

The Impact of Housing Facilities for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer Families on Material Living Standards



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**THE IMPACT OF HOUSING FACILITIES
FOR REHABILITATION OF
BONDED LABOURER FAMILIES
ON MATERIAL LIVING STANDARDS**

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Contents

Abstract	5
PART I - Introduction	7
PART II – Literature Review	9
PART III - Methodology	10
PART IV - Discussion	11
4.1 The Impact on Total Income	11
4.1.1 Causes of the Rise in Total Income	14
4.2 The Poverty Context	19
4.2.1 Poverty Headcount as per Annual Income	19
4.2.2 Chronic Poverty	20
4.2.3 Transient Poverty	20
PART V - Conclusion	22
Bibliography	24

ABSTRACT

In February 2007, National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) completed 'Housing Facilities for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer Families', a project that delivered 75 housing units to former bonded labourers, who had been residing in 7 camps around Hyderabad District. This study attempted to measure the impact of the project on the material living standards of former bonded labourer households. Total income was applied as the measure of material living standards. Accordingly, impact was measured by juxtaposing total income earned by a household during its last year at a camp against the total income it earned during its previous year at the housing colony. Data to this effect was elicited from 10 households by way of structured questionnaires, themes arising from which were inquired into via group interviews of beneficiaries and project personnel. Data analysis was decoupled in terms of change in aggregate total income and poverty analysis. Findings state that aggregate total income rose from Rs. 813,142.5 to Rs. 1,603,865, which, it is contended, was enabled by access to work in stone quarries, curtailment in wage discrimination, enhanced access to livestock, enhanced access to sharecropping contacts, and a reduction in health shocks. Barring access to labour in stone quarries, the stated causes are predicated on changes in the physical environment and changes in the social milieu engineered by the transition from the camps to the housing colony. In addition, findings also state a fall in poverty, measured using the poverty line, and viewed in terms of annual income per member per month, chronic poverty, and transient poverty. Amongst the two stages, camps and housing, only 1 household was classified as poor and that too with respect to the first of the two stages. The widow-headed household was both poor in terms of annual income per member per month and chronic poverty. Its change in status from poor to non-poor can be attributed to a fall in dependency ratio rather than the transition from camp to housing. Moreover, 4 households experienced transient poverty during their residence at the camp, 2 of which did not experience transient poverty during their previous year at the housing colony. Analysis of the 2 households that retained their transient poor status suggests a shift in the temporal location of transient poverty from the sugarcane harvesting season vis-à-vis the camps to the summer season vis-à-vis the housing colony, when the severity of high temperatures force the residents of the housing colony to curtail their supply of labour to stone quarries.



INTRODUCTION



In October 2005, National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) initiated a project titled Housing Facilities for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer Families to improve the living standards of former bonded labourers who were living in seven temporary settlements around District Hyderabad, which were termed camps (NRSP 2007). The camps generally comprised individuals who had escaped situations of bonded labour via facilitation from the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) (Ibid).

At the time the respective project was initiated, NRSP in congruence with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), had completed a project titled Prevention of Family Indebtedness with Microfinance and Related Services (March 2002-March 2004) and was implementing another project titled Preventing and Eliminating Bonded Labour in South Asia (PEBLISA) (October 2004-February 2006), both of which were aimed at improved the living standards of the former bonded labourers residing in different camps (Ibid). Land lease as a microfinance product was an approach taken for mainstreaming former bonded labourers under the PEBLISA project. For this approach, World Bank Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (C GAP) awarded NRSP \$20000 USD, which was then used to procure 20 acres of land as a starting point for the abovementioned housing project (Ibid). The land has been carved into 437 plots of three different sizes: 3, 5, and 15 marlas, as described in Table 1 below (Ibid). The 3 and 5 marla plots are meant for housing whilst the 15 marla plots aim to facilitate household agriculture in conjunction with residence (Ibid).

Table 1 - Number of Plots as Different Sizes

Plot Size	Number of Plots	Percentage
3 Marlas	319	73
5 Marlas	64	15
15 Marlas	49	11
Amenity Plots	05	01

However, due to funding constraints, when the housing project was completed in February 2007, it had delivered 75 houses, with access to water and electricity supplies (Ibid). The houses were bought in exchange for nominal instalments by camp residents. The receipt of nominal charges was meant to conjure a sense of ownership (Ibid). Specifications of the completed houses are given below (Ibid).

Table 2 – Specifications of Completed Houses

Serial Number	Specification	Plot Size			
		3 Marlas	5 Marlas	15 Marlas	Total
1	3 – common walls	40	5	0	45
2	2 – common walls	13	2	0	15
3	1 – common walls	1	0	14	15
Total		54	7	14	75

The purpose of this study is to trace the impact the transition from camps to the housing colony has had on material standard of living, and identify the factors to which the impact can be attributed. The emphasis on material living standards does not suggest that the study views deprivation only in such terms, but it acknowledges the argument made by Deaton and Grosh (2000) that deprivation has a multitude of manifestations including deprivation of health, deprivation of education, deprivation of freedom from crime, and deprivation of political liberty; all of which should be the focus of a study tracing the impact on living standards. Nonetheless, logistical constraints informed the choice of emphasising the material dimension of living standards alone.

The study is broadly structured according to four subsequent stages. The first phase is the literature review, which collates arguments for different ways of measuring material living standards. It is succeeded by the methodology phase, which presents the methodology applied in this study for measuring material living standards, the findings of which are analysed in the following discussion phase. The study closes with a brief conclusion, which collates points of success and concern.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Broadly speaking, material standard of living has two different sets of measures: those based on consumption and those based on income.

Deaton (1997) and Lipton and Ravallion (1995) argue that consumption-based measures are preferable to income-based measures, particularly inline with the development context, on primarily two accounts. Firstly, it is consumption that provides utility, an economist's measure of personal welfare (Ibid). Secondly, permanent income or life-cycle models contend that current consumption is less volatile than current income, as in the face of shocks the former can be smoothed to an extent by saving and dissaving/borrowing (Ibid). The second argument posits that current consumption is more likely to bear a closer relationship to permanent standard of living than income (Ibid).

Conversely, McKay (2000) argues that income, if measured as total income, offers certain advantages relative to consumption-based measures in the measurement of living standards. To this effect, total income is described as follows:

"Households can derive their income from many different sources, which can be classified into factor income (payments received by households or their members in return for supplying factors of production that they own, such as labour or land) and non-factor income (net transfers received from sources outside the household that do not need to be repaid). Total household income is the sum at the household level of these diverse sources, and represents the total purchasing power available to a household in a given time period."

The respective author states three advantages. Firstly, he posits the situation in which a household, facing a loss of income, is forced to sell its income-generating assets at the expense of future income levels (Ibid). In such a case, consumption-based measures may draw a more misleading estimate of permanent income as compared to a measure of total income (Ibid). To crystallise the argument, in the given situation, consumption-based measures shall confound an unsustainable level of consumption with permanent living standards (Ibid).

Secondly, given that poverty is a state below a minimum acceptable standard of living (Deaton 2004), McKay (2000) argues that in contradiction to consumption data over time, data describing total income overtime allows for a clearer recognition of and distinction between the transient and the chronic poor.

The third advantage stated by McKay (2000) differs from the first two, as it does not argue total income's virtues as an estimate of permanent standard of living relative to consumption-based measures, but instead contends that total income allows for an insight into the causes of poverty, a question consumption based measures are fragile in answering. He argues that by knowing the components of total income, it is possible to decipher which income sources are associated with the poor and those that are not (Ibid). For instance, the poor may be involved in activities bearing low economic returns or may have no income sources other than inter-household transfers (Ibid).

In essence, the debate between Deaton (1997) and Lipton and Ravallion (1995), on the one hand, and McKay (2000) on the other, suggests that both consumption-based measures of living standards and total income as a measure of living standards offer different yet compatible incentives. Hence, in measuring living standards both consumption-based measures and total income offer an opportunity for triangulation. However, as noted by McKay (2000), total income offers the advantage of analysing the causes behind the differences among different elements in relation to living standards. Hence, the debate suggests the conclusion that, keeping in view the focus of this study, that is, to measure changes in living standards and identify the causes that underpin the changes, total income offers an indispensable measure of material living standards whilst consumption-based measures form a valuable supplementary to total income in identifying living standards.

III. METHODOLOGY

The findings of this study were in part extracted from structured interviews aimed at measuring total income for two stages: the camps and the housing colony. The questions posed were based on the constituents of total income as articulated by McKay (2000), namely, income from wage employment, household agricultural income, non-farm self-employment income, actual and imputed rental income, income from private inter-household transfers, and various miscellaneous income. The structured interviews did not aim to measure consumption vis-à-vis each stage, because the interviewees were unable to recall consumption data for the camp stage.

The reference period for each stage was chosen to be a year. The choice of a year was predicated on the argument by Deaton and Grosh (2000) that there seems to be a general consensus that a year is a sensible period over which to judge people's living standards.

Specifically, the reference period in relation to the camp was the interviewee's last year at the camp and the year 2008 in relation to the housing colony. The reference period, however, did not extend from the beginning of January till the end of December. Instead, it extended from the beginning of December till the end of November. This was done due to the interest of the study into how income fluctuations had changed over the two stages.

To elaborate, according to dialogues with the project staff that took place whilst the methodology for the study was being drafted, incomes primarily tend to fluctuate at the camps in accordance with whether a crop is being harvested or not, and as a simultaneous concern, in accordance with which crop is being harvested. At camps residents harvest sugarcane from December to February, wheat from March to April, and cotton from September to November, whilst the period May to August is spent in miscellaneous agricultural activities. Of these periods, lower economic returns are experienced during the periods December to February and May to August. Hence, in order to trace the behaviour of total income through the course of the reference period relevant to the camp stage and investigate how, if at all, it had changed, the reference period for each stage was chosen to extend from the beginning of December till the end of November. In addition, the structured interviews progressed in terms of the breakdown of the year stated above; investigating each stratum at a time.

The causes behind changes in total income suggested by the structured interviews were subsequently investigated through semi-structured interviews in the form of group interviews.

Data was elicited from 10 households, where 28 earners were interviewed. Unfortunately, they were sampled conveniently, that is, those who happened to be there were interviewed. The constraint that led to convenience sampling was the absence of randomly selected individuals, who were for one reason or the other not available during daytime.

IV. DISCUSSION

The discussion phase of this study analyses the collected data. The analysis is decoupled in terms of the impact on total income and the impact on poverty, of which the former, being an aggregate, masks the experience of households in terms of the latter. With respect to the impact on total income, the impact itself and the causes that underpin it are described. In the subsequent section on poverty, the impact is gauged in terms of all three bases: annual, chronic, and transient poverty.

4.1 THE IMPACT ON TOTAL INCOME

Analysis of the data collected suggests that the impact of the housing project on total income, and hence material living standards, has been positive. This is reflected by Table 3 and Table 4 (placed in the following pages) which show the breakdown of total income for both the camp and the housing colony and the profiles of individual households in terms of total income and dependency, respectively.

Table 3 associates the transition from the camps to the housing colony with an expansion in the elements that comprised total income at the camps, namely, wage income in cash, wage income in kind, revenue from the sale of animal products, and consumption of self-produced food. Simultaneously, it associates the respective transition to the introduction of new constituents of total income, namely, revenue from the sale of crops, and revenue in cash from sale of (non-farm) output.

The increase in total income associated with the respective transition can also be viewed via a comparison in per capita income per month between the camps and the housing colony. The per capita income per month at the camp was computed to be Rs. 1149.82 whereas the same statistic was Rs. 2299.79 for the housing colony.

Table 3 – Measuring Total Household Income

Income Component	Data That Must Be Collected	Camp	Housing
Income from wage employment	Wage income in cash	615600	1187250
	Wage income in kind	180550	95750
	Bonuses		

Income Component	Data That Must Be Collected	Camp	Housing
Household agricultural income	Revenue from the sale of crops	146500	
	Revenue from the sale of processed crop products		
	Revenue from the sale of animal	11500	131400
	Consumption of self-produced food*	12775	54750
	<i>Minus</i>		
	Expenditure on inputs for crop cultivation	43950	
	Expenditure on inputs for processed crop products		
	Expenditure on livestock inputs	7282.5	55845
	Depreciation of agricultural capital equipment		
Non-farm self-employment income	Revenue in cash from sale of output		135400
	Revenue in kind from sale of output		
	Consumption of own produced output (where appropriate)*		
	<i>Minus</i>		
	Expenditure on inputs		47390
	Depreciation of capital equipment		
	Food commodities		
	Non-food commodities (where not otherwise included)*		
Actual and imputed rental income	Income from renting out household assets		
	Imputed rent of owner-occupied dwellings*		
Income from private inter-household transfers	Income from private inter-household transfers		
	Income from private inter-household transfers in cash and kind (where no repayment is expected)		
Other income	Various miscellaneous income (income from pensions, unemployment benefits)		

– Household Total Income and Dependency Profiles

Name	Details	Camp	Housing
Hemmoon	Number of Household Members	7	6
	Number of Earners	4	4
	Annual Total Income	112450	186924
Harchand	Number of Household Members	4	6
	Number of Earners	4	2
	Annual Total Income	75817	182100

Name	Details	Camp	Housing
Bai	Number of Household Members	5	5
	Number of Earners	5	4
	Annual Total Income	107120.5	186870
Aloo	Number of Household Members	4	6
	Number of Earners	2	3
	Annual Total Income	70800	153700
Chattan	Number of Household Members	3	4
	Number of Earners	2	2
	Annual Total Income	72450	121750
Khatoon	Number of Household Members	6	6
	Number of Earners	1	3
	Annual Total Income	30750	157050
Jumoon	Number of Household Members	5	7
	Number of Earners	2	3
	Annual Total Income	89800	168814
Walo	Number of Household Members	7	5
	Number of Earners	4	2
	Annual Total Income	95405	110760
Nim	Number of Household Members	5	8
	Number of Earners	2	2
	Annual Total Income	77800	183900
Photo	Number of Household Members	7	7
	Number of Earners	3	3
	Annual Total Income	80750	175360

Additionally, the poverty line, which can be seen to signify the minimum acceptable standard of living for a given year, can be used to further inform analysis. Viewing the percentage of monthly income above (or below the poverty line), not only adds an extra lens from which to view the impact on total income, but importantly facilitates comparisons overtime. For the purpose of this study, two poverty lines shall be employed: Rs. 944.47 for the year 2005-06 (Pakistan Economic Survey 2007-08) in relation to the camps and Rs. 1123 for the year 2008 (Saadi 2009) in relation the housing colony. The choice of the poverty line for the year 2005-06 is informed by the fact that all interviewees reported the respective year to have been their last year at the camp.

Hence, at the camp 34.82% of the per capita income per month was above the poverty line of Rs. 944.47 for the year 2005-06. On the other hand, at the housing colony, 51.17% of the per capita income per month was above the poverty line of Rs. 1123 for the year

2008-09. This is shown in the graph below.



4.1.1 Causes of the Rise in Total Income

The causes that underpin the abovementioned increase in total income shall be discussed in this section of the study. These are recognised as the transition from agricultural labour to labour in stone quarries, the curtailment of wage discrimination, increased access to livestock and sharecropping, and a reduction in health shocks.

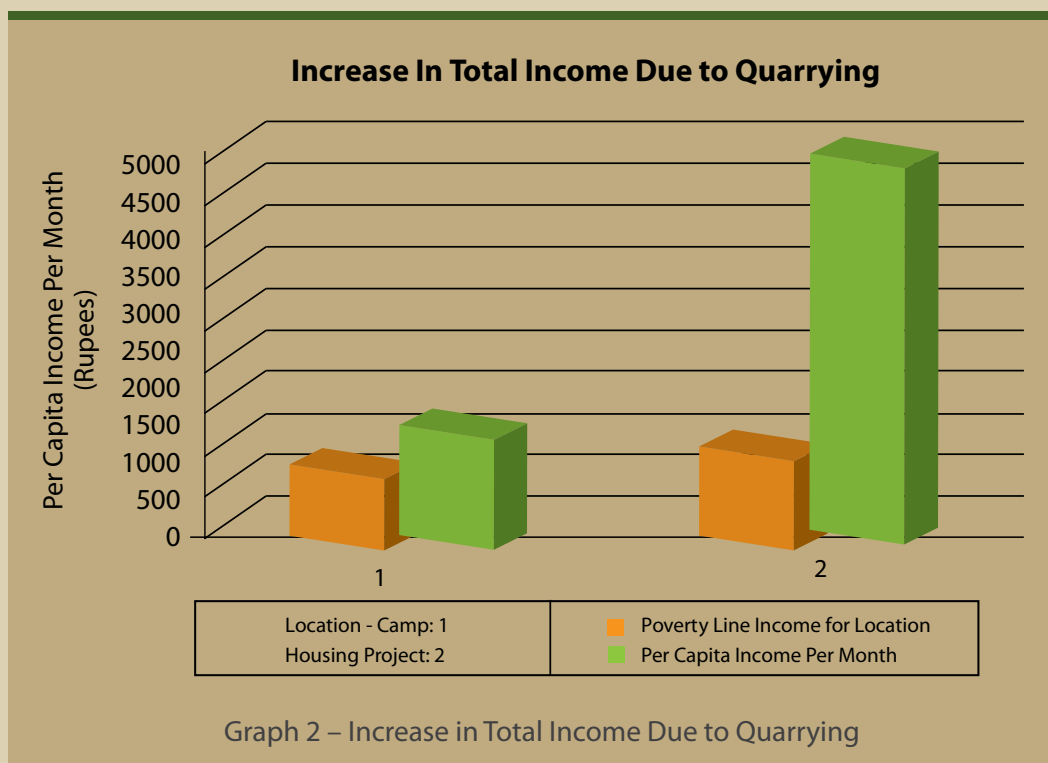
4.1.1.1 Stone Quarries

The rise in total income can in part be attributed to labour in stone quarries, which was unavailable at the camps. Labour in stone quarries entails both: extraction of stone for building materials and loading the extracted stone onto transport vehicles.

Labour in stone quarries is deemed difficult work. During the course of interviews, the Urdu phrase *sakht kaam*, meaning difficult work, was often used in order to describe it. Accordingly, it is solely accorded to males. In addition, supply of labour is reduced during the summer season, albeit that demand for their labour remains virtually constant through the course of the year.

Of the 10 households analysed, with respect to 8 households, at least 1 male works in stone quarries through the course of the year. Of these 8 households, 7 male members have replaced agricultural labour with labour in stone quarries as their sole occupa-

tion. With respect to these 7 individuals, the switch from agricultural labour to labour in stone quarries has had a positive impact on both number of days worked and daily income. On average, number of days worked in a month has increased from 20.7 to 22.3 and daily income has risen from Rs. 69.13 to Rs. 210.83. For heuristic purposes, let us develop model months relevant to their former and current occupations by multiplying the average number of days worked in a month with the average daily income for each occupation, and juxtapose each model month against the relevant poverty line. The model month for agricultural labour yields an income of Rs. 1430.991 (20.7 days*Rs. 69.13) and the model month for labour in stone quarries yields an income of Rs. 4701.51(22.3 days*Rs. 210.83). This entails that 33.99% of income for the former model month is above the respective poverty line whereas the statistic is 76.11% for the latter model month. This is shown in the graph below.



Graph 2 – Increase in Total Income Due to Quarrying

Testimonies of NRSP project staff and those of interviewees from the housing project contended that stone quarries are not in close proximity to the camps, although they are in close proximity to the housing colony, rendering these accessible.

4.1.1.2 Wage Discrimination

Of the 10 households analysed, 4 male interviewees partially attributed an increase in total income to an end in wage discrimination in favour of non-camp workers as opposed to camp workers. No single wage gap was reported. On the contrary, different

ranges of daily wage gaps were reported by each interviewee, which were: Rs. 50-70; Rs. 20-50; Rs. 15-65; and Rs. 40-90.

They contended that wage discrimination existed due to the migratory status ascribed to the camp workers. However, with permanent settlement, they argued that their supply of labour was now perceived by employers to be less uncertain. Accordingly, wage discrimination has not been carried forward to the housing colony. The following quote from Aloo summaries this argument:

“They (non-camp workers) were settled there. They had been working for them. Zameendars thought that they would work for them in the time to come. To them we were simply migratory labour. Now we have bought our plots. Zameendars think that we cannot leave as we have bought our own permanent residence.”

4.1.1.3 Livestock

The increase in income can also be in part attributed to access to livestock, to which two crucial sources of income are linked: profits from the sale of animal products and consumption of self-produced food. Together these have risen from Rs. 16992.5 to Rs. 130305, a rise of 666.84% or a rise of 6.6684 times.

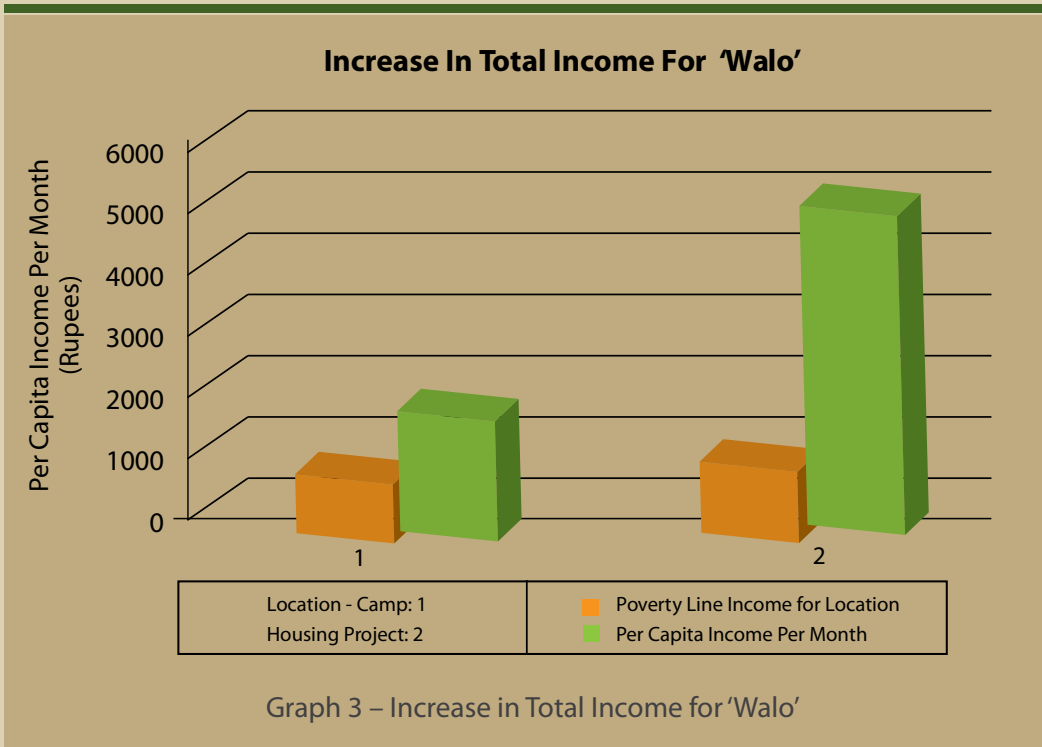
Two factors underpin the rise in livestock sales, that is, the space and security of tenure associated with the transition to the housing colony. In other words, a lack of space and insecurity of tenure at the camps rendered keeping livestock cumbersome.

This argument was recurrent in the testimonies, and its essence was captured by the following quote by Jumoon:

“In the camp, land was only sufficient to build a hut. Besides, the local zameendars used to say that it was their land. They wanted to take over the land. At first they would use words, and then they would hire the police. Then the poor man had to move.”

4.1.1.4 Sharecropping

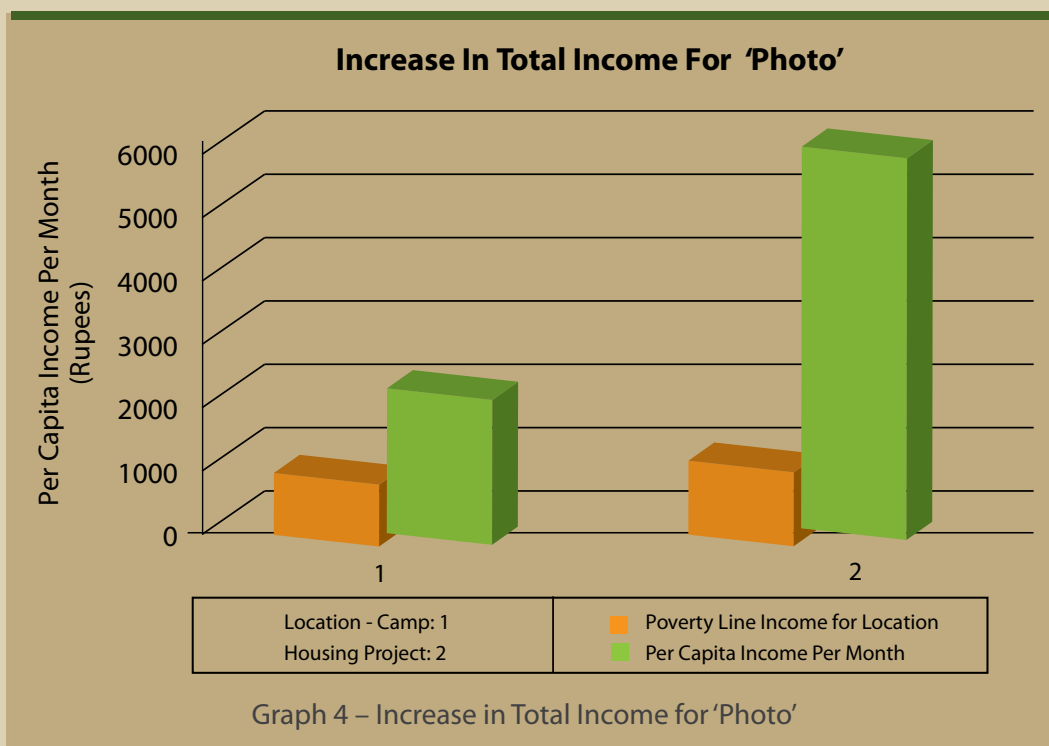
Sharecropping is another factor that is associated with a rise in total income, as shall be shown, both as an income source in its own right and also as a companion income source to wage labour. Of the 10 households analysed, 2 have sharecroppers as household heads, namely, Walo and Photo, both of whom were formerly agricultural labourers. Conversely, of the 10 households analysed, none contained members who worked as sharecroppers during their time at the camp.



In the case of Walo, he earned Rs. 22,800 as an agricultural labour for the year 2005-6, or Rs. 1900 per month. This entails that 50.29% of his income was above the poverty line of Rs. 944.47 for the respective year. As a sharecropper he earned Rs. 34650 for the year 2008-2009, or Rs. 2887.5 per month. This entails that 61.08% of his monthly income was above the poverty line of Rs.1123 for the respective year. In addition to this, he contends that as a sharecropper he has been able to complement his earnings from sharecropping with earning from wage labour. For 7 months in the year he claims to have worked for 12 days at a daily wage of Rs. 300 at stone quarries. This adds a further Rs. 25,500 to his annual earning, and entails that his earning per month, that is, Rs.59850 or Rs. 4987.5 a month is 77.48% above the poverty for the relevant year.

With respect to Photo, he earned Rs. 68250 or Rs. 5687.5 per month in profits from sharecropping for the year 2008-09. This is as opposed to Rs. 26000 or Rs. 2166.67 he earned as a wage labourer for the year 2005-06. This entails that 56.41% of his income was above the poverty line for the year 2005-06 and 80.25% of his income was above the poverty line for the year 2008-09.

In relation to their inability to access sharecropping contracts during their time at the camps, both individuals iterated that, as they had fled from bonded labour and settled in camps, they had been ascribed as untrustworthy by the zameendars local to their relevant camps. Sharecropping contracts, they contended entailed advances or loans in the initial year for subsistence purposes and for covering the costs of inputs; advances zameendars did not trust them with. However, they further argued that dislocation from the camp via transition into the housing colony had by default severed them from



an environment where their identity was intimately intertwined with having been in bonded labour. This, in turn, had facilitated them in acquiring sharecropping contracts. A quote by Walo captures this argument:

"They (zameendars) did not give us money in advance. They used to think that we might run away with the money. They used to think that we had fled zameendars after having stolen their money. Here, at the colony, we are viewed differently; we are trusted. Here no one judges us as runaways."

4.1.1.5 Reduction in Health Shocks

A factor underlying the increase in per capita income is the reduction in health shocks. This reduction is indicated by the average number of days an individual remained inactive due to ill-health, which was 5.83 in the camps for the year 2005-6 and 3.18 in the housing colony for the year 2008-2009.

Consultations with Dr. Imran Kalhoro (2009), Field Medical Officer (NRSP), suggested that higher levels of economic inactivity due to health shocks were observed at the camp due to the usage of contaminated water and the fragile state of the huts used for residence.

Contaminated water led to widespread diarrhoea and skin illnesses, of which scabies was most prevalent. The following quote by Chattan describes how the residents of camps had to survive on water from the Indus River:

“There were no hand pumps. There were some, but the problem was that they were far away; out of reach. We drank water from the river; Sindhu river.”

In addition to this, the huts at camps were weak structures, and formed vulnerable defence against rain and extreme temperatures. This gave way to seasonal illnesses such as cold, common flu, pneumonia, sunstrokes, malaria, and conjunctivitis.

The quote below is by Bai, who attributes the fragile state of the huts to a lack of financial resources. The quote can be better understood in light of the insecurity of tenure mentioned in the section on livestock. In other words, building a hut was not alike building a permanent place of residence; one had to be built whenever the camp members were forced to move, or at least the prospect of having to move was a deterrent against larger investments.

“Look, huts are made of small pieces of wood and a larger piece of wood in the centre. At the zameendar, we used to take the wood from his trees, as much as we wanted. At the camp we had to buy wood, Rs. 1000 worth of wood, and a Rs. 200 worth plastic cover to try and stop the rain, and the wind would still blow the hut away.”

4.2 THE POVERTY CONTEXT

The discussion phase thus far has been concerned with the change in aggregate total income and the causes behind it. Hence the poverty context has remained concealed. In what follows, this context is investigated in all three terms, annual, chronic and transient poverty.

The distinction between transient and chronic poverty is sample-based. Accordingly, one who remains below the poverty line through out a given stage is categorised as chronic poor, and one who moves into and/or out of poverty during a given stage is categorised as transient poor.

4.2.1 Poverty Headcount as per Annual Income

Respecting both stages, of the 10 households analysed, only one household was identified as poor on the basis of its annual income. For the year 2005-06, at the camp Qadir Nagar, the household headed by a widow named Khatoon, reported a total annual

income of Rs. 30750, and a total annual income per member per month of Rs. 427.08, which was Rs. 517.38 below the poverty line for the year (Rs. 944.47). This household was also the sole chronically poor household, an analysis of which is given in the next section.

However, at the housing colony, for the year 2008-09, the household reported a total annual income per member per month of Rs. 2181.5, Rs. 1058.5 in excess of the poverty line for the year (Rs. 1123). Hence, the change in location is associated with the household's transition out of poverty. However, a careful analysis of the household suggests that the change in location did not per se cause the transition out of poverty.

At the camp, Khatoon's household was suffering from a high dependency ratio, with 1 female head of working age, and five members of child ages. Hence its dependency ratio was 5. In the year 2008-09, the household's dependency ratio had fallen to 1, as 2 members had exited child ages since 2005-06. Hence the fall in dependency ratio appears to be the intervening variable in relation to the association between the change in location and the move out of poverty. In other words, it cannot be argued that the household's move out of poverty would not have taken place had the household not moved to the housing colony.

4.2.2 Chronic Poverty

An analysis of income per member per month with respect to the 4 different strata of the year mentioned in the methodology section suggests the abovementioned household's status as chronic poor. The respective breakdown is shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5 – Temporal Stratification of Total Income				
Khatoon	Dec-Feb	March-April	May-August	Sept-Nov
Camp	250	562.5	250	750

4.2.3 Transient Poverty

However, with regard to transient poverty, the headcount is higher for both stages: camps and housing. 4 households were poor for a single stratum during the camp stage and 2 households were poor for a single stratum during the housing stage. 2 households that experienced transient poverty during the camp stage experienced transient poverty during the housing stage as well, but for a different stratum, which is of significant importance.

Of the 4 households mentioned above, all experienced transient poverty during the period December-February, 2005. On the other hand, the transient poor households at the housing colony experienced poverty during the period May-August, 2008. Both the reduction in transient poverty and the change in the temporal location of transient poverty can be attributed to labour in stone quarries. The male members of these 4 households switched from agricultural labour to labour in stone quarries after moving to the housing colony. Hence they were not exposed to the low economic returns associated with harvesting sugarcane. However, during the summer season, male members from 2 of these households chose to curtail their supply of labour to the stone quarries to the extent that their households fell below the poverty line.

An analysis of income per member per month with respect to the 4 different strata of the year mentioned in the methodology section suggests how 2 households have exited their transient poor status, whilst 2 households have retained the status, but for a different time in the year.

Table 6 – Temporal Stratification of Total Income

Chattan	Dec-Feb	March-April	May-August	Sept-Nov
Camp	916.67	1800	1216.67	3233.33
Housing	2250	2793.75	1600	3900
Harchand	Dec-Feb	March-April	May-August	Sept-Nov
Camp	843.75	1686.5	1012.5	3000
Housing	1800	4200	875	4350
Jumoon	Dec-Feb	March-April	May-August	Sept-Nov
Camp	820	1800	1070	2540
Housing	1395.71	2214.28	875.14	4000
Nim	Dec-Feb	March-April	May-August	Sept-Nov
Camp	600	1280	1000	2400
Housing	2000	2070	3600	4080

V. CONCLUSION

Data suggests that NRSP's project Housing Facilities for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer Families has enabled a rise in total income. In other words, the total incomes of households have increased due to their transition from camps to the housing colony. The increase in total incomes has been enabled by access to work in stone quarries, curtailment in wage discrimination, enhanced access to livestock as well as sharecropping contracts, and a reduction in health shocks.

All these factors, barring access to stone quarries, cannot be attributed to a change in physical environment alone. From the analysis above it can be contended that the remaining factors have been enabled by a synergistic interaction between a change in the physical environment and a change in social milieu.

With regard to the curtailment in wage discrimination, permanent residence has rendered the supply of labour of the former bonded labourers less uncertain. However, simultaneously, it can be argued that it has removed the negative ascription that a set of individuals are dissimilated from the society they reside in, which may have partially contributed to the wage gap.

Enhanced access to livestock as a product of increased space and security of tenure can be solely viewed as a product of a change in the physical environment. However, as was suggested above, insecurity of tenure was not merely a subject of undefined legal status of residence at the camps, but also a product of the power local zameendars projected on the vulnerable camp settlers.

Increased access to sharecropping can be seen as a dislocation from negative ascriptions that accompanied life in camps. However, permanent residence cannot be disregarded as an incentive for zameendars to be more forthcoming in relation to giving advances to potential sharecroppers.

With respect to a decline in health shocks, the availability of soundly structured housing and the supply of clean drinking water are two evident causes associated with the physical environment. However, freedom from the power local zameendars had over the camp dwellers, by way of which they could displace them, allows residents to benefit from the protection the altered physical environment offers them against ailments.

Hence it can be argued that the factors underlying the increase in total income have not merely come about due to the tangible interventions inherent in the respective housing project, but also due to how the respective project has created an altered social milieu for its residents.

However, reservations remain in relation to the ability of the housing project to impact poverty in its different forms. For instance, it cannot be claimed that a widow like Khaatoon, with 5 young children would not be poor at the housing colony. Moreover, although data indicates a fall in transient poverty, it does not suggest that the housing colony has given way to sources of income from labour that are not at the behest of seasonal forces.

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