

# Briefing Paper 1

## Commonwealth Games and Social Exclusion



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Release of a community charter on human rights violation during the Commonwealth Games, New Delhi, December 2010

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ACGF: Anti-Commonwealth Games Front  
CRY: Child Relief and You  
CSO: Civil Society Organisations  
CWG: Commonwealth Games  
FGD: Focus Group Discussion  
HLRN: Housing and Land Rights Network  
MCD: Municipal Corporation of Delhi  
NDP: Net Domestic Product  
NGO: Non-governmental organisation  
PUDR: People's Union for Democratic Rights  
SEW: Social Equity Watch

## 1. INTRODUCTION

India hosted the Commonwealth Games from 3 to 14 October 2010 in New Delhi. Despite scathing criticism and embarrassing evidence exposed by the media and researchers about the way the Games were conducted, what the world saw were spectacular opening and closing ceremonies, commendable performances from the Indian sports contingent and accolades for successfully hosting the mega sports event. What however is a matter of concern is the violation of citizenship rights and social justice as a direct consequence of the Commonwealth Games (CWG).

Several reports, including the one by Housing and Land Rights Network, (HLRN) (2010 a, b), have stated that in the name of security and preparation for the Games, thousands of citizens were denied the fundamental rights of freedom of movement and of engaging in trade and occupations of their choice (among many others). The concern here is that these rights were selectively denied to certain sections of society. Street vendors and rickshaw pullers were barred from carrying on their business, weekly markets were not allowed to be held, roadside shops and *jhuggis* (slums/temporary shelters) were demolished and construction workers were forcefully sent back home (HLRN, 2010a). Reasons cited for these actions were 'beautification' of the city and security concerns. With the overall aim of achieving international accolades for Delhi as a 'world class city' and India as 'an attractive international sports destination', the Indian government seems to have evaded its responsibility of protecting the rights of disadvantaged sections of society. The city's poor struggled hard to earn their livelihood for subsistence, find accommodation, or even stay alive<sup>1</sup>. For the duration of the CWG and in preparation of it, many thousands lost their livelihood and were evicted from their 30-40-year-old dwellings. During the evictions, several lost their family members. While there were some exceptional cases where the urban poor were housed in shelter-homes or compensated for their losses, these cases are very few. About 95% of the affected population did not receive any rehabilitation or compensation (HLRN, 2010 a & b).

The most affected were workers in the unorganised sector who are an indispensable part of the city and largely enable its smooth functioning. The sector comprises cleaners, trash collectors, roadside tea stall owners, weekly market shopkeepers, street vendors and rickshaw pullers among others. The Planning Commission's Institute of Human Development Report in 2000 estimated that the unorganised labour comprised the largest portion of the work force in India (92.5%) and was the greatest contributor to the Net Domestic Product (NDP). The non-agricultural unorganised sector (which includes unorganised manufacturing; unorganised trade and restaurants and unorganised transport, storage) contributed 52% of Net Domestic Product. In Delhi, the population covered under the unorganised labour are largely the cleaners, rickshaw pullers, street vendors, domestic workers, trash collectors, rag pickers and other such daily wage earners.

To gain a better understanding of the issue and violation of rights of the unorganised sector workers in the scramble to organise the Games, the Social Equity Watch

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<sup>1</sup> As found from the literature review and field research

(SEW) secretariat carried out a study on Commonwealth Games and social exclusion.

## 1.1 Objectives

The study attempts to understand:

- a) The impact of Commonwealth Games (and the run-up to it) on the lives of the affected urban poor – including rickshaw pullers, destitute, street vendors and daily wage earners;
- b) Aspects of livelihood, health, nutrition and mental anxieties faced.

The study aims at creation of an articulated public opinion on these issues and to identify important areas where in-depth research could be organised to gather evidence of exclusions.

## 1.2 Methodology

The study was carried out in October 2010. It involved the review of secondary literature, interactions with groups/experts working on the issues of human rights violations during the Commonwealth Games as well as in-depth interviews with persons whose lives and livelihoods were directly affected by it. The study chose a case study-based approach. The sample was kept small with the aim of taking stock of the situation and understanding the immediate impact of the CWG (and possible long-term repercussion) on the affected.

The first step was to telephonically interview civil society groups to seek their views. Their first views were that the CWG caused havoc in the life of city makers and that the government completely ignored the poor and disadvantaged sections of society. This was followed by a short consultation with activists and organisations working on the issue, where it was decided that a short and crisp study would help capture the nature of exclusion that occurred.

Sites for field visits were two shelter homes – one in Paharganj (Motia Khan) and another in Maharani Bagh (Krilo kari) – and two daily street markets – Kotla Mubarakpur and Lodi Road. Fifty-five respondents were surveyed and from them, the case studies of 10 respondents were selected for the study. The study process was initiated by contacting organisations that could help the team in identifying and approaching the targeted group. IGSSS facilitated the process at the Paharganj shelter home.

**Table 1 details the places the team visited, the number of respondents and the number of profiles taken from each location for analysis:**

<i>S.NO</i>	<i>LOCATION</i>	<i>Total number of respondents</i>	<i>Number of profiles selected for analysis</i>
1.	<i>Paharganj</i>	20	3
2.	<i>Maharani Bagh</i>	20	-
3.	<i>Kotla Mubarakpur</i>	5	5
4.	<i>Lodi Road</i>	3	2

Cases were selected on the basis of a respondent's availability for discussions, their willingness to record their details and to provide a mix of occupation, age, and gender profiles. In-depth analysis of the cases of the ten selected respondents was done and evidence was gathered for the study. These informed the secondary literature which had been done.

The field processes were participatory and the information generated was mainly through focus group discussion (FGD) and personal interviews. The team did some group as well as individual interviews to understand the problems of the target group. There were a series of questions on the impact of the CWG on the livelihood, income, health and food habits of the respondents (see Annexure 3).

### **1.3 Limitations**

The team could not meet CWG construction workers since they had been forcefully sent to their native villages after completion of construction work. Information provided on construction workers is purely from secondary literature (reports/press-releases) and through discussions with NGO heads.

## 2. FINDINGS

### 2.1 From the Literature Review

A review of secondary literature such as relevant reports, press releases and Internet searches was undertaken to take stock of the issue. Review of literature was supplemented by discussion with civil society organisations active on related issues. What underscores the findings of the literature review is the fact that starting from the bid for the Games, the process has been objectionable. India's bid for the Games was neither well-known nor published. This raises critical questions on the functioning of a democracy (HLRN, 2010 a). Further, the exact amount of money spent on the Games remains unknown. The estimated figure of the total cost of the Games ranges from Rs.10,000 to 30,000 crore but this remains to be confirmed by the organisers (HLRN, 2010, a & b).

Organisers justified India's decision of hosting CWG in terms of tangible benefits it would bring to the city like development of infrastructure, employment generation, boost to tourism and creation of a clean and beautiful city. But HLRN's report shows these promises are quite exaggerated and CWG could not live up to the benefits promised at the time of bidding. From the projections of more than one lakh tourists to visit Delhi, to creation of jobs, to beautification of the city – all estimates remained far from being realised. Only a few thousand tourists visited the city (several star players turned down the opportunity to participate in the Delhi CWG for various reasons), no sustainable jobs could be created, beautification drives resulted in the worst forms of violations and brutalities and city residents were inconvenienced because of construction work. In all, the cost benefit analysis of CWG remains a big question to be resolved, especially in the context of a developing country with jarring socio-economic inequalities. Critics have argued that the volume of money spent on the Commonwealth games could have been used to develop infrastructure throughout the country. A press release of the 'Anti Commonwealth Games Front'<sup>2</sup> (ACGF) formed by a number of civil society groups to oppose the CWG protested on the following grounds:

- Utility of stadiums after the Games: Stadiums would not be made available for use of school children. If the government intends to boost the spirit of sports in the country, it would do better to recruit coaches and invest at the school-level and in sports material.
- In an attempt to 'clean up' the city, destitute people were met with undignified and cruel treatment. They were rounded up from the streets and forcibly sent back home. Migrant workers were threatened to leave the city. Domestic workers, drivers, plumbers and other workers were packed off to the railway stations. They were being hidden away in parks because the Delhi government did not want foreigners to see Delhi's poor.
- At least 3,00,000 (3 lakh) street vendors lost their livelihoods to the Games. Cart-pullers, waste-pickers, head-loaders, balloon sellers, cobblers, street-food vendors and other informal sector workers were denied the right to work. Since they were not able to earn their daily wage, they had no money to buy food. All

<sup>2</sup> South Asia Citizens Web (2010) - Press Release - Citizens Groups Protest Against Commonwealth Games Held in Delhi



*dhabas* (eateries) on the Games routes were closed for security reasons. Weekly markets in the vicinity of stadiums were banned for the duration of the Games.

- Workers at the Commonwealth Games construction sites saw some of the most widespread violation of human rights. The relentless toil of starving labourers created the new infrastructure in Delhi. But workers were forced to work day and night without receiving minimum and overtime wages. Some labourers lost their lives due to hazardous working conditions. Child labour was also involved in some Games projects.

Studies confirm that Commonwealth Games construction site workers – the builders of new infrastructure of the city – were the biggest victims of injustice, exploitation and violation of legal and social rights. A study by Child Rights and You (CRY, 2010) found that at Dhyana Chand National Stadium, R.K. Khanna Stadium, Talkatora Stadium, Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium and in Lodhi Road, 84% labourers were paid much less than the stipulated minimum daily wage of Rs. 203 for unskilled workers. A 25-year-old worker at the Games Village site told CRY that the contractor took a large chunk of his wages away: “Our entire family is cramped into a plastic tent. Whenever media persons come, the site supervisor bluffs them by saying that workers receive Rs. 200 and masons get Rs. 500. We only get a part of it, the rest goes to the contractor.” Further, People’s Union for Democratic Rights (PUDR, 2010) states in reference to CWG and violation of construction site workers that “behind the glitz of fancy stadiums, hotels, and apartments, lies the murky and sensitive death knell of a large majority of people whose livelihoods and habitats are at stake and who have become cheap pawns in the Commonwealth jamboree.” In addition, the fact that construction workers who worked round the clock had no protective or safety gear was visible for all to see. The PUDR report also revealed that the Minister of State for Labour admitted in the Rajya Sabha that 42 labourers in connection with work on various CWG sites have lost their lives.

At the construction site, workers lived in inhuman conditions with no facility for quality food, safe drinking water, healthcare and schooling for children (CRY 2010).

This review highlights the Government’s indifference to uphold human rights and security of its most marginalised people. The CWG can be seen to have defied people’s basic human rights<sup>3</sup> as defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, such as:

1. Freedom of movement and residence (Article 13)
2. Not being put into inhuman undignified cruel treatment (Article 5)
3. Not be arbitrarily arrested, detained and exiled (Article 9)
4. Freedom of work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
  - a. Right to equal pay for equal work.
  - b. Right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for oneself and one’s family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection (Article 23, 24)
5. A standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of oneself and of one’s family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services (Article 25)

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Organization – Universal Declaration of Human Rights <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

## 2.2 From the Field and Analysis

This section presents findings gathered from the field study, as below:

1. Profile of respondents
2. Impact on income
3. Impact on health and nutrition
4. Impact at psychological level

The findings are supplemented with data and information assembled from the review of published literature and discussions with activists from relevant NGOs.

### 2.2.1 Profile of the Respondents

Personal profiles of the ten respondents consulted are presented below in tabular form. Respondents fall into three occupation types – vendors, rickshaw pullers and beggars. Respondent's names have been changed to protect their privacy.

#### **Respondent 1: Abhay**

Abhay is a 25-year old street vendor who sells spices in Kotla Mubarakpur market. He hails from Uttar Pradesh and migrated to Delhi when he was 10 years old. During discussions he shared that his usual earning was Rs. 750 a day. After cutting down the work expenditure, it came down to almost Rs. 650 per day. He is the oldest son in the family so has the responsibilities of looking after his parents and younger siblings. His father is old now so the whole family is dependent on him for survival. Every month he sends a minimum of Rs. 5000 to his family. He and his family were affected by CWG restrictions on street vending. Abhay had to go hungry for the days he was in Delhi during the restrictions. After waiting for a few days for the situation to improve, he went back to his village. The police told him to return only after the Games. The police prevented him from carrying on his regular business at the place he used to. He tried to look for some other work so that he could earn some money but nothing worked out. He visited many of his friends to get some work but wasn't successful. Besides this, his food habits were also directly affected. He shared that generally he used to have three meals, which cost him Rs. 30 a day but when he was out of work; he skipped his meals and managed his per day food expenses within Rs. 10 only. Since he did not want to sit unemployed in Delhi, he decided to go back to his native place and look for some work there. Finally, he left for his village and worked there as a street-food vendor (*samosa ka theila*). He recollects having suffered a huge financial loss for the duration he was not allowed to work in Delhi. By selling *samosas*, he used to earn Rs. 150 per day as against Rs. 650 he used to earn from selling spices in Delhi.

#### **Respondent 2: Asha**

Asha, aged 42, runs a '*mitti ke bartan*' (earthen utensil) shop at the roadside in Kotla Mubarakpur (New Delhi), along with her husband. She sells pots and earthenware of different kinds used during weddings, festivals and for decorative purposes. She is originally from Rajasthan but her ancestors moved to Delhi about 70 years ago. Her husband spends most of his money on alcohol. Asha has three children – two girls and a boy aged 28, 11 and 22 respectively. The eldest girl is married and lives in Rajasthan while the other two live with her in Delhi. Her son helps run the shop. Asha's lives as a paying guest in a room that she has taken up for Rs. 2000 per month. She takes a loan from her landlord to manage her daily expenses.

Asha received threats from the police, asking her to clear the pavement on account of preparation for the CWG. This started 10-15 days before the start of the Games. On being asked where she could shift her shop, she was told: “Take it wherever you want, we don’t care; but move it from here! (*Yahan se hatao, bas!*)” When she tried to resist their threats, some material of her shop was destroyed. She was threatened that the street would be permanently wire-fenced consequently destroying her business in the long run. Her son was arrested, beaten up and released around 5 hours later. Asha finally shut her shop and could not carry out business till 15<sup>th</sup> October. She also reported that the same policeman collected weekly *hafta* (bribes) from them.

Her family’s daily income before closing the shop was Rs. 800-1000, of which she used to save Rs. 150-200 daily. But no income was reported for the duration of keeping the shop was shut. During this time, she and her family were quite worried about whether they would be able to set up their shop at the same place again or not. Besides this they were not able to spend the usual amount on food. Before closing down of business Rs. 100-150 was spent on buying food, which fell to a daily income of Rs. 50-70 during the CWG. Illness in the family during this period was also reported. The reasons quoted were infection due to rains and insufficient nutrition.

Upon being asked why she thinks she has been treated like this, Asha observed her powerlessness and consequent inability to influence the system as the main reasons for this. She also expressed that she and other people who worked on the street felt ‘strangled’ (*bahut gala ghuta hai hamara*). She also said CWG-type events are good for the nation but for the poor it’s a complete negation of even existence of people like her (*garib aadmi to pis gaya*).

### **Respondent 3: Sameer**

Sameer is a street vendor and operates in Kotla Mubarakpur. He owns a ‘*jaljeera ka thaila*’ (digestive drink stall). He is 40 years old and his family comprises his wife and seven children (3 girls and 4 boys). All his children, except the eldest and the youngest, go to school. The eldest son is about 15 years old and dropped out of school. He does not enjoy studying and wants to learn skill-based work. The youngest child is too young to join the school now. Prem Kumar is the only breadwinner in the family. He lives in Narela (Sonipat, Haryana) and takes a train to reach Kotla every day.

Sameer was asked by the police to move his stall almost 20 days before the start of the CWG. He feared being imprisoned or his goods being confiscated and therefore stopped standing at the same place to conduct his daily business. During the restrictions, his earnings fell from Rs.125-130 to Rs. 70-80 a day. Sameer could not save anything from this earning. He could not buy vegetables, fruits and milk in sufficient quantity for his family due to the fall in income (*Hamare bachcon ko na phal mila na kuch*). His younger daughter who is 3 years old is only on milk diet and she was fed with milk only once a day as against twice a day, the norm before the restriction. The family too had to compromise their usual two meals per day to one per day during this time. The food the family used to eat was cereals and potatoes, sometime with forced alternations liked more quantity of salt added to a smaller quantity of food to make it enough for the whole family.

On being asked why he feels this happened to him, he blamed his poverty. He is indifferent to the importance of occurrences of mega budget international events like the CWG, but registered the adverse effect on people like himself as a result of the events. “We were forced to starve. (*Hamare to pet pe laot padi hai.*)”

#### **Respondent 4: Imran**

Imran is a 50-year-old man who lives with his wife and five children, a daughter-in-law and a grandchild. They all live in a rented house in Kotla Mubarakpur. Imran is the bread-earner of the family. He sells nuts, popcorn and chips on a pushcart in the same area. He came to Delhi from UP when he was 22 years old. He earns almost Rs. 700 per day after spending 12 hours in the market.

He shared that the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) took away his pushcart 25 days prior to the CWG. As he didn't have enough money to get it released, he had to rent another pushcart to sell his material. After a few days the police told him that he couldn't sell anything on the road till the CWG ended. He tried to find out the reason why he was being stopped from selling anything 12 days before the start of the games but nobody responded to him and he was just told that all his material would be thrown out if he would be seen in the market from the next day. It was a big shock for his eight-member family as they were totally dependent on Imran's daily wages. He started thinking about it extensively and went into depression. His wife took a loan from their landlord and managed their daily living expenses. He said that they had to reduce their food expenses – the number of meals were reduced from three to two and no milk or medicine could be bought for children when they got sick. It was a bad period for them, which they will never be able to forget.

#### **Respondent 5: Seema**

Seema is a 27-year-old physically challenged woman. She lives with her mother and son at her mother's house as she and her husband are separated. She has a small roadside shop where she sells tobacco. Seema said she earns almost Rs. 200 per day, which is sufficient to manage the family expenses. She said that almost a month before the start of the CWG, her income went down. Many shopkeepers, roadside sellers and other people who were her customers were not allowed to come to the market. She also added that the police urged her to shut their shop and leave Delhi for some time; but since she had permission from the government to run her shop she was not forcefully evicted like others in the market.

#### **Respondent 6: Chaman**

Chaman is a 31-year-old rickshaw puller who hawks for an additional income in the vicinity of the Pusa round-about, Paharganj metro station, Rajouri Garden and Patel Nagar. He is originally from Karnataka and has been living in Delhi since birth. He is not literate. He lives with his wife and five children. Chaman was out of employment from 15 days prior to the start of the Games. The police threatened him with non-bailable imprisonment, beatings, confiscation and a fine of Rs. 5,000 for appearing on the streets of Delhi. There has been a decline in his income since then. Before restrictions, he used to earn about Rs. 150-200 per day and after the restrictions his total per day income from vending locally in the interior of colonies was Rs. 40-50. Besides this, he was also displaced from his residence in Shaadipur. His belongings, like clothes and utensils, either got displaced during the eviction or were confiscated

by the police. He and his family members have been eating on plastic sheets since then. He has been living in a shelter home in Paharganj (since March 10) with other people who faced similar situations. About 15 families besides his live in the shelter home and suffer from severe food shortage. People get only one meal at the end of the day at 10 pm.

#### **Respondent 7: Siddharth**

Siddharth is a 20-year-old rickshaw puller and a street hawker who is paralysed in one arm. Prior to imposition of the CWG restrictions, he used to earn Rs. 80-100 a day. Following the restrictions, his earnings came down to Rs. 10-20 per day. He could only ply the rickshaw locally where he found a few passengers for short distances. He was threatened to stay off the streets by the police. He was scared of being imprisoned or beaten up by the police and was evacuated from his original place of dwelling in Delhi at *Shaadipur* earlier this year. In the process, he lost all his belongings. He has been living in a shelter home in Paharganj since March 2010 with 15 other families.

#### **Respondent 8: Ishank**

Ishank is 19 years old. He dropped out of school after Class 8. He is from Karnataka and works as a rickshaw puller and hawker. Before CWG restrictions he used to earn Rs. 60-80 per day everyday and after the restrictions his income came to Rs. 20-30 per day. Ishu was evacuated from his house in *Shaadipur* earlier this year and has been currently rehabilitated in the shelter home in *Paharganj*. The residents of the shelter home are not able to earn enough for their sustenance, and the food that is available in the home is sent by civil society organisations where only one disproportionately small meal is cooked everyday. Like most others at the home, he doesn't have many of his personal belonging left with him. It was either misplaced in the process of evacuation or confiscated.

#### **Respondent 9: Harish**

Harish is 40 years old. He is a rickshaw puller and a street hawker. He has three children and a wife. His daily income before and after the Games restriction fell from Rs. 120-150 to Rs. 50-70. He was evicted from his dwelling in *Shaadipur* and is currently housed with his family at the *Paharganj* shelter home. Their clothes, cooking utensils and other material were lost in the process of evacuation. In the shelter home, due to large number of dwellers and comparatively little food to eat, many people starved. There were also regular fights among the inmates. Cases of hunger are common even among the infants.

#### **Respondent 10: Shashi**

Shashi is a 50-year-old widow and she begs on the streets of Delhi. She used to live in *Shaadipur* but was chased away by the police from there. Since then she has been living in a shelter home in *Paharganj*. She lost most of her belongings in the process of moving from *Shaadipur*. In the shelter home, she lives with 15-17 other families. The shelter home reported of cases of starvation among adults and children and fights over food. Before the Commonwealth Games restrictions, she used to manage to earn Rs. 100-120 everyday but after the restriction she manages only Rs. 20-30.



**Table 2: Summary of all the respondents**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Dependents</b>
<b>VENDORS</b>					
Respondent 1	Abhay	22	Masale ka Theila	Male	4
Respondent 2	Asha	42	Mitti ke bartan ki dukan	Female	3
Respondent 3	Sameer	40	Jaljeera ka thaila	Male	8
Respondent 4	Imran	50	Mungfali ka thaila	Male	7
Respondent 5	Seema	27	Road side tobacco shop	Female	2
Respondent 6	Chaman	31	Traffic signal hawker	Male	5
Respondent 7	Siddhartha	20	Traffic signal hawker	Male	2
<b>RICKSHAW PULLERS</b>					
Respondent 8	Ishank	19	Rickshaw Puller	Male	2
Respondent 9	Harish	40	Rickshaw puller	Male	4
<b>BEGGARS</b>					
Respondent 10	Shashi (widow)	50	Beggary	Female	2

Important points that emerge are that all respondents were daily wage earners. They were dependent on each day's earning for survival. Also, in most cases, field researchers did not come across situations where families might have saved money for unforeseen contingencies. All respondents came from big families and had a minimum of two dependants each (maximum of eight) and it was noted that in grave situations, the women and children tended to be the most affected.

Field consultation confirmed that over the period of the last few months from the start of the Games till they ended many thousands lost their livelihood and were displaced from their dwellings where they had resided for years. There were reports of deaths and other traumatic situations having occurred as a direct or indirect consequence of preparation for the CWG. Also the disappearance of rickshaw pullers and vendors adversely affected the convenience and smooth functioning of life in the city.

### 2.2.2 Impact on Income

During group interviews it was shared that all weekly street markets around key stadiums were banned for security reasons; cobblers, cart-pullers, waste-pickers, balloon sellers and other informal sector workers were banned from carrying out their daily business. They were threatened with beatings, random arrests and fines of Rs. 5000 to keep them housed wherever they found shelter and not be seen on Games routes. As a result of these restrictions loss of livelihood for at least the period of 20 days (in the run up to the Games) was reported. No case was found where anyone received compensation from the government for the period of restriction on business.

**Jahan khane – kamane ki jagah thi, unohone vahiin se hata diya (We are displaced from the place where we earned our livelihood and lived)**

- Sameer, street vendor

The table below gives an estimate of wage loss of the 10 respondents. On the basis of findings, a rough estimate of wage loss for the whole community of rickshaw pullers, vendors and beggars in the city has been attempted (Refer to Annexure 2 for details).

Each respondent's income was calculated by taking an average of per day's income - before and during CWG - of each occupation type. To understand the bigger picture of wage loss for the community, the total number of people (vendors, destitute people and rickshaw pullers) in Delhi was identified from the sources like NGO reports (example, HLRN, 2010 a & b), press releases (example BBC) and total figure for that category was arrived at.

**Table 3: Projected wage loss based on a rough estimate of workers belonging to a particular occupation-type**

<i>Categories</i>	<i>Average per-day income before CWG (Rs)</i>	<i>Average per-day income during CWG (Rs)</i>	<i>Per day loss (Rs)</i>	<i>Loss for 20 days</i>	<i>Total no. of members in Delhi</i>	<i>Per day loss of the community (Rs)</i>	<i>Percentage loss</i>
<b>Vendor</b>	263	67	196	3920	350000 <sup>4</sup>	68600000	75%
<b>Rickshaw Puller</b>	73	18	55	1100	600000 <sup>5</sup>	33000000	75%
<b>Beggar</b>	110	20	90	1800	60000 <sup>6</sup>	5400000	82%
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>6820</b>	<b>1010000</b>	<b>107000000</b>	<b>76%</b>

Rs.10,70,00,000 (Rs. 10.7 crore) were lost to ten lakh poor people in Delhi in one day. The right to livelihood, an integral part of the right to life, ensured as a fundamental right to every Indian citizen was compromised and no explanation nor alternatives/compensatory mechanisms for it were put in place.

For instance in the case of organised labour, on the days of the opening and closing ceremony, offices were ordered to close down. But this was declared as a paid holiday (Refer to Annexure 1). The government commendably protected the right to livelihood of the organised sector workers. However, this was not the case for the unorganised sector. During group discussions as well as individual interviews, it emerged that for the daily wage earners, restriction on earning extended to at least 20 days (as opposed to two for the organised sector) – meaning a devastating loss (mal-nourishment of children, hunger fights, starvation deaths) without compensation and a steep decline in income of 75-80% (for all occupation categories).

<sup>4</sup> BBC (2010) 'Delhi Street Vendor Evicted Before CWG'. *New South Asia*, Reported by Geeta Pandey, BBC News Delhi.

<sup>5</sup> TOGETHER India.(2001) 'Wheels of misfortune'. *Reported by Madhu Kishwar*, Available at [www.indiatogether.org/manushi/rickshaw/](http://www.indiatogether.org/manushi/rickshaw/).

<sup>6</sup> Counter Currents (2008) Commonwealth Games and A Beggar Free Delhi. *Reported by Loveleen Kaur*, Available at [www.countercurrents.org/karur110908.htm](http://www.countercurrents.org/karur110908.htm).

### 2.2.3 Impact on Health and Nutrition

**Table 4: Food deficit based on respondent's account**

<b><i>Incidents of food deficit</i></b>	<b><i>Number of families affected out of the ten respondents</i></b>
<i>Decline in vegetable consumption</i>	5
<i>Decline in milk intake</i>	9
<i>Decline in expenditure to half on food</i>	10
<i>Cases of Starvation</i>	3

Spending on food had come down drastically in the families of all respondents. This included expenditure on essentials like vegetables, milk and fruits. In most cases the number of meals had also reduced from 2 to 1 and in some cases that meal would be available at the end of day at 10pm. In the shelter home in *Paharganj*, many cases of fights over food, cases of starvation and hunger pangs from small children were found. Zero-five-year-olds were the worst affected. In this case children were mostly on milk diet. Wherever possible, they were breast fed, but in other cases they were fed with rice and water. In all the cases, children were not provided with enough food necessary for growth and development for their age.

Several families were also reported to have fallen sick during this period. This was especially so because of heavy rains at the time combined with lack of sufficient food and increased stress. Health services were either beyond affordability or they were not served attentively at hospitals. Death of two old ladies in the *Paharganj* shelter was reported to the research team because of a mix of these reasons.

***We are eating food with lots of salt added to it. Less curry is needed with roti then, and more salt also makes us thirsty, we drink more water with food then. This fills the stomach faster.***

- Sameer, on alternative to manage food deficit faced due to CWG

***Ever since the police asked me to remove my footpath cycle repair shop (left side of Panchsheel park flyover, going to IIT), I'm with no work. How do I feed my family? How do I pay the rent of my house in Chirag Delhi? Things are very difficult for us.***

- Raju, loss of work due to CWG

### 2.2.4 People's Fear During CWG

In the shelter homes and the street markets, people spoke about being forced to remain in the house. They feared random arrest or beating by the police, being charged Rs 5000 for being seen on the streets and confiscation of their belongings by the MCD – if they stepped out. The Bombay Prevention of Begging Act 1959 has been used to arbitrarily arrest, terrorise the homeless and force them to leave the city (South Asia Citizens web, 2010).

The following table shows reasons for the fear of free movement faced by respondents interviewed during the field consultations:



<b><i>Reasons restricting movement</i></b>	<b><i>Number of people affected (of the 10 respondents)</i></b>
<i>Police atrocities</i>	10
<i>Random arrest</i>	4
<i>No bail on arrests</i>	2
<i>Fine - Rs. 5000</i>	3
<i>MCD confiscations of their belongings</i>	9

### **Evictions and Demolitions**

Large scale forced eviction and demolitions also occurred in the course of CWG preparation. Reasons for this ranged from constructing stadiums to building parking lots, widening roads, city 'beautification,' and clearing of streets on grounds of 'security' (HLRN, 2010b). The usual trend followed in the process of demolition were threatening people an evening before and demolishing them the following day. Many demolitions, as reported by the victims, have happened when people were away for work or some other purposes. HLRN (2010 b) observes that the psychological impacts on children who witness losing and demolition of their 30-40 year-old homes are severe and long lasting.

*A cluster of dwelling was demolished when people were away for celebration of winter festival of Lohri.*

*Many children have lost an academic year because the demolitions happened immediately before or during examination time.*

- HLRN (2010b)

Besides demolitions, evictions and confiscation of belongings were also reported for chasing people away from the area around the key site of the game. In the course of eviction, people lost their valuable belongings (clothes and utensils). Cases of injuries like fractures and trauma like fainting at the sight of bulldozer demolishing houses (HLRN 2010 b) were also found. Some exceptional cases of rehabilitation of the evicted in government-provided shelter homes were also found. But the number of shelter homes was inadequate to house all the homeless and the evicted. Besides, the areas lacked hygiene and sanitation.

- Delhi authorities evicted more than 35,000 families
- Municipal Corporation of Delhi demolished around 500 jhuggis and puts the figure of displaced at 30,000-40,000 families.
- Resettlement sites are Bawana, Holambi Kalan, Sawda Ghevra. But
- Living conditions in these sites are extremely inadequate and unhygienic.
- These sites are not able to cover most displaced. More than half of the affected population still remain displaced
- Night shelter homes are also not able to accommodate the entire relevant population. Only 5 % of the homeless are sheltered in these homes.
- The Delhi Shramik Sangathan puts the figure to be displaced at 30,000-40,000 families

**Source: HLRN, 2010 (a & b)**

**CASE STUDY 1**

An old man who was around 65-years-old died as a result of trauma he faced due to the CWG eviction process. He was taken away by a beggar-catching van one morning, and was sent back home by evening. Upon returning, he had accused the in-charge of the van of taking away all the money he had (which was estimated to be around Rs. 25,000). His family said he had been saving money for the marriage of two youngsters in his family. The incident deeply disturbed the old man and he was in a trauma-stricken state when he returned home. Soon after, he fell sick. His condition deteriorated over the next few days and he was taken to hospital, but he was not attended to even after six hours. Consequently, he was brought back home on September 26. He died within a few hours of being brought home.

**CASE STUDY 2**

On September 9, 2010, at Rachna Golchakkar - a six-year-old homeless balloon-seller was raped. Her family lived at the Motia Khan shelter home. When she was selling balloons with her mother, the police came and started beating all the hawkers at the traffic lights as they had been previously instructed not to hawk there. During this process, she was separated from her mother and was raped soon after. The next morning she was found in a bruised state under one of the metro pillars. From there her parents took her to the Prasad Nagar police station (Karol Bagh) where a case was registered. She was admitted to Sucheta Kripalani Hospital, where rape was confirmed. Her case is being heard in the Tis Hazari courts. The accused has not yet been identified.

### 3. CIVIL SOCIETY RESPONSES

The civil society in Delhi has been active in researching and highlighting the impact of the CWG on the city's poor. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have been engaged in the research since the end of 2009 to study the process undertaken to rehabilitate the city's poor and raise questions of the government's accountability to the cases of mishaps and corruption.

Further, organisations have also provided the affected population with food and shelter wherever possible. They have also contributed to documenting the narratives of the trauma faced by the marginalised sections and highlighting them before the society. CSOs have also been active in collaborating with the media and asked the concerned officials and ministers for explanations of violations at different levels. CSO reports have concluded that the Games have been essentially underscored by secrecy, unavailability of information, and unconstitutional activities, with evidence of long-term economic, social and environmental costs for the nation, and specifically for the city of Delhi (HLRN, 2010 (a))

Praxis contacted some NGOs to learn from their experience of working on the issue of CWG and violation of human rights. People interviewed were -

1. Indu Prakash Singh (Indo – Global Social Service Society (IGSSS))
2. Shivani Chaudhary (Housing and Land Rights Network (HLRN))
3. Subhash Bhatnagar (Nirman Mazdoor Panchayat Sangam (NMPS))

Key issues that emerged from the discussion were:

1. CWG in terms of social development has caused havoc in the lives of the disadvantaged sections of society, as well as been deeply exploitative and unjust to this section.
2. The Government has completely ignored the violation of human and social rights of the marginalised. CWG workers, vendors and the homeless are victims of this ignorance. The Government's attitude has been of complete denial and negation towards rights and welfare of this section.
3. The Government's accountability towards violation has been overlooked. Government seems to have evaded its responsibility of rehabilitating the poor.
4. The key questions that were raised in the face of Government's approach and plight of the marginalised/excluded are:
  - a. How laudable is the decision of hosting the Games when 77 % of the country's population live on Rs. 20 or less per day?
  - b. Who are the Games benefitting? Arguments stated by the Government to justify the decision of hosting the CWG are rendered flawed by many. On the contrary the unanimous opinion of civil society has been that the opportunity to facilitate development in the city and for the poor (by creating work for them) have been lost forever. The Games were an opportunity wasted. They have caused more destruction than construction for the life of the city. For example, rising inflation rate in the city, extravagant use of tax payer's money by the government, questionable cost-benefit analysis of Game, its failure to attract the level of tourism as estimated, and above all the Games happening at the expense of life and

livelihood of the most vulnerable section of the society. So can the Games really be considered a celebration as claimed by the government?

- c. What kind of legacy will the Commonwealth Games leave in the minds of the poor? Given that social schemes like *Aap ki Rasoi* (free food for the homeless) were stopped with no alternative planned for the period of CWG and the poor and homeless were shunned and chased away from the city - suggest skewed priorities of the Government.
- d. Another question is why the government has failed to protect rights and livelihoods of the unorganised sector while due attention was paid to protecting loss of each day's salary of the organised sector? (Refer Annexure 1) Why is the government being harsh on the powerless and protective of the empowered in the matter of life and livelihood of the city dwellers?

#### 4. WAY FORWARD

The questions that the study raises are –

1. To what extent can the decision of hosting a mega budget event like the CWG be justified in the face of the fact that a huge segment of society is still devoid of basic housing, education and healthcare services? Having said this, it also cannot be negated that holding an international event does enhance the country's visibility, international relations and possibility of international trade – all of which unquestionably are beneficial for overall advancement of the country. So, if India aspires to hold a position at an international stage and project itself as an economically viable country, how can it be ensured that these ambitions are not achieved at the cost of social justice and social development?
2. What does the equation - international pride but social injustice - speak of the relationship between the State and its most vulnerable people, and the government's commitment to social development?
3. Poor Implementation of laws - During the Asiad Games in 1982, laws and rights were framed to protect and ensure social security and rights of construction workers (i.e. proper registration of each site worker) which can be implemented to check similar events in future but same story of violation of construction worker's rights is repeated during Commonwealth Games.
4. In the face of these facts, the urban poor who are an integral part of city making and were chased away from the city appears clearly as an evidence of skewed vision of the government.

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**ANNEXURES****Annexure 1:**

Circular Received by Praxis For Compulsory Closure of Office on Opening and Closing Ceremony days of Commonwealth Games 2010

(TO BE PUBLISHED IN PART IV OF THE DELHI GAZETTE  
EXTRAORDINARY)

**GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY OF DELHI**  
**LABOUR DEPARTMENT**  
5, Sham Nath Marg, Delhi – 1100 54.

No.F.19(37)/CIS/2010/3007 Dated . 01 -10 - 2010

**NOTIFICATION**

In exercise of the powers conferred by Sub-section (3) (i) of Section 16 of the Delhi Shops and Establishment Act, 1954, the Lt. Governor is pleased to specify 3<sup>rd</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2010 as the close days for all shops and commercial establishments located in all markets in the NCT of Delhi.

No deduction shall be made from the wages of any employee on account of the above close days by any employer in the NCT of Delhi.

By order and in the name of  
THE HON'BLE LT. GOVERNOR OF  
THE NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY OF DELHI

— *Seal* —  
(R.K. Srivastava)  
Secretary (Labour)  
Govt. of NCT of Delhi

2458  
29/10/10

No.F.19(37)/CIS/2010/ Dated :

1. Pr. Secretary to the Hon'ble Lt. Governor, Delhi.
2. Pr. Secretary to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Govt. of NCT of Delhi.
3. Secretary to the Hon'ble Minister of Labour & Employment, Delhi Secretariat, I.P. Estate, New Delhi.
4. Secretary to the all the Hon'ble Ministers of GNCT of Delhi
5. Staff Officer to the Chief Secretary, Govt. of NCT of Delhi.
6. Commissioner of Police, MSO Building, I.P. Estate, New Delhi.
7. Secretary (L&J), Govt. of NCT of Delhi.
8. Special Secretary, GAD, Govt. of NCT of Delhi.
9. Director, Information & Publicity, Govt. of NCT of Delhi with the request to publish the Notification in the major daily Newspapers.
10. All the Dy. Labour Commissioners, Labour Department, GNCT of Delhi.
11. Chief Inspector of Shops & Establishments, Labour Department, 5, Sham Nath Marg, Delhi
12. President/General Secretary of all the Market Associations in NCT of Delhi.

*M.K. Gaur*  
(M.K. Gaur)  
Dy. Labour Commissioner  
Govt of NCT of Delhi

Annexure 2: Estimation of Losses of Income for Respondents of the Study: Table on each days earning of the respondents - before and during CWG

	Respon. 1	Respon. 2	Respon. 3	Respon. 4	Respon. 5	Respon. 6	Respon. 7	Respon. 8	Respon. 9	Respon. 10
<b>Name</b>	Abhay	Asha	Sameer	Imran	Seema	Chaman	Harishl	Ishank	Shashi (widow)	Siddhart ha
<b>Occupation</b>	Masale ka theila	Mitti ke bartan ki dukan	Jaljeera ka thaila	Mungfali ka thaila	Small road side tobacco shop	Traffic signal hawker	Ricksh aw puller	Ricksha w puller	Destitut e people	Traffic signal hawker
<b>BEFORE COMMONWEALTH GAMES (IN RUPEES)</b>										
<b>Per day earning before CWG</b>	750	800	130	1300	700	100	150	125	130	80
<b>Per day work expenditure before CWG</b>	150	650	55	600	500	55	70	60	20	10
<b>Real Income before CWG</b>	600	150	75	700	200	45	80	65	110	70
<b>DURING COMMONWEALTH GAMES (IN RUPEES)</b>										
<b>Per day earning during CWG</b>	75	80	60	400	100	60	75	60	35	20
<b>Per day work expenditure during CWG</b>	45	70	40	100	40	30	50	50	15	0
<b>Real Income during CWG</b>	30	10	20	300	60	30	25	10	20	20
<b>Income loss due to CWG (Rs)</b>	570	140	55	400	140	15	55	55	90	50
<b>DECLINE IN INCOME – PRE AND DURING CWG (IN PERCENTAGE)</b>										
<b>Income loss in percentage</b>	95%	93%	73%	57%	70%	33%	69%	85%	82%	71%



## Annexure 3: List of Questions for Data Collection

<b>GROUPS</b>	<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<b>ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED</b>
<b>Vendor</b>	<b>Livelihood</b>	Source of Income/Daily expenditure – Before, during, after
		Survival conditions
		Distance
		Government schemes availed of – Before, during and after
	<b>Education</b>	Do they have kids?
		What do they do?
		Effects on schooling
	<b>Health</b>	Where do you go?
		Accessibility-now and then
		Effects on their health
		Sanitation level
	<b>Food</b>	Food arrangements
		Quality of food
		Source of water-now and then
		Diseases henceforth
	<b>Psychological effects</b>	Perception on CWG
		Fears and trauma
		Effects on family (women and children)
		How did they feel (helplessness)
		Displacement issues: What other fears do you have?
		- 'If I would be re-settle at the same place?'
		- 'Would I be able to re-enter?'
		- How were they displaced?
		- Any other of their own
	<b>Shelter</b>	Where? - Now and then
		Conditions where are they living?
		Safety issues-especially women
<b>Rickshaw Pullers (Homeless)</b>	<b>Livelihood</b>	Source of Income
		Survival conditions
		Distance
		Daily expenses
	<b>Education</b>	Do they have kids?
		What do they do?
		Effects on schooling
	<b>Health</b>	Where do you go?
		Accessibility-now and then
		Effects on their health
		Sanitation level

<b>GROUPS</b>	<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<b>ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED</b>
	<b>Food</b>	<i>Food arrangements</i>
		<i>Quality of food</i>
		<i>Source of water-now and then</i>
		<i>Diseases henceforth</i>
	<b>Psychological effects</b>	<i>Perception on CWG</i>
		<i>Displacement issues</i>
		<i>Fears and trauma</i>
		<i>Effects on family (women and children)</i>
		<i>How did they feel (helplessness)</i>
		<i>Displacement issues</i>
	<b>Shelter</b>	<i>Where-now and then</i>
		<i>Conditions where are they living?</i>
		<i>Safety issues-especially women</i>

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Child Rights and You (CRY)

Hazards Centre

Housing and Land Rights Network (HLRN)

Indo-Global Social Service Society (IGSSS)

Jamghat

Jhuggi Jhopdi Ekta Manch

Khushi

National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR)

Pradarshita

Save the Children