

LIVELIHOODS: HOME-BASED WORKERS



Photo credits: Rashmi Choudhary for WIEGO

It is estimated that there are around 3-4 lakh home-based workers in Delhi, a majority of them being women. They provide goods and services at low prices to local and global customers, and contribute to their family income. It is important for them that homes are recognized as workplaces. Home-based workers demand visibility, legal protection, quality housing, public infrastructure and decent work conditions.

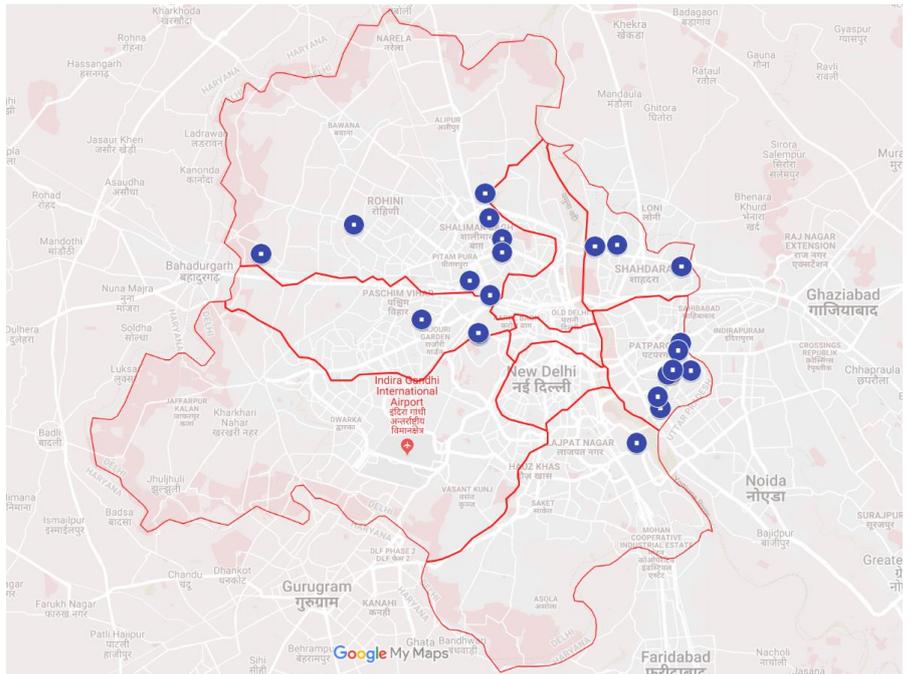
Main Bhi Dilli is a people's campaign aiming to envision and enable a more inclusive city. It is a collective of civil society organisations, activists, researchers and others who work on diverse issues of housing, livelihood, gender and other rights.

HOME-BASED WORKERS IN THE CITY

The category of workers who do productive or remunerative work from within or around their homes are home-based workers. These workers produce a wide range of low and high-end goods and services for both domestic and global markets (WIEGO). There are two kinds of home-based workers:

- Self-employed- those who buy their own raw materials and supplies and sell their own finished goods, mainly to local customers and buyers.
- Sub-contracted/homeworkers- those who produce goods for firms in national and global supply chains.

Home-based work clusters in Delhi



Source: Mapping by WIEGO based on first and secondary research studies on home-based work in Delhi

Estimated to constitute around 7% of non-agricultural workforce in Delhi- 13% for women and 6% for men (WIEGO)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CITY

SUPPORT TO HOUSEHOLD INCOME

- More work taken up in times of distress- allows for more regular cash flow than monthly wage work

CARE WORK

- Allows them to balance the burden of caring for children and elderly, and other household tasks

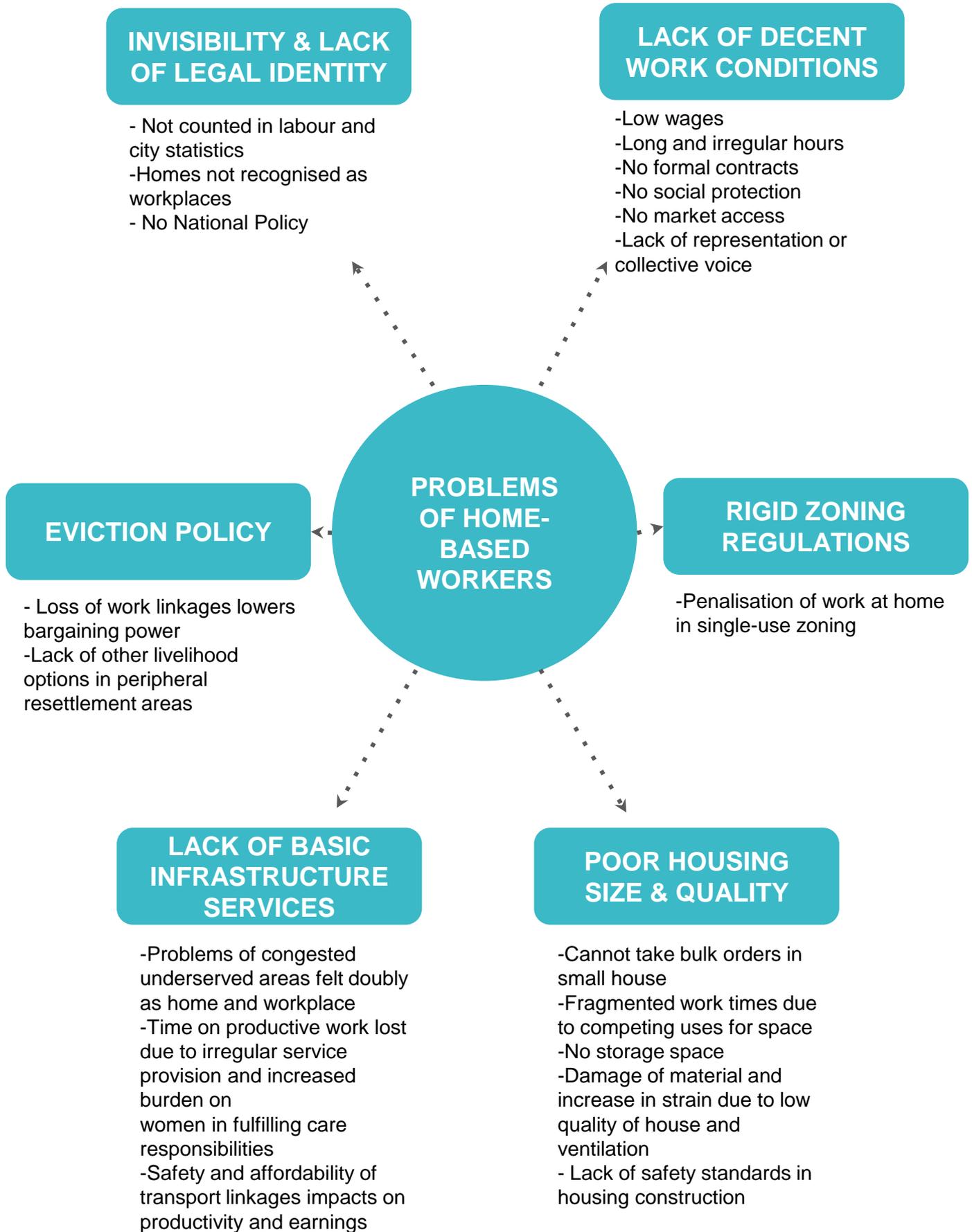
ECONOMIC VALUE

- Supply of low-cost goods
- Create demand for other goods
- Low cost input to make final industrial product cheaper
- Taxes

ENVIRONMENTAL

- By not commuting on a regular basis and relying more on walking or cycling, home-based workers reduce traffic congestion and air pollution

KEY ISSUES



WHAT CAN MPD '41 DO FOR HOME-BASED WORKERS?

1 RECOGNITION THROUGH ENUMERATION

- Need to push for comprehensive surveys to ascertain the numbers and extent of home-based work so that adequate provisions can be given

2 VIEW HOUSING AS PRODUCTIVE ASSET THROUGH BETTER DESIGN AND STRUCTURE

- Better design and structure of house to accommodate livelihood needs - this includes lighting, basement, storage facilities, safety etc.

3 ACCESS TO BASIC PHYSICAL & SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- Access to public infrastructure and services like water, electricity and transport
- Social infrastructure like schools, hospitals, markets and transport connectivity in resettlement sites
- Provision of neighbourhood level public child care facilities
- Street lighting and safe public transport
- Design of public spaces has to focus beyond main roads and flyovers to pedestrian friendly spaces like access to pavements, foot-over bridges etc.

4 NO EVICTION POLICY

- In-situ upgradation to be preferred over eviction and relocation

5 MIXED USE ZONING

- Mixed-use zoning to be revisited and implemented properly

6 CREATION OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY SPACES AND MARKETS

- Multiple use of community spaces for neighbourhood work centres, child-care, recreation etc.
- Provision for exclusive daily or night markets for home-based workers to sell their products
- Open public spaces for recreation- parks in close proximity to homes impacts on girls' and women's ability to access them

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