yojana (North Zone)	Approval letter	358	1.61
		Total:		**4 439**	**426.85**

Source: Garib kalyan melas, Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, http://www.egovamc.com/garib_k_m/gkm.asp (accessed 1 May 2011).

The district collector has reached out to 1,586 beneficiaries (table 23) and distributed assistance worth 7 million rupees in Ahmedabad. The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation and the district collector together have reached out to 6,025 beneficiaries and disbursed assistance totalling nearly 434 million rupees through the three welfare fairs. The total number of beneficiaries is fewer than the total number of BPL families. Another round of such fairs are planned. Discussions with the district collector officials and the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation officials confirmed that regular social assistance was no longer disbursed. The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation budget of the past few years reflects no distribution of social assistance. Thus, it appears that the regular social assistance schemes are not implemented.

Table 23: Welfare distribution through the garib kalyan melas by the district collector (up to 16 February 2010)

1.	District Welfare Office	Manav Kalyan Yojana	Tool kit of 4 000 rupees	339	0.68
	Vikasati Jati Kalyan Department	Kuvarbai nu Mameru	5 000 rupees cheque	10	0.05
		Bankable Scheme	33% subsidy	09	0.04
		Gujarat Minorities Development and Finance Corporation	Up to 40 000 rupees for business loans	29	1.08
		Stitching Trainer's Tool Kit Aid	3 000 rupees worth kit	17	0.03
		International High Education Loan Scheme	Up to 1,000,000 rupees aid	01	0.50
		College Hotelier Students Scholarship	Scholarship of 3 000–6 000 rupees	428	2.17
		Merit Cum Means Scholarship	Scholarship of 3 000–20 000 rupees	64	0.77
2.	District Backward Class Welfare Officer	Inter-caste wedding	50 000 rupees aid	08	0.40
		Direct loan scheme	25 000–500,000 lakh rupees loan	20	0.50
		Post Metric Scholarship	Scholarship of 1 900–7 500 rupees	17	0.04
		Kuvarbai Nu Mameru	5 000 rupees cheque	64	0.77
		Shop Loan Aid	Aid up to 75 000 rupees	01	0.06
3.	Assistant Employment Officer	SCOPE Yojana	Certificate	99	0.19
4.	District Social Security	Disable Tool Aid	Tool kit up to 25 000 rupees	25	0.06
		Financial Assistance to Widows and Destitute Women	Assistance up to 5 000 rupees	15	0.08
		Disable Free Travel ID card	Identity card	16	0.00
5.	I. T. I.	Stipend to student	From 750–1 500 rupees	116	0.12
6.	City Deputy Collectors office	Vayvandana	Monthly 200 rupees aid	335	0.07
		Total		**1 586**	**7.01**

Source: Garib kalyan melas, Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, http://www.egovamc.com/garib_k_m/gkm.asp (accessed 1 May 2011).

The city clearly has not devised a system to ensure that the poor receive their entitlements. It is difficult to attain urban citizenship first of all, but once having obtained it, there is a struggle to acquire a ration card and then a BPL card that would qualify workers to access their entitlements. In the past few years, implementing the welfare schemes was on an ad hoc and thus, even if a household possesses a BPL card, they could not access any benefit.

10. Associations and participation

This section looks at trade unions and workers' cooperatives. Ahmedabad does not have a history of militant left-wing trade unions as other states have experienced; instead, the large Gandhian-influenced trade union, the Textile Labour Association for textile mill workers, organized on a philosophy of reconciliation rather than conflict. Cotton textiles were the main industry in Ahmedabad up to the late 1980s. As previously noted, the Self Employed Women's Association (established in 1972 as a trade union for self-employed women) also came together under Gandhian principles of non-violence, trusteeship and cooperation.

For the great majority of working women in India, joining the conventional form of trade unionism is not possible. Most women workers are either home-based producers or vendors and hawkers, carry head loads through the streets or provide low-skilled services. In response to the circumstances of poor women workers, grass-roots organizations devised new and creative means of mobilizing women. SEWA is a notable example, with probably the largest membership, at about 150,000 self-employed women, mostly in Gujarat. Two thirds of the membership is rural based. One third of the members are Muslim and one third Harijan (members of the most deprived section of the state's population).

Realizing that the self-employed workers union alone cannot provide adequate protection to these workers, other forms of collective action have come together, such as the formation of cooperatives to increase their bargaining power. SEWA has about 70 cooperatives in the sectors of dairying, land-based production, handicrafts, health care and child care services. Extending credit to self-employed women is another major activity of SEWA because the lack of access to credit has been a major point of exploitation of these women. The SEWA Bank, formed in 1974, has enabled members to acquire in their own name such assets as land, a house and production tools. Because of the easy availability of micro credit, about three fourths of members are fully employed. SEWA also provides social security and health care services to its members. Thus, SEWA has emerged not only as a labour rights movement but a holistic effort towards the development of the most marginalized group of workers, the self-employed women.

Gujarat prides itself as a state of industrial peace. The Textile Labour Association had a membership of 120,000 workers in its heyday, but that significantly reduced to 67,000 towards the end of the 1990s (Patel, 1990; Patel, 1997) and even further now. The state has experienced very little radical working class movement except in sporadic pockets; this peacefulness has attracted some industries that have endured industrial disputes elsewhere.[48] The good industrial relations, however, indicate the growth is at the cost of workers' rights. In fact, the state government's important promise for attracting industrial investments is the guarantee of an environment that is free of labour disputes, which has been achieved not because of dialogue and negotiation but by denying workers their rights.

Additionally, there are smaller trade unions engaged with either workers of specific sectors, such as the BMS (Construction Workers' Union), or general unions in the large as well as small-scale industries. These unions function as places of wage bargaining and are not very effective in building a labour movement. The city also has various hawkers' unions, market associations (such as the one for the vendors of the weekly market on the riverbank), auto rickshaw drivers' unions and so on. These are all fragmented and are engaged with only their sector or trade-specific issues. Recently, under the

[48] "Manesar woes make Maruti look to Gujarat", in *The Sunday Guardian*, 30 Oct. 2011, http://www.sunday-guardian.com/business/manesar-woes-make-maruti-look-to-gujarat (accessed 1 Nov. 2011).

aegis of SEWA and supported by the National Association of Social Security, three unions came together to give inputs into the framing and implementing of the Unorganised Sector Social Security Board in Gujarat.

11. Assessing policy coherence and the way forward

The once caring and inclusive Ahmedabad has become autocratic and uncaring. It is now emerging as a city of elites and middle class who support right-wing policies. The city has lost its autonomy, and the state government and its officials as well as politicians have taken over the governance to a great extent. The state's chief minister, pandering to the demand of the elites and the middle class and in an attempt to wipe out the blemish of the 2002 communal violence, is promising and promoting large visions and projects. Consequently, the city's development has veered towards mega projects.

Ahmedabad is a metropolis in India with very special characteristics; historically, it is a wealthy city, located in a state that has reaped large economic benefits on account of economic reforms. Beginning in the 1960s, the state climbed to the category of the most developed and urbanized in India on its peoples' entrepreneurship, backed by a proactive state machinery in support of industrialization. The decade of the 1970s in particular heralded the development of small-scale industries in the industrial estates created by the state government and those catering to commercial agriculture. This resulted in balanced economic growth in terms of sector-based development on one hand and labour-intensive growth on the other (Hirway and Mahadevia, 2005). Since the 1980s, the state has moved on to a higher-growth trajectory, inviting investments into mega industries when the older industries, such as cotton textiles, which had organized labour, closed down. Industrialization through mega industries shifted away from Ahmedabad to Surat and the coastal belt of the state. Ahmedabad since then has emerged as a tertiary economy. Since 2000, Ahmedabad district has again started to attract large industries. But that has not improved the employment situation, and the state as well as the city has experienced increases in self-employment at the higher as well as lower ends of the labour market.

Ahmedabad remains a city of entrepreneurs. Across all income groups, people prefer to engage in their own business rather than be employed; whenever regular jobs are not available, people shift to their own business, however small it may be, to eke out a living. Despite the creation of new special economic zones, industry has not been able to absorb additional labour, and a section of workers have shifted to run their own business. The new work is available in small enterprises in retail trade, small food stalls and the transport sector. At the higher-income end, a large proportion of work seems to have moved to services in finance and real estate. On account of the economic dynamism of the city, people have found work and have been able to earn a living. But many of them have unprotected and insecure work. This is where the proposed Social Security Act for the unorganized workers would be important.

There is another shift: whatever manufacturing employment is available in the city, a large proportion has shifted to self-employment, most likely subcontracted work (involving nearly half of the male workers and 90 per cent of the female workers). Many of them operate out of their homes. In some of the slums, for example, small workshops operate in open spaces to produce food items (Mahadevia et al., 2010b). As discussed previously, some workers were adversely affected by the inflationary pressures and resorted to increasing their work hours to earn adequate income. Those who did not pulled their children out of private school and shifted them to public school, although some instead pulled their children out of school completely and put them to work. Social security in such a situation is absolutely essential.

The pro-capitalist leanings of the state government have grown stronger over the past decade, especially with the high economic growth. There has not been any counter force from the labour unions; labour legislation enforcement in the state as well as in Ahmedabad is very lax. The rapid economic growth of the city has been accompanied by sacrifice of labour welfare. Social security

measures, which are essential in a situation of informal economy and unorganized labour, have been minimal. There are some state statutory and non-statutory workers' welfare boards related to the trades, but their coverage is very slight. For example, the GUWWB, which operates in only three cities, has coverage of less than 1 per cent of the unorganized workers in Ahmedabad. The statutory board for head-loaders has only about 3,500 members. Although the GUWWB has support of the SEWA union, the effort is too small to make any impact. In the past few years, the Labour and Employment Department has not had sufficient budget to enforce the labour legislation and carry out welfare activities through the existing boards. There is hoped that the new Gujarat State Unorganised Workers' Welfare Board will provide comprehensive coverage, although the early stage is not looking promising, considering the board was finally established under a Gujarat High Court order and not on the state government's own volition, even though it is required by the Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, 2008. If this board runs well, it would be one mechanism for possibly promoting decent work conditions in the state.

The other approach to achieve decent work would be to integrate the shelter and employment policies. Decent work would require that shelter security be integrated with tenure security. Gujarat state and Ahmedabad do not have a tenure regularization policy, and thus slum dwellers live with de facto tenure security. This worked until the public land on which the slums had developed was wanted by the city for big development projects. Now that the idea of a global city has been introduced, many infrastructure and beautification projects are causing large-scale displacements of slum dwellers. The city framed a Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy for the evictees of a large beautification project, the Sabarmati Riverfront Project, but only because it was ordered to do so by the Gujarat High Court. However, there is no accompanying land policy to facilitate shelter security. Land is left to the market and, gradually, the poor are being shifted out of the city, breaking their close shelter-employment links. An integrated approach to decent work is extremely important for the city, but the city has not responded positively on this.

The new projects in the city, such as road widening and expanding the bus rapid transit system corridors, has led to either displacement of vendors or the breaking up of natural markets of vendors. There is no alternative mechanism to allot them spaces for carrying out their livelihoods despite of the availability of the legislative tool, the town planning scheme mechanism. On behalf of the street vendors, SEWA filed a complaint seeking justice, but it was a bittersweet success in that the scheme accepted by the High Court will break up 129 of the 174 natural markets.

Overall, the situation has become one in which poor households are forced to seek justice through litigation; neither the local nor the state government has been proactive in protecting and promoting a better living standard and livelihoods of the most vulnerable workers. This was not the case a decade ago when the city and the state government engaged with organizations of the poor. That window of partnership leading to policy coherence has closed.

The city needs policy coherence in terms of labour-intensive employment strategies. Whatever existed in the area of solid waste management has now ended. The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation needs to rethink its approach to solid waste management. It also needs to be futuristic, thinking about mitigating climate change impacts through a green agenda, which can be employment intensive. As of now, there is no discussion on this.

Nonetheless, there is still scope for moving forward towards policy coherence to bring about a return to an inclusive city. Two areas are important: one is shelter security and the other is the new board to

implement the Social Security Act. The national housing programme, Rajiv Awaas Yojana, or RAY,[49] promotes slum development or redevelopment through a participatory approach and provides a good platform for creating shelter security. The RAY has potential to minimize slum evictions and displacements of the urban poor to the city's periphery. Many cities have organized public consultations to move ahead with RAY.

[49] The author is involved in developing the planning guidelines of the programme and also is assisting city officials to prepare plans for the programme.

Annex
Individual cases of construction workers

Damor Jaswantbhai Harjivanbhai, age 38, is from Santrampur Taluka, Panchmahals where he with his siblings owns 5 ha of land. At the time of the survey, he was working on a construction site in Ahmedabad. Damor is one of five brothers, all married with children. Their land is rocky and not very productive; they can only produce one crop of rice in the monsoon season. They have to depend on other work, which has been in construction in the city. Damor's elder brother brought him to Ahmedabad ten years ago. He lives alone, shifting from one construction site to another. On each site, Damor works for only 20–22 days a month and then he has to look for another site for work. This means that he cannot apply for the CWWB benefit, which requires he show continuous work of 90 days on one site. He earns about 150 rupees a day, half of which he sends home to his wife, two sons and two daughters. His children study in village school. He has an election card, an Above Poverty Line card and a bank account in his home village. He wants to settle down in the city but cannot on his own. He said he needs government assistance, but is uncertain whether the local government is ready to extend the help or even if the state government is willing to act on its responsibilities. More established workers do not want to share the financial responsibility for people in the lower-income classes and among the tribal populations, arguing that taxpayers should not have to bear their burden; their position is that if workers cannot afford to settle down in the city, they should go back to the village. Damor argues that he and people like him are entitled to regular employment, which would enable them to live permanently in the city.

Bamaniya Somabhai Bhalabhai, age 25, works with the same construction company as Damor and also moves from one site to another. His wife and 18-month-old daughter are with him. They are recent migrants to the city but are not seasonal workers. His sister and brother-in-law are also in the city. They do not have any urban identity documents. His wife also works with him, and together they earn about 300 rupees per day. Their desire is to find regular jobs in the city so that they can settle down here.

The life for women construction workers living and working on the site is harder because they do not have access to any facilities, such as for their children. They keep their children by their side in the work site. They cannot leave infants in their living quarters because their wages are cut if they step away from the work to tend to a child. That is the case with **Urmilabhen Lachhubhai Katara,** age 28, from Fatehpura Taluka, Panchmahals. She and her husband have worked in the city for the past 15 years, moving from one construction site to another. They go back to their village only for the Diwali and Holi festivals. Their daily income is about 300 rupees. Although they have worked in the city for such a long time, their Below the Poverty Line card and election cards are registered in their home village and they do not qualify for any social security scheme in the city. Because they move from one site to another, they are unable to register with the Construction Workers' Welfare Board.

Some tribal workers come together in a group for construction work; in fact, they are brought by a labour contractor to work on infrastructure projects, such as road or bridge construction. They also move from one construction site to another. **Ramaben Nabirbhai Bhabhor**, a tribal woman from Dahod district working at a construction site in Odhav area, came to Ahmedabad only three months previously with about 80 people from her village, including her husband and a 2-year-old son. The boy is left in a cloth swing tied to a tree while they work. During the survey, she was working on the construction site of a ring road of the Ahmedabad Urban Development Authority, a public entity. She and her husband earn about 350 rupees daily and work about 25 days each month. They live by the

road side in a temporary shelter without any facility for bathing or sanitation. All their identity documents are registered with their village, including a Below the Poverty Line card and an election card. They have no idea how to procure such documents in the city; however, they would like to settle down in the city if they could find regular work. Then they could enrol their children into school.

Sometimes a group of migrant workers from the same region who are brought to work on a construction site by the same contractor tend to share living accommodations in a slum on a rental basis. **Kalubhai Bhurjibhai Sangada**, age 23, from Zalod Taluka of Dahod district, lives in the Bharwad vas of Odhav slum within Ahmedabad. He has been living there with his wife and two children for the past six years. All their identity documents, including a Below the Poverty Line card, are registered in their village. During her pregnancy, Kalubhai's wife returned to the village to apply for her maternity benefits. Kalubhai has a work card given provided by his employer, which is his only urban identity document, but he has not registered with the Construction Workers' Welfare Board.

Monabhen Lalubhai Sangada, age 20, is from the same village as Kalubhai and shares the slum dwelling with his family. In all, eight adults live in the house and share the rent, at 150 rupees per person. Monabhen lives there with her husband, who also works in the construction sector, and their two children. Every morning they go to the designated labour point at 7.30 a.m. to be hired by a contractor who then gives them transport allowance to go to the construction site. This means that they do not have the same employer every day, which thus means it is impossible for them to register with the Construction Workers' Welfare Board. They take their children with them to work. It does create difficulty, but there is no other option. Even if they are not well, they need to work. Sometimes when they have to pay attention to the children, the employer cuts a half day's salary. Such work is thus very difficult for women, but there is no choice because they have to work to survive. They do not have any identity card and cannot benefit from any government welfare schemes in the city.

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Decent work in Ahmedabad: An integrated approach

Ahmedabad, the seventh-largest city in India with a population of 6.35 million in 2011, has grown by 3.5 per cent on average per year during the past decade. Cities are the centres of economic growth and innovation. However, rapid urbanization can pose formidable challenges to such aims as reducing urban informality and creating decent and productive jobs, reducing the urbanization of poverty and social exclusion, the adequate provision of social services and sustainable development and environmental protection. This paper examines the recent history, political economy and trends in urbanization in Ahmedabad and discusses a number of integrated policies and strategies for supporting sustainable urban development and decent work in regard to governance, social protection and quality employment creation, among others.

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