



Participatory statistics to measure prevalence in bonded labour hotspots in Tamil Nadu: Findings of the base- and endline study

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List of abbreviations

ARG	Action Research Group
ALC	Alternate Livelihood Consultant
BL	Bonded labour
BC	Backward Classes
CVC	Community Vigilance Committee
CSE	Commercial Sexual Exploitation
CSG	Community Support Group
GSI	Global Slavery Index
HH	Household
IDS	Institute for Development Studies
IRS	Indian Rupees
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
MBC	Most Backward Classes
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OBC	Other Backward Classes
ODAM	Organisation of Development Action Maintenance
PMJDY	Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana
READ	Rights Education and Development Centre
SC	Scheduled Castes
ST	Scheduled Tribes
SHGs	Self Help Groups
SSSSS	Serene Secular Social Service Society
SPEECH	Society for People's Education and Economic Change
TEST	Trust for Education and Social Transformation
WORD	Women's Organisation in Rural Development

Executive Summary

This report documents the findings of the Institute of Development Studies' (IDS) and its partner, 'Praxis Institute for Participatory Practices', programme of research, learning and evaluation of the Freedom Fund funded operational work in a 'modern slavery hotspot' in Tamil Nadu to reduce the prevalence of bonded labour in the states of Tamil Nadu. Research was undertaken in this programme between 2016 and 2019 by IDS and Praxis Institute teams.

Methods

This study carried out a baseline¹ and endline survey using participatory statistics in order to examine changes in the prevalence of bonded labour using repeated cross-sectional household data. The baseline survey was underpinned by scoping visits, which consisted of interviews with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), focus groups with community members, field observations, and the participatory collection and analysis of 308 life stories. The goal of the surveys was to identify the most significant indicators of change in localities which were the subject of FF supported NGO interventions and to generate a baseline of participatory statistics.

To measure the changes in hotspot prevalence rates² that took place during the intervention period, we compared the results of NGO interventions that were in the programme working in vulnerable communities³ at both baseline and endline surveys. The baseline and endline surveys were conducted in the same NGOs and hamlets although NGO partners were not forewarned that this would be the case. One NGO stopped Freedom Fund-supported work in the target localities between the baseline and endline surveys.⁴ We drew a cross-section of households for each NGO and hamlet.

Participatory statistical analysis was undertaken to show the correlations of bonded labour with various factors, such as land ownership and access to a bank account. There is a dearth of other studies that examine changes resulting from interventions on modern slavery.⁵ Where possible, conclusions have been drawn about whether the quantitative analysis corroborates certain widely held assumptions with regard to forms of bonded labour in India, such as its concentration among, poor, landless households belonging to Dalit, Scheduled Castes / Scheduled Tribes

¹ Oosterhoff, P.; Burns, D.; Bharadwaj, S. and Nanda, R.B. (2017). *Participatory statistics to measure prevalence in bonded labour hotspots in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar: findings of the baseline study*, Brighton, IDS

² Prevalence adjusted for variance inflation rates are reported.

³ The focus of the work is at the communities, but the program also works with government and businesses. For a brief description see <https://freedomfund.org/programs/hotspot-projects/southern-india-hotspot/>

⁴ LEAF dropped out as Freedom Fund no longer supports them and we omitted the data from this NGO from the baseline.

⁵ Oosterhoff, P.; Yunus, R.; Jensen, C.; Somerwell, F. and Pocock, N. (2018) *Modern Slavery Prevention and Responses in South Asia: an evidence map*, London: DFID, for a recent systematic review of the evidence of "what works" in interventions that aim to reduce the prevalence of modern slavery in South Asia (see also [Evidence Map and Rapid Evidence Assessment on Modern Slavery](#))

(SC/ST) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) with little or no access to credit and other services.

To gain additional insight into the causal relations and local perceptions of what positive change could look like, the team facilitated focus group discussions on the results at the end of the data collection process in each hamlet or ward at both the base- and endline surveys. These discussions focused on the reasons for the differences in prevalence results and used the tallied-up data to explore how gender, age and caste dynamics shape bonded labour.

Summary findings

It is clear that the Freedom Fund supported intervention sites have been chosen well as they are in areas where there has been a high prevalence of bonded labour.

Bonded labour reduced dramatically in the intervention communities in the period between the base- and endline surveys from 56.1% to 11.1%.

Some other reports suggest that “modern slavery” in India might be reducing in general, however the lack of comparable methodologies makes it difficult to draw definite general conclusions on national trends.⁶ Our report brings important bottom-up evidence that shows how interventions targeted at communities/ households/ individuals affected by bonded labour have contributed to a likely reduction in bonded labour prevalence in this geographical “hotspot”⁷.

The baseline survey found that half of the participating households were directly affected by bonded labour. Among the participating households, at baseline, 39% (n=1,051) of surveyed households were in exclusive bonded situation and about 17% (n=468) of households had at least one person in bonded labour. At endline, about 7% (n=191) of surveyed households were exclusively in bonded labour and 5% (n=126) of households had at least one person in bonded labour.

⁶ The global slavery index was reporting a *flow figure* in 2016 (over past 5 years) and found that approximately 7,989,000 million people were estimated to live in slavery in 2018. This is less than half of the estimated 18 million people in 2016. But 2018 reports a *stock figure* for that year and these two methodologies are not comparable. (Both reports are available at: [Global Slavery Index](#)). Methodologically our data cannot be compared with slavery index (2016 or 2018). GSI identifies risk factors of modern slavery using national surveys to identify variables were statistically associated with victims. The risk factors are used to build a statistical model that best predicts slavery at individual level. And these Individual predictions are aggregated to risk scores at the country level. The number of victims is estimated by applying the estimated prevalence to population data for each country. An estimate of state-imposed forced labour was then added. What we do is estimate intervention area-specific estimates of prevalence and these estimates go towards bringing micro/bottom-up evidence on prevalence from hotspots. Another report suggest that ex-child labour did go down ([Save the Children](#)) but there are differences by states. [A systematic literature review of the effects](#) also found no comparable studies that looked at changes in incidence and prevalence of interventions on [modern slavery](#).

⁷ The term hotspot comes from the [Freedom Fund](#) and is used to describe a geographical area with particularly high levels of bonded labour.

At endline, most of the 585 bonded labourers, 51% were men (age 18 and above) 43% were women, 3% (17) were boys (aged 17 years and below) and (3%) 17 were girls (aged 17 years and below).

Most people in the intervention areas at both baseline and endline belonged to the Dalit (or Scheduled Caste) social category, followed closely by Other Backward Classes (OBC).⁸ Most people in the intervention area have a stable lease for the house they live in but are landless. The data do not show a significant linkage between land ownership status and bonded labour.

Households in the intervention communities in this hotspot in Tamil Nadu have been able to change the characteristics of their working relationships, which led to a reduction in bonded labour through a combination of interventions at the heart of which is collective local mobilisation and action through community support groups, adolescent girls and boys groups, worker groups and credit and savings groups.

The program is facilitated by different NGOs. There is variety between the communities, the intervention characteristics and components. These components include community-based groups, access to entitlements, improving performance of schools, activation of government livelihoods programmes, rescue and rehabilitation, awareness raising and legal support, community support groups (CSG), adolescent girls and boys groups, NGO's interventions at the factories strengthening the Internal Complaint Committees, formation of action research groups (ARGs). Furthermore, collaborations between local groups, local government bodies and the private sector took different forms based on local needs and capacities. This rich diversity means that we cannot say which intervention is the "magic bullet" that can be scaled up to ensure universal success. What we can say is that a bottom-up approach that stimulates and facilitates collective organisation and local action is effective in reducing the prevalence of bonded labour in the intervention communities living with bonded labour. Systematic reviews of the evidence of "what works" in interventions that aim to reduce the prevalence of modern slavery in South Asia (Oosterhoff et al., 2018)⁹ agree that community-based approaches are effective in reducing prevalence of trafficking (Jensen, Oosterhoff and Pocock, 2019)¹⁰ at community and village levels.

There are substantial geographic variations within our sample. In Virudhunagar, three out of four NGOs recorded a slightly higher prevalence at the endline compared to the baseline. All participating NGOs attributed this change to the ban on fireworks, in November 13th 2018, to

⁸ Other Backward Class (OBC) is a collective term used by the Government of India to classify castes that are educationally or socially disadvantaged.

⁹ Oosterhoff, P.; Yunus, R.; Jensen, C.; Somerwell, F. and Pocock, N.S. (2018) [Modern slavery prevention and responses in South Asia: An evidence map](#), London: DFID.

¹⁰ Jensen, C., Oosterhoff, P. and Pocock, N. (2019) Human Trafficking in South Asia: Assessing effectiveness of interventions. London: Department for International Development.

reduce Barium and nitrate pollution. This has caused job loss for people who worked in the factories or in other parts of the firework supply chain.¹¹ Without alternative livelihood a large number of people have been pushed into vulnerable situations which could be part of the explanation for the increased bonded labour.

Caste, gender, age, and loan-taking are key factors at the individual and household level related to bonded labour in this hotspot. Access to Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and a bank account did not reduce bonded labour.

Access to safe loans has increased slightly since the baseline, but among households with at least one or all members in bondage, the money lender remains the main source for credit. Households without a member in bondage, many of whom only very recently emerged from bondage, did not take money from the moneylenders. This suggests that the grip of the money lenders over people's labour has decreased.

Health expenses, especially emergency health expenses, which were the main reason why people took out high-risk loans that could trap them in bonded labour are still the main reason for taking out a loan among all households in the intervention areas. The healthcare system in Tamil Nadu consists of a mix of public and private sectors, and research suggests people prefer private sector treatment for certain services (Kanmony, 2018)¹², but there is a scarcity of data relating to private sector health services. Some progress was made in terms of access to public health services, and the number of government health facilities has increased, reflecting public investments in building and upgrading health facilities. Whether the quality of the services or beneficiary perception of this quality has improved is a different question.

Conclusion

This study suggests that a targeted approach which focuses on a hotspot with high levels of bondage using a variety of community-based interventions, community mobilisation and organisation is particularly effective in reducing the prevalence of bondage.¹³ It also corroborates the central idea of the hotspot approach, that slavery eradication should come from within communities and that NGO activity should be designed to enable and facilitate this through collective action.

¹¹ Media reports estimate this at 600,000 (2018) But it is not clear how this number was calculated. Available at: [The Silenced Lives of Firecracker Workers in Sivakasi](#)

¹² Kanmony, J. C. (2018) Alternate Healthcare Systems and Their Utilization with Special Reference to Kanniyakumari and Tirunelveli Districts of Tamil Nadu, India, *Economic Research*, 2 (4), 11–26

¹³ The findings in this report are similar to our findings on interventions to reduce the prevalence of bonded labour in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh in North-India, which also has a variety of community-based interventions, community mobilisation and organisation. What these community-based groups do varies, and each hotspot is unique, but in both community-based groups play a central role. However, there may be interventions that have similar or better results that have not yet been identified as they were, for example, not yet published.

Community-based groups, specifically community support groups that receive a range of support to build their capacity to work against bonded labour, were a consistent factor across the hotspot. NGO reports and observations show that these groups are very diverse in the scope and intensity of their activities, the local contexts in which they operate, and the kinds of support they can mobilise.

The community groups observed by this study engaged in multiple similar activities. These include (1) collective bargaining for multiple purposes (e.g. for getting entitlements, for improving schools, for changing exploitative work arrangements) (2) accessing improved livelihoods in various ways such as assessment of suitable livelihood opportunities with the technical support of Alternative Livelihood Consultants (ALC) and (3) awareness about legal rights and about the illegality of trafficking, bonded and child labour. A film-based toolkit¹⁴ was used by adolescent groups and by adult groups to stimulate dialogue and action on key issues that had been identified through the initial life story analysis. This toolkit created very strong engagement and ownership of the efforts for preventing risky recruitment and working together for safe and decent work. The hotspot also invested in a community facilitator (often a former mill worker) to lead the groups in each community. These interventions are all combined and often take place at the same time, which is important because it allows a concerted yet flexible response to different problems that can contribute to bondage in these communities.

We cannot extrapolate from this data to estimate prevalence of bonded labour beyond the intervention area in Tamil Nadu or with comparable approaches and combinations of interventions. Lack of generalisability is one of the reasons why data in this socially diverse and complex intervention area cannot be extrapolated. Some of the intervention areas have unique socio-economic characteristics, including the presence of particular industries such as flowers or firecrackers, or other NGO interventions that may not be present in other areas. Prevalence data builds an understanding of the socio-cultural and economic profile of families affected by bonded labour such as gender and caste backgrounds and their relations to the labour market rather than demonstrate causal analysis. Therefore, the results of this study are useful to inform program design and the selection of communities and households in other high prevalence areas.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

“Modern slavery” is a contested umbrella term for a range of exploitative labour practices, such as forced labour, bonded labour (sometimes referred to as “bondage”), trafficking and more

¹⁴ The toolkit is private, but an example video and some curriculum excerpts can be found here: <http://www.novofilm.co/portfolio/call-me-priya/>

recently, forced marriage (Walk Free Foundation, 2016).¹⁵ The semantics of the term has divided researchers and activists (Bunting and Quirk, 2017).¹⁶ With the definitions of modern slavery changing over time, estimates of the number of affected people change, which in turn affects the measurements of the impact of “modern slavery” eradication efforts. For local organisations and activists, these global debates are relevant as they shape policy and funding decisions, which affect local actions. Practitioners should be able to collect data that they can analyse and use as part of their work on eradication. This is not always the case with large-scale surveys as they may aggregate many intervention areas or combine high and low prevalence areas. Furthermore, understanding shifts in intervention areas in “hotspots” can enrich and inform global debates with more detailed local lived realities. Bonded labour has been illegal in India for many decades, and the government, domestic NGOs, activists and international organisations have collaborated with the aim of reducing the prevalence of bonded labour and other extreme forms of exploitation. However, according to the Global Slavery Index 2018, India still has the largest number of individuals in modern slavery in the world. Approximately 7,989,000 million people were estimated to live in slavery in India in 2016 (Walk Free Foundation, 2018).¹⁷

The Freedom Fund, along with partner organisations, are working towards reducing the prevalence of trafficking, bonded labour and harmful child labour. The main objective of this study is to measure changes in prevalence in the specific communities in which Freedom Fund NGO partners are working during the programme period.¹⁸ Intervention districts are highlighted in grey in the map below.



Figure 1 Intervention districts (source: Freedom Fund)

¹⁵ Walk Free Foundation (2016) [Global Slavery Index](#)

¹⁶ Bunting, A., & Quirk, J. (eds.) (2017). *Contemporary Slavery: Popular Rhetoric and Political Practice*. UBC Press.

¹⁷ Walk Free Foundation (2018) [Global Slavery Index](#)

¹⁸ Program started in July 2015 and still continuing. Current funding is up to June 2020.

The Freedom Fund, along with 11 partner organisations in Tamil Nadu at baseline (and 12 undertaking the work currently),¹⁹ are focusing their interventions in hotspots and locations where forms of bonded labour are more prevalent. Before the start of the program the Freedom Fund commissioned a feasibility study (ASK, 2014).²⁰ The NGOs are working towards reducing trafficking, bonded labour and harmful child labour. Between 2015 and 2018, the overall objective of the programme was to reduce the prevalence of bonded labour in 4 districts of Tamil Nadu. The program uses a Logical Framework for the hotspot, a planning matrix tool which provides an overview of a project's goal, activities and anticipated results. The target outcomes of the programme are:

1. Increased community capacity to prevent forced and child labour.
2. Survivors are rehabilitated and attain viable livelihoods.
3. Improved brand and supplier practices deter forced and child labour.
4. Improved policy environment advancing women's rights and labour rights.
5. Increased awareness and knowledge for accountability.

During 2018, the intervention was active in 405 communities, involving 38,000 group members and almost 9,000 mill workers.

1.2 Study context

The state of Tamil Nadu in southern India plays an important role for both the Indian textile industry and for global brands and retailers. Much of country's spinning, power loom and handloom units are located in Tamil Nadu. The cotton-spinning sector is the backbone of Tamil Nadu's textile industry. As one of South Asia's oldest and most prestigious manufacturing sectors, the cotton-spinning sector employs thousands of workers, and has been the leading source of the state's revenues, exports, and industrial entrepreneurship. Tamil Nadu also accounts for over 65% of other cloth preparation prior to manufacture (Shadab and Koshy, 2012).²¹ The textile industry in Tamil Nadu, as in several other Asian countries, contributes to the gender wage gap by relying on the production of labour intensive goods that are produced by exploited women (UN Women, 2016; Braunstein, 2015).²² Young women workers are exploited in spinning and textile units through manipulative schemes that reinforce gender inequality. The

¹⁹ The program currently works with 12 NGO. LEAF was taken out of the endline survey because the Freedom Fund no longer supports them. And the new partners did not join in the endline if they were not there at baseline. This means there are ten NGOs who are both at base- and endline.

²⁰ Feasibility study: Association for Stimulating Know How (ASK) (2014) [Addressing Modern Slavery in Tamil Nadu Textile Industry – Feasibility Study Report](#), Freedom Fund

²¹ Shadab, M. and Koshy, T. (2012) [Understanding the Characteristics of the Sumangali Scheme in Tamil Nadu Textile & Garment Industry and Supply Chain Linkages](#), Solidaridad.

²² UN Women (2016) [Towards gender equality in Viet Nam: making inclusive growth work for women](#), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

Also: Braunstein, E. (Ed.) (2015) [Economic Growth and Social Reproduction: Gender Inequality as Cause and Consequence](#), Discussion Paper No. 5., UN Women

media has widely reported on some of these schemes and the abuses that women and girls have suffered in the last few years (Shadab and Koshy, 2012).²³

The hotspot area in Tamil Nadu is thus located in a complex and dynamic setting where bonded labour co-exists with many other types of labour exploitation and social-economic and political inequality.

Site selection was based on a Freedom Fund internally commissioned study (ASK, 2014),²⁴ and experience of the partners, some of whom have worked in these districts for many years, as well as other research studies carried out by some NGOs. These other NGOs' studies helped target the districts. The locations for the baseline and endline surveys were randomised among intervention communities. These districts are Erode, Namakkal, Virudhunagar and Dindigul.

To be considered for the programme intervention, communities needed to have a significant number of mills existing in their district with large numbers of workers going into those mills each day and a large number of workers moving from source villages to live inside mill hostels. To find work in mills, individuals may obtain a reference from a labour market intermediary, who can be friend, family member or a professional. There are many different types of labour market intermediaries or labour agents. They fulfil a need by mediating the arrangements between individual workers and the organisation with a demand for labour. However, some of these labour intermediaries or agents are involved in trafficking and the use of force or deceit to extract work from people against their will. The payment of advances for work, or dowry schemes with unclear conditions, are among the mechanisms that agents in this hotspot use to force people to work (Burns, Oosterhoff and Joseph, 2016).²⁵ Across the hotspot, NGOs have raised awareness about labour rights and the use of advances and other economic traps used by such agents.

The aim of each hotspot programme is to reduce prevalence in the hotspot as a whole with partners in specific communities working on direct prevention, protection and prosecution interventions; improving the wider enabling environment for freedom; increasing civil society's capacity for sustained and effective anti-bonded labour action; and supporting rigorous research and evaluation on bonded labour. Each partner NGO has its own expertise and history but all support and initiate community-based interventions.

While most partners are engaged with multiple types of intervention, the balance of activity is on group-based actions especially those focused on enabling adolescents to stay in school, collective action for the improvement of conditions for mill workers, improving access to

²³ Shadab, M. and Koshy, T. (2012) [Understanding the Characteristics of the Sumangali Scheme in Tamil Nadu Textile & Garment Industry and Supply Chain Linkages](#), Solidaridad.

²⁴ Feasibility study: Association for Stimulating Know How (ASK) (2014) [Addressing Modern Slavery in Tamil Nadu Textile Industry – Feasibility Study Report](#), Freedom Fund

²⁵ Burns, D., Oosterhoff, P., & Joseph, S. (2016) Patterns and dynamics of bonded labour and child labour in the spinning mills of Tamil Nadu: Findings from life story analysis, Brighton: IDS

entitlements and livelihoods. Partners were chosen based on the following criteria (though not all partners needed to have strengths in all of these): (1) addressing bonded and child labour (2) equipping survivors through support for recovery and reintegration (3) positioning to contribute to systemic change, including through community-based reflection and collective action against bonded labour (4) engagement in local, district, state and/or national level advocacy (5) involvement in legal services for victim protection and/or prosecution of those who hold or traffic bonded labourers and (6) capacity and organisational reliability, trustworthiness, and transparency.

While acknowledging the importance of deep structural factors in communities and the wider political economy that affect the prevalence of bonded labour (e.g. the impact of caste discrimination, sector wide economic changes, and social protection), a central idea underpinning the programme is that slavery eradication should come from within communities and that NGO activity should be designed to enable and facilitate this through collective action, including the work of community support groups. NGO activity in villages within the hotspot therefore tended to focus at the hamlet level, the lowest administrative level as well as government engagement at many levels and work in the mills.

2 Methods

2.1 Study design

The main objective of this study is to measure the change in prevalence of bonded labour in the communities in which the Freedom Fund's NGO partners are working during the programme period. Since an empirical measurement of interventions and change requires documentation of at least two points in time to offer comparison, the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) and Praxis conducted baseline and endline surveys.

The intervention communities have some of the typical characteristics associated with high prevalence of forms of bonded labour in India, such as being primarily Dalit, having high levels of landlessness and poverty, and poor reach of government safety nets. The partners participating in the prevalence study intervene through the above described flexible and comprehensive package of activities in 338 hamlets in total, out of which the study was conducted in 66 hamlets from four districts in the baseline and 60 hamlets in the endline from the same districts. Districts are larger units which comprise of different blocks, blocks comprise of different Panchayats which comprise of several villages, villages may or may not have different hamlets. Residents in a hamlet often share social characteristics, such as caste, and it is at this level that one would expect to be able to measure changes in prevalence in bonded and child labour.

The study team used the same instrument to conduct the baseline and endline surveys in hamlets using random sampling of households. The endline survey was undertaken in the same hamlets 27 months²⁶ after the baseline survey was conducted. For the endline the NGO partners were trained in the data collection process in June 2018 and by July 2018, they began data collection in six hamlets each, where the baseline study was done. A quality control measure in place for the endline was a validation study to explore the extent of deviation from the data collected by the partners and to understand the reasons for the same. After partners collected data in the first sample hamlet, they shared the same with the Praxis team and received inputs on the process and quality of data. Any clarifications, errors and discrepancies were sorted out before the team proceeded to collect data in the second hamlet. The validation study was timed such that it would be done after data collection in two hamlets.

The baseline study has also provided the partners with inputs to their ongoing programmes, such as paying more attention to boys and young men and health with the aim of decreasing the prevalence of bonded labour during the intervention period. This immediate use of the study results also increased the ethical benefits of the study.

The choice of participatory statistics as a method for working with baseline data was influenced by a range of different factors which we have documented and written up elsewhere (see for example: Oosterhoff et al., 2016).²⁷ They include the existence of multiple working definitions and understandings of bonded labour; the difficulties associated with identifying “hidden populations”; the extractive nature of traditional surveys; and the need to give feedback to the communities affected so that they can validate the results and take action themselves.

Participatory census and generation of numbers can also overcome some of the problems associated with traditional survey methods, especially the extractive nature of the process. With the use of participatory tools, such as a social map, disaggregated socio-demographic data of families and village institutions can be collected, analysed and discussed at a local level. When statistical principles are used, these data can be analysed at a higher aggregated level, in this case, the hotspot level. Having been successfully used for monitoring and evaluation in other contexts, IDS and Praxis selected participatory statistics as the method for measuring prevalence and other indicators of change as part of an integrated mixed-methods approach including life story analysis, system mapping and action research.

This experiment in the use of participatory statistics for collecting prevalence data on bonded labour has wider importance within the global movement, as anti-slavery agencies around the world struggle to generate accurate prevalence data in a way that is relevant locally. It is

²⁶ Midpoint of baseline data collection: Jul 2016, and the midpoint of endline data collection: Sep 2019.

²⁷ Oosterhoff, P.; Bharadwaj, S.; Burns, D.; Raj, A.M.; Nanda, R.B. and Narayanan, P. (2016) [Using Participatory Statistics to Examine the Impact of Interventions to Eradicate Slavery: Lessons from the Field](#) CDI Practice Paper, Number 16, Brighton: IDS

consequently particularly important to explore the validity and reliability of the results from this research so that it can inform further research about the extent to which this method can be re-used.

2.2 Process and timeline

The process and timeline followed by the study team for the base- and endline surveys is detailed in the figures below.

BASELINE:

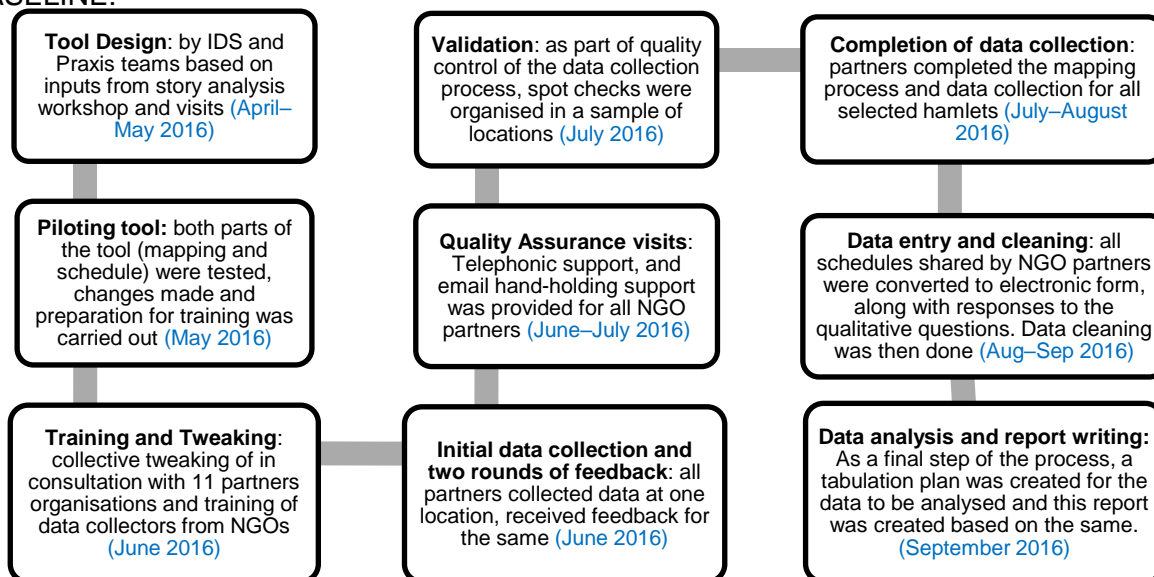


Figure 2 Baseline survey - process and timeline

ENDLINE:

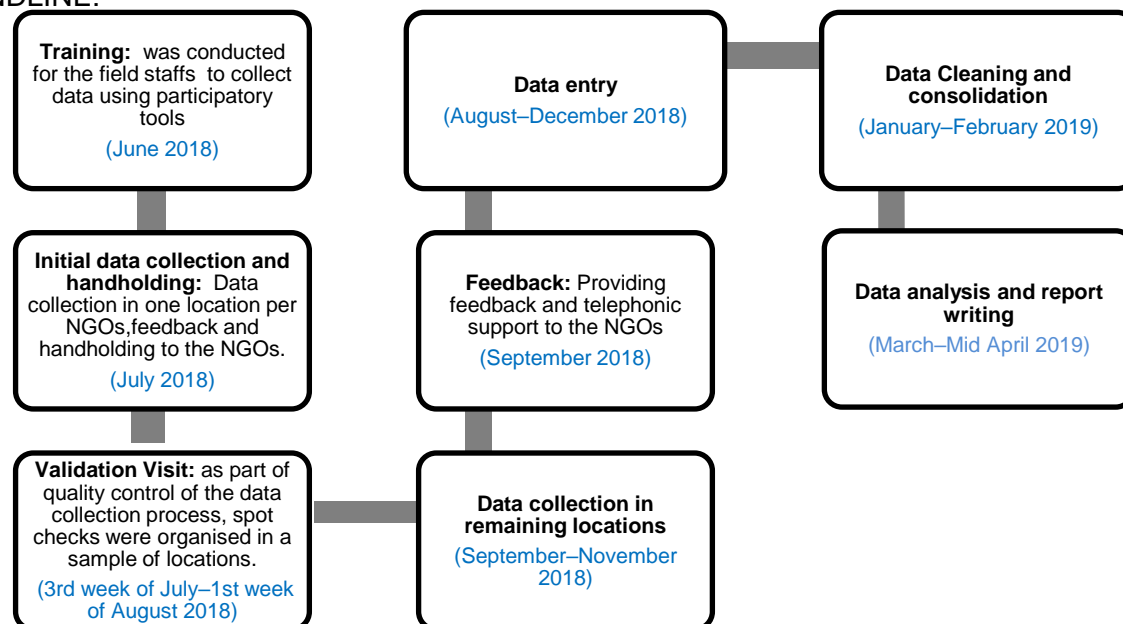


Figure 3 Endline survey - process and timeline

The team did not carry out a piloting process at endline as it replicated the same tool used in the baseline.

2.3 Tool Development and Sample

Before the prevalence study was conducted, IDS and Praxis involved seven NGOs²⁸ working in the hotspot in a life-story collection and analysis workshop (Burns, Oosterhoff and Joseph, 2016).²⁹ The purpose was to understand the systemic causes of bonded labour, identify how participants understood programmes should intervene and remain relevant, and consider the indicators of significant change according to individuals living in contexts of bonded labour.

The key themes that emerged from the joint analysis of 308 life stories collected by bonded labourers, residents in villages affected and NGO staff during the workshop included poverty, alcoholism, illiteracy, illness, work-related accidents, death in family and debt. Participants used these life stories to explore causal relations between themes and bonded labour creating a wall-wide system map using arrows and lines. This map showed causal relationships and systemic feedback loops. The qualitative analysis of the pathways and indicators of change from the map and the clustered analysis generated indicators of change over time. Following the life stories exercise, the study team identified three main indicators to use within the statistics both at baseline and at endline. These were, (1) prevalence and incidence of bonded labour (2) development of collective action by those affected by bonded labour and (3) access to health services. These are co-constructed indicators were used to measure the changes, which the analysis suggested would contribute to a reduction of prevalence.

To identify and understand bonded labour amongst adults and children, three categories of bonded labour were defined at the workshop for the tool: (1) bonded labour in a mill within the village³⁰ (2) bonded labour in a mill outside the village (3) bonded doing other work within the village and (4) bonded labour doing other work outside the village.³¹

In addition, data on the following diagnostic and demographic indicators was collected: religion, caste, type and size of land ownership, access to MGREGA, having a bank account, family size, family composition, access to school, school drop-out rate, presence of traffickers and type of trafficking, loans, borrower, purpose of loans, reason for loans, early marriage and alcohol addiction in the family.

²⁸ These NGOs participated voluntarily. All NGOs were invited.

²⁹ Burns, D.; Oosterhoff, P. and Joseph, S. (2016) [Patterns and dynamics of bonded labour and child labour in the spinning mills of Tamil Nadu: Findings from life story analysis](#), Brighton: IDS

³⁰ Labour is in the village when people sleep at home in the village. And outside is when they have to sleep outside to work.

³¹ The answer was to be inserted along with the suitable pictorials of men, women, boys and girls and accordingly.

To identify whether or not a person was in bonded labour, the following operational criteria³² were used in the study (Oosterhoff et al., 2016). These criteria and guidance on questions are detailed in the survey instrument and guidelines.

- The presence of an advance or agreement. An advance, whether completely or partly in cash or in kind, made by one person who is also demanding the labour of the borrower as a means of repayment for a loan.

Plus at least one of these remaining four:

- No freedom of movement: physically constrained or has restrictions placed on his/her freedom of movement.
- Paid less than the minimum wage: a remuneration which is less than the current notified minimum wage under the minimum wages act.
- No freedom of employment: absence of freedom to choose one's employment or other means of livelihood.
- No freedom of marketplace: loss of freedom to sell one's labour in an open market.

Debt could be from anyone in a household to classify that somebody is in bonded labour. Prevalence of bonded labour was measured at the household level. Although a specific individual may take out a loan, debts are in practice treated as being held by the household as a collective unit. Consequently, decisions, duties and responsibilities about who is repaying the loan or advance are collective rather than individual. For example, a daughter paying back a loan that was taken out by her father from a moneylender.

2.4 Sampling strategy and size

One of the criticisms of participatory quantitative methods is that they lack statistical power and result in conclusions with low statistical robustness. This study adopted rigorous statistical methods to overcome the lack of pre-existing survey data and the use of an estimate of current prevalence to calculate sample size. Overestimating baseline prevalence could result in a sample too small to detect changes. Given that the NGOs had to collect the data and that this would take them away from other activities, we also wanted to keep the sample small enough for them to manage the study with normal working expectations and goals.

The study team thought it was important that the participant NGOs themselves were involved in estimating expected reductions in bonded labour prevalence because they work in these areas and it would help them to reflect on their own assumptions about what they could achieve in the

³² These criteria were adapted from Freedom Fund and global criteria by the NGOs and the researchers based on the collective life story analysis as described in details in: Oosterhoff, P.; Bharadwaj, S.; Burns, D.; Mohan, Raj A.; Nanda, R. B. and Narayanan, P. (2016) [Using Participatory Statistics to Examine the Impact of Interventions to Eradicate Slavery: Lessons from the Field](#), CDI Practice Paper 16, Brighton: IDS.

program. Participating NGO estimates of the prevalence at baseline and the expected change as a result of their interventions are displayed in the table below:

Participating NGO estimates of the prevalence at baseline and the expected change as a result of their interventions	NGO estimated % of households now	NGO estimated % of households in 2 years	Sample required baseline	Sample required repeat
Serene Secular Social Service Society (SSSSS)	14%	5%	165	165
Trust for Education and Social Transformation (TEST)	18%	10%	294	294
Women's Organisation in Rural Development (WORD)	19%	10%	239	239
Child Voice	30%	10%	62	62
Peace Trust	45%	30%	162	162
Organisation of Development Action Maintenance (ODAM)	19%	9%	188	188
Society for People's Education and Economic Change (SPEECH)	35%	25%	328	328
Leaf	16%	7%	196	196
Rights Education and Development Centre (READ)	48%	27%	82	82
Van Muhil	25%	15%	250	250
Vizhuthugal	48%	20%	48	48
Don Bosco	12%	7%	539	539
	Average estimated baseline 27.41		Average 212.75	

Table 1 Participating NGO estimates of the prevalence at baseline and the expected change as a result of their interventions

The estimated expected reduction in bonded labour varied significantly between the NGOs. Their estimations provided an average estimated baseline of 27% and an average expected reduction of 10% during the project period. For this a sample size of 2,681 would be sufficient for 9 out of 12 NGOs if their estimates were accurate, which meant that our sample was large enough to detect their estimated changes.

This ensured that the sample size was big enough to measure the changes in at least nine of the individual NGOs in addition to detecting a change of less than 5% across the hotspot as a whole. For the hotspot as a whole the study team took a more conservative estimated reduction from 27.5% to 24%, which required 2,449 households for the baseline and endline surveys. This meant that even if NGO interventions resulted in a lower decrease in prevalence than expected, there were still enough households to assess changes in the hotspot as whole.

In order to select hamlets, each NGO shared a list of the hamlets in which it operated and indicated which of these had interventions before 2015 on the issue of bonded labour. These were then taken off the eligibility list to avoid conflating the results of Freedom Fund supported interventions with their previous efforts. To select the final list of hamlets we used random

numbers³³. To arrive at the desired sample size across all partners, each NGO had to meet an average of 90 respondents (who would share data of two neighbours relating to a total of 270 households). With an average number of around 100 households per hamlet³⁴, each NGO randomly selected 15 respondent households in each hamlet.³⁵ The endline survey was conducted in the same hamlets, except six hamlets, which were the intervention areas of LEAF using random from a list of numbered households numbers to select 15 respondent households in each hamlet. In cases where the selected respondents were not home or did not have any adult working members, the facilitators chose the next household on the random number list.

Due to the focus of the programme we excluded hamlets where NGOs visited less than once a month.

The distribution of households across partner NGOs as well as hamlets in both states, at baseline and endline is below:

Baseline												
District	NAMAKKAL		VIRUDHUNAGAR					ERODE	DINDIGUL			
NGO	WORD	LEAF	Don Bosco	ODAM	Vaan Muhil	TEST	SPEECH	READ	PEACE	Child Voice	SSSSS	Total
HH per NGO	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	2970
Hamlets per NGO	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	66
Endline												
District	NAMAKKAL		VIRUDHUNAGAR					ERODE	DINDIGUL			
NGO	WORD	Don Bosco	ODAM	Vaan Muhil	TEST	SPEECH	READ	PEACE	Child Voice	SSSSS	Total	
HH per NGO	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	2700
Hamlets per NGO	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	60

Table 2 Distribution of households across partner NGOs and hamlets

The NGO cover 358³⁶ villages. The total number of hamlets from which data is collected at baseline by the 11 participating NGO is 66 at baseline and 60 hamlets at endline by the 10 participating NGOs.³⁷ Each NGO partner had an equal workload and visited 6 hamlets. The average number of household size across the hamlets at baseline was 179.8, ranging from 72 in Avathipalayam in Namakkal to 284 in S.Thiruvengatapuram in Virudhunagar. The average

³³ Using excel.

³⁴ The average number of household size across the hamlets at endline was 181.25 ranged from 72 in Avathipalayam in Namakkal to 284 in S.Thiruvengatapuram in Virudhunagar. We followed the same process during baseline and endline.

³⁵ Using an excel generated list of random numbers.

³⁶ Child Voice=30; Don Bosco=25; LEAF=40; ODA=25; PEACE=30; READ=30; SPEECH=30; SSSSS=25; Vaan Muhil=20; WORD=83 and TEST=20.

³⁷ One NGO was no longer in the program

number of household size across the hamlets at endline is 181.25 ranged from 72 in Avathipalayam in Namakkal to 284 in S.Thiruvengatapuram in Virudhunagar.

Data from the baseline study showed significant variation in prevalence across NGOs and between hamlets in the NGO intervention areas. In order to compare the prevalence rates across these hamlets at two moments in time, the same hamlets were revisited at the endline survey. We did not tell the NGO partners that the endline would be carried out in the same places to avoid that such information would change their interventions in these hamlets. There was therefore a repeated cross-section of households at baseline and endline.

2.5 Survey administration

The IDS and Praxis teams were keen to conduct research in a way that would utilise the expertise of field staff, would be of interest to the participants and encourage the sharing of experiences of community members in a simple, non-threatening manner. A two-part research process was evolved, through which each NGO collected data in a set number of predetermined (randomly selected) hamlets. Part 1 consisted of a mapping exercise to generate background details on each hamlet and to compile a numbered list of houses from which households could be randomly selected. Part 2 was facilitated within 10 days after the mapping exercise and a pictorial self-assessment tool (see Annex) was used to generate detailed information about certain households in the hamlets. These maps were also used for the focus group discussions with the respondents in both the baseline and endline data to understand the meaning of the measured changes.

Ten to fifteen individuals from randomly selected households³⁸ participated in the survey. Respondents themselves indicated the appropriate answers to the questions and for their two adjacent neighbours on their sheet (one set of survey sheets was used per household for a total of three households per respondent). Non-literate community members were able to participate by referencing the pictorial equivalent which was provided for all questions on the survey, for which they encircled the appropriate response. They could also clarify with other respondents or the facilitators in case they were unsure of the meaning of any questions.³⁹

Interviewers asked about *current* bonded labour status and explained that a person is bonded when they are working to pay off a particular debt and had one of the other above-mentioned characteristics.

³⁸ If nobody was available, then we would use the next randomly generated number to pick a household.

³⁹ We had trained the facilitators to ask questions to help people answer but refrain from answering for the respondents.

2.6 Validation

As part of the study's quality control mechanism, the study team undertook data validation for both base- and endline results to explore the extent of deviation from the data collected by the partners and to understand the reasons why (See Annex 1 and 2).

In the baseline validation, Praxis staff visited five per cent of the total of 2,970 households, i.e., 155 households, using a random sample in the communities where the NGO had collected data. Praxis staff visited all 11 NGOs intervention areas covered under the study. In each of the organisations data for between 9 and 12 households was validated by Praxis staff from one location per organisation.

The same procedure was followed for the selection of households at endline. Praxis staff visited 5% of the total of 2700 households i.e., 144 households. These households being the same from where data was initially collected. The validation visit was in one location each of the 8 participating NGOs. The locations were those where the partner NGOs had already collected data previously. The locations and households were selected randomly.

In total, the survey tools with 21 questions were redone with respondents from 155 households at baseline and 144 households at endline with the same respondents.⁴⁰

The first validation at baseline found >10% variance about questions relation to the loans and about alcohol intake. The validation team checked the variance and found that the reported differences were random. They could be higher or lower which meant that there was not systematic under or over-reporting. The variation on the numbers of people in bonded labour reported by respondents was below 10% in both rounds. This suggests that validation procedures found that the survey had been administered correctly and that the data shows a reliable level of accuracy.

2.7 Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions by the respondents themselves on the results of the survey took place on the same day immediately after the survey was conducted. The purpose of these discussions was not only to have another collective validation of the results, but also to discuss strategies and views of the respondents on reducing the prevalence of bonded labour. Interviewers tallied up the prevalence data to facilitate discussions on prevalence in 66 hamlets at baseline and 60

⁴⁰ We could verify that it was the same individual because their name was on the original form and the other respondents in the group and the NGO colleague remembered who participated. If another family member chose to represent the respondent, they were part of the process, but the data from their sheets was not included in the analysis.

hamlets at endline. Facilitators asked the five questions below, observed interactions between participants and made sure that every participant was given a chance to speak.

1. What do you feel is most surprising about the numbers?
2. In your opinion, what happens to people who want to come out of bonded labour?
3. Does the number reflect the situation? If anyone has managed to escape from bonded labour, who helped them?
4. How does the community approach help people in bonded labour?
5. What do you feel will help prevent bonded labour? Please prioritise them.

2.8 Ethical considerations

This study is part of a larger research project, which includes scoping visits, life stories, action research, participatory statistics and an evaluation. This research project has been reviewed and approved by the IDS Ethical Review Board.

2.9 Study limitations and challenges

The aim of this study was to go beyond token participation and move to research grounded in the community while providing opportunities for community members to share information and insights through discussion. The study team faced challenges associated with the community-based research process that was undertaken. These included crowd management due to the (mistaken) anticipation of hamlet residents that the researchers came for a government scheme or NGO programme making beneficiary lists; reluctance of participants to mingle with people hailing from various social categories (especially across caste hierarchies); communication gaps or delays between senior staff at the organisation and front line staff carrying out the research; and timeline slippages due to festivals and elections.

The researchers were instructed to ensure that at least 50% of the respondents were female from hamlets they visited and to choose times and venues for interviews according to the convenience of women. However, as most of the men were away at the time that researchers went to collect data, there was a slightly higher number of female respondents,⁴¹ which might mean that some male perspectives are less represented.

The shortage of elderly - both men and women - means that we probably missed some historical perspectives on bondage, which could have been important to understand their experiences and views on changes.

⁴¹ At the baseline, 152 more women than men and for the endline 588 more women than men.

The study was limited by the lack of a cross-sectional design and the lack of a control group, which reduces the study's ability to detect causal relations between the intervention and prevalence outcomes. Additionally, because the survey was designed to measure changes within the intervention areas of selected NGOs in certain geographic locations, it cannot be used to draw conclusions about prevalence outside these areas.

The survey tool was prepared for use by largely non-literate groups and not all data could be tallied up for a group analysis while the group members who had given the information were waiting. Therefore, the study team focussed more on the “why” aspect of the prevalence in addition to the questions about strategies to get out of bondage. We think the data generated through this method are likely to be accurate and that the process encourages a shared understanding of the participants and the NGOs of the changes in these hamlets. The group discussion and reflections on the data was facilitated by the field staffs of NGOs, who are well known to the community and have built up trust over the years.

3 Findings

This section details the profile of respondents and the bonded labour status of participating households. A sub-group analysis based on socio-economic and demographic profiles of households from which data is shared is also conducted.

3.1 Background Information

3.1.1 Respondent profile

In the charts below, terms such as ‘exclusively bonded labourers’ refer to working members of the household. For the baseline survey, a total of 970 respondents were met across 66 hamlets in locations covered by 11 NGOs. The total number of households about whom data was generated is 2,970, given that each respondent shared data for three households: their own and their immediate neighbours on either side of their house. During the baseline, the study team collected data for 2,970 households of which 30 were excluded.⁴² Further, the NGO LEAF, as mentioned above, is no longer supported by Freedom Fund and dropped out from the endline study. Hence, for the comparative analysis between the baseline and endline, Praxis analysed data for 2,670 households after removing data from LEAF’s hamlets (which consisted of 270 households from 6 hamlets). For the comparative analysis, the adjusted baseline sample is n=2,670.

Similarly, for the endline survey, a total of 900 respondents were met across 60 hamlets in locations covered by 10 NGOs. The total number of households for which data was collected was 2,700. Following the same pattern from the baseline survey, respondents shared data for

⁴² Because they had no working members. These were mostly elderly

three households (their own and their immediate neighbours on either side). Praxis excluded data for three households⁴³ bringing the final sample size at endline to n=2,697.

Both at the baseline and endline, the number of female respondents was higher than male respondents. At baseline, 64% (n=576) of respondents were female and 36% (n=324) were male. At endline, the percentage of female respondents was 83% (n=744), which was higher than at baseline, whereas the percentage of male respondents was 17% (n=156) which was lower than at baseline.

The age distribution of respondents is detailed in the charts below:

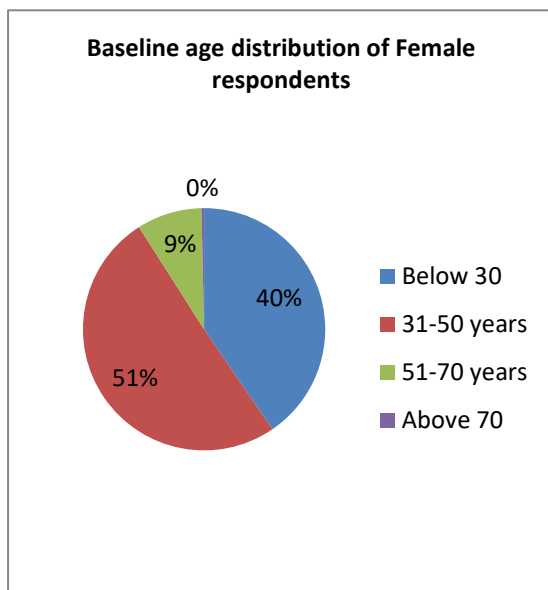


Figure 4 Baseline age distribution of Female respondents

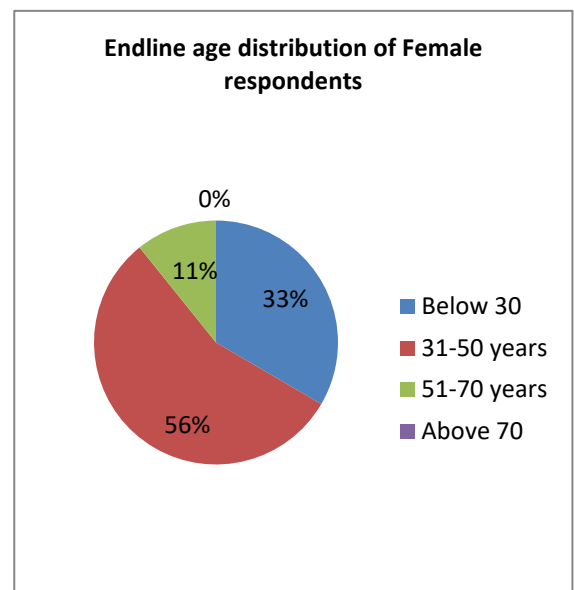


Figure 5 Endline age distribution of Female respondents

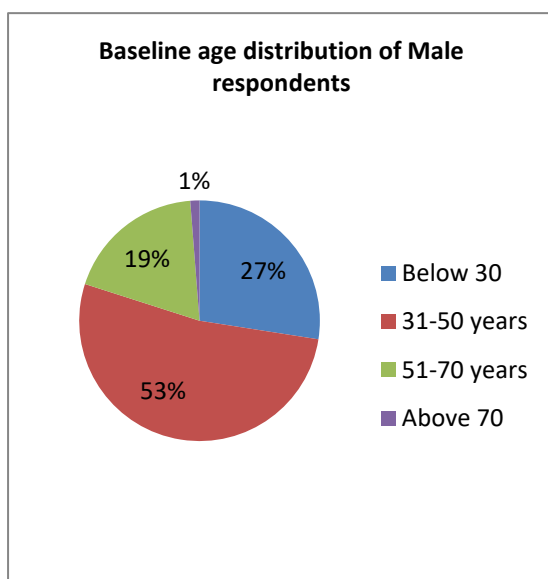


Figure 6 Baseline age distribution of Male respondents

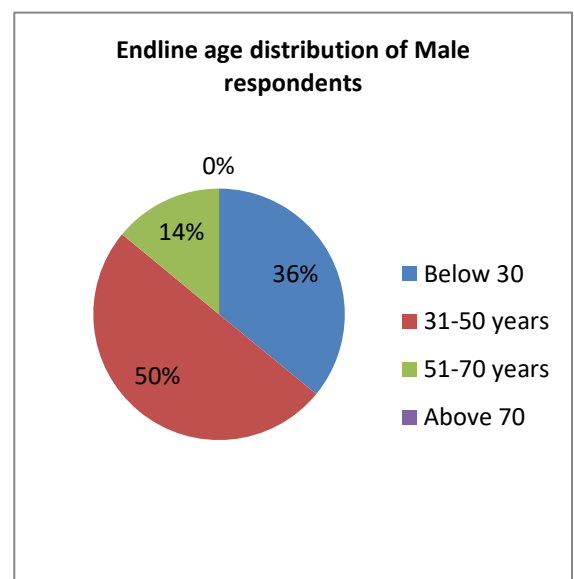


Figure 7 Endline age distribution of Male respondents

⁴³ All the three households had no working member in their family.

At baseline and endline, for both male and female respondents, between 50% and 60% were between 31 and 50 years. At baseline, 1% of male respondents belonged to the age group 70 and above, however at endline, no respondents identified themselves as over 70 years old. The shortage of elderly means that we probably missed some historical perspectives on bondage and bonded labour in village and in the mills.

3.2 Bonded labour Status and Types

3.2.1 Bonded labour Status

Households that were found to *currently* have one member in any form of bonded labour were categorised as ‘At least one person in bonded labour’. Households in which all working members were in bonded situations were categorised as ‘Exclusively in bonded labour’.

A summary of the overall status of the sampled population and status of bonded labour at baseline and the endline is presented in the figures 8 and 9 below:

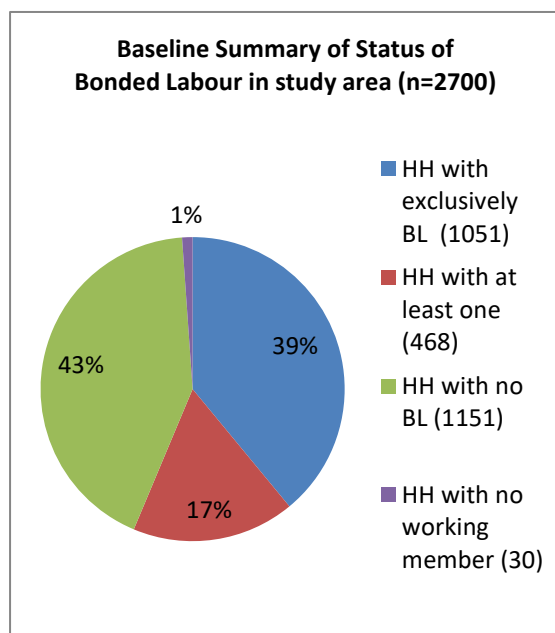


Figure 8 Baseline Summary of Status of Bonded Labour in study area (n=2700)

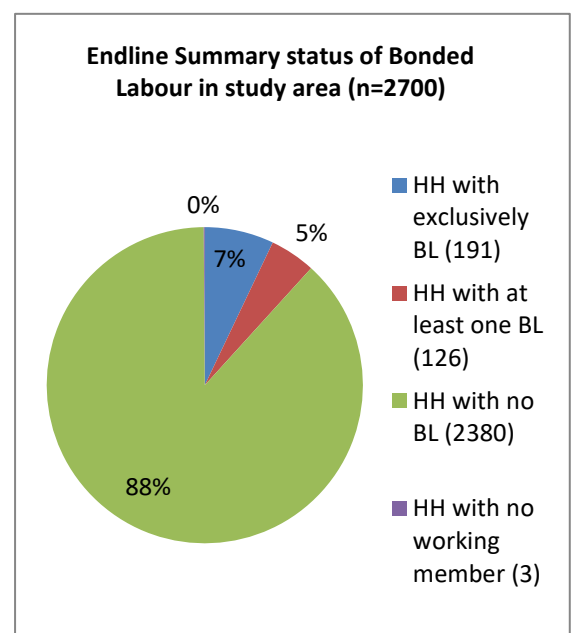


Figure 9 Endline Summary status of Bonded Labour in study area (n=2700)

Figure 8 shows that at baseline, 39% (n=1,051) of surveyed households were in exclusive bonded situations and about 17% (n=4,68) of households had at least one person in bonded labour. At endline, as seen in Figure 9, about 7% (n=191) of surveyed households were exclusively in bonded labour and 5% (n=126) of households had at least one person in bonded labour. Compared to the figures at baseline, the endline figures indicate a drastic reduction in the number of households exclusively in bonded labour. From baseline to endline, the percentages of households with at least one person in bondage reduced by slightly more than half.

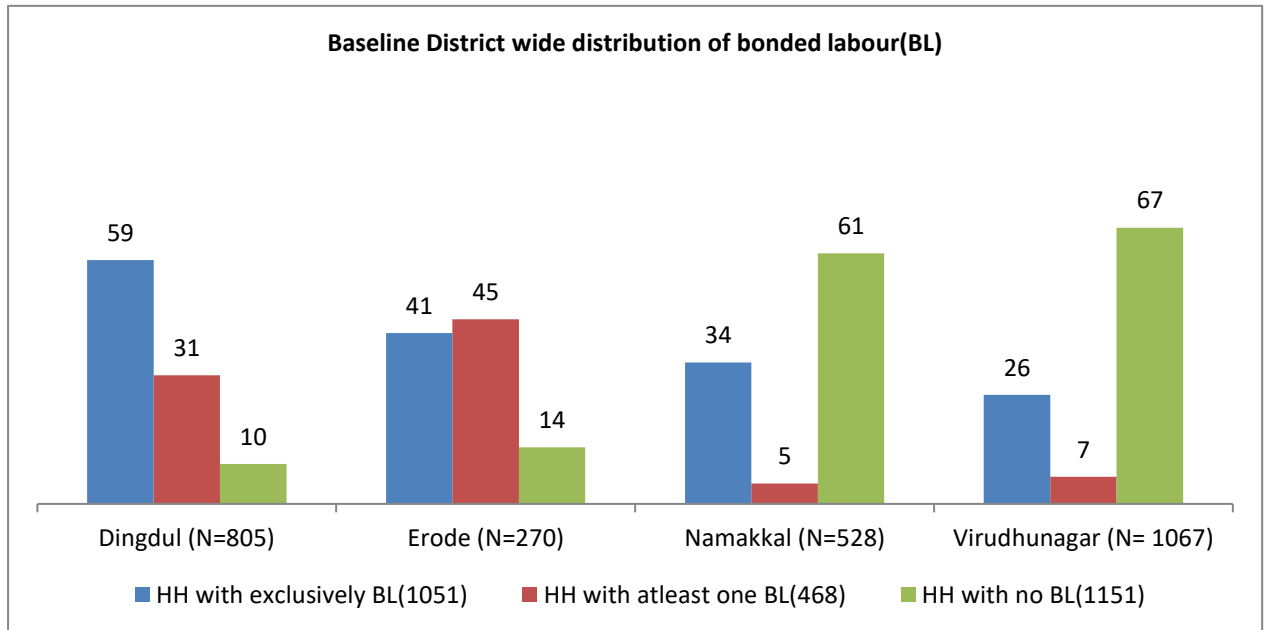


Figure 10 Baseline District wide distribution of bonded labour (BL)

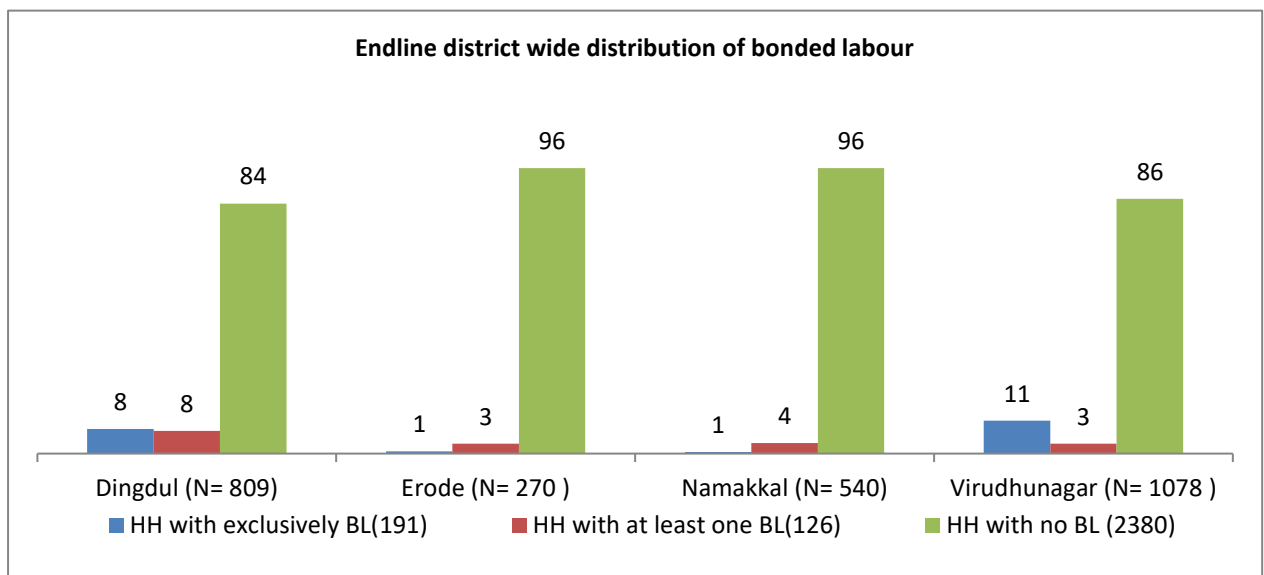


Figure 11 Endline district wide distribution of bonded labour

The data disaggregated by district shows a clear reduction in the number of households with members in bonded labour. The reduction in four districts has been substantial, with the total number of households with any form of bonded labour from n=1,519 to n=317, i.e. from 57% to 12% (unweighted).

Lower prevalence rates of entire families in bonded labour was found. A sharp decrease in prevalence was recorded in Erode from 86% at baseline to 4% at endline and in Dindugul from 90% to 16%. Bonded labour prevalence in Namakkal decreased from 39% to 5% and in Virudhunagar from 33% to 14%.

To draw prevalence estimates by NGOs that are representative in our hotspots, Table 1 presents the prevalence rates and the corresponding prevalence with inflation weights.⁴⁴ Prevalence with inflation weights has reduced from 56.1% to 11.1%. Figure 12 presents the weighted prevalence rates by NGOs. We find that there is a statistically significant difference in prevalence⁴⁵ between the baseline and endline for most NGOs, the exceptions being 4 NGOs: VAANUHIL, SPEECH, Don Bosco, & ODAM⁴⁶, where there have been only minimal drops in prevalence.

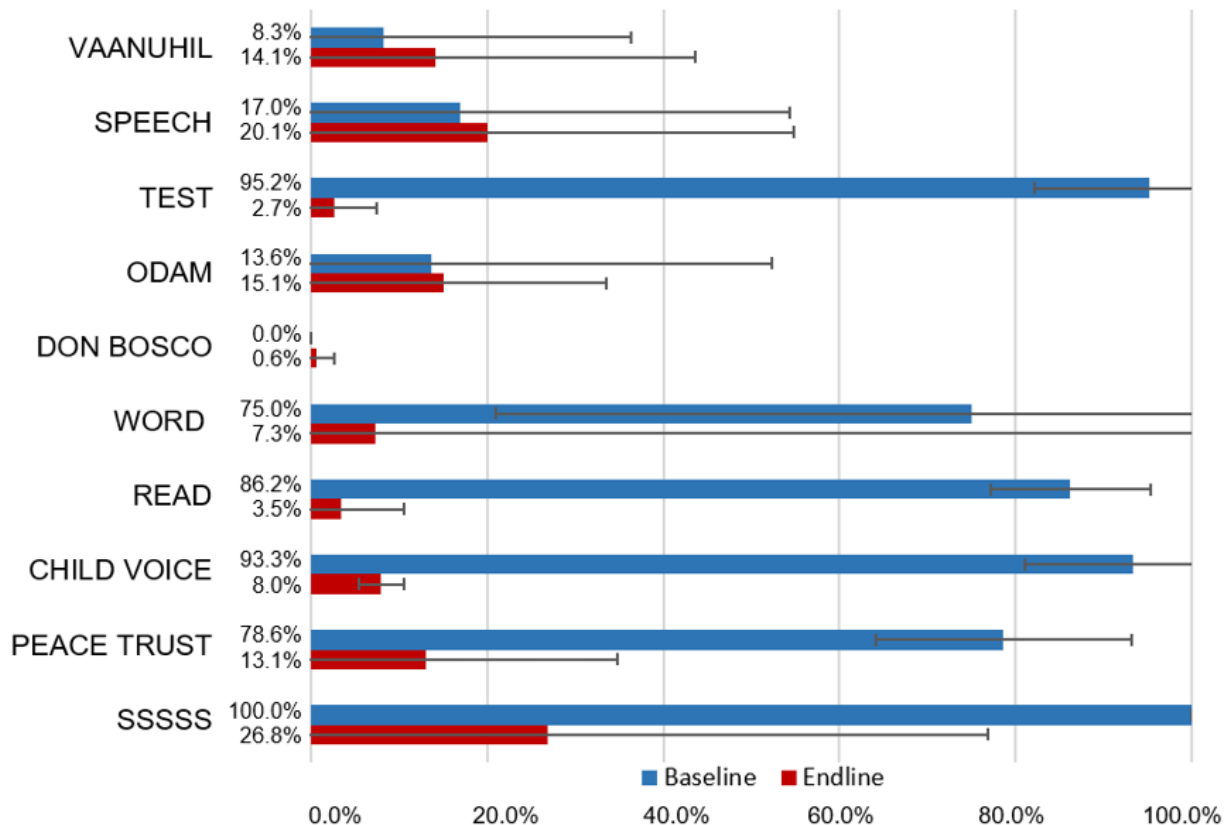


Figure 12 Prevalence of bonded labour at baseline & endline by NGO⁴⁷

Note: Figure 12 presents weighted prevalence rates by NGOs between baseline and endline that suggests significant changes for most NGOs. Bars display mean prevalence, i.e. average % HHs with bonded labour, and horizontal lines display confidence intervals⁴⁸ (of the mean).

⁴⁴ Prevalence with inflation weights accounts for sample selection such that estimates can coincide to some known totals of the population. Using a one-stage clustered design with stratification, and primary sampling unit (village hamlet), weights are generated by population size for each hamlet divided by number of HH in the hamlet. The one stage-level sampling weight variable is used to compute mean prevalence for each NGO.

⁴⁵ The confidence intervals are at 95%

⁴⁶ For WORD, even with a substantial change in prevalence, it appears insignificant as we find that the confidence intervals overlap. In this case as we find >25% overlap in CI, we further check for significance using a 2-sample t-test that helps ascertain that the change is significantly different.

⁴⁷ The standard error equals the standard deviation divided by the square root of the sample size. If s.d.=0, then s.e. of the means are not reported. SSSS at baseline has 100% prevalence, i.e. all HH have BL prevalence, hence sd=0, hence there is no standard error for SSSS.

⁴⁸ Confidence intervals at 95%.

We consulted the NGOs to get their views on change. In Dindugul district, Child Voice and PEACE thought that the community-based awareness activities by community vigilant group and the action research group on issues such as vulnerability of girls resulted in the reduction of bonded labour. They found that the adolescent action group actively increased awareness and reported suspected cases of bonded labour to the NGOs, which help NGOs to intervene. They also found skills trainings to rescued persons, to be helpful in keeping them out of bondage. During the focus group discussions respondents also reported that in their view, initiatives to increase school attendance decreased the prevalence of bonded labour. PEACE's efforts in linking women with Self Help Groups (SHGs) and banks reduced women's dependency on taking loans from mill owners. At the same time, staff found that its advocacy activities with mill owners and farmers increased their awareness on several legal provisions governing issues of bonded labour. As a result of better legal knowledge, some workers prefer to be paid daily wages rather than taking an advance which might get them in a situation of bonded labour. However, in some parts of Dindugul district, getting an advance is the most important condition for employment.

Similarly, in Namakkal district, WORD staff thought that increased awareness through community-based action groups about the risks of taking advances has reduced prevalence of bonded labour. In some parts of Namakkal district, all employed persons work in mills or do other work without getting an advance with bonded labour strings attached. If they need loans, they look for other sources of money rather than taking advances.

In Erode, one of the intervention areas of READ reported a higher prevalence (86%) at baseline and a lower prevalence (4%) at endline. READ staff felt that community-based campaigns against bonded labour through community action groups that aimed to raise awareness about advance payments was an important factor in reducing prevalence. In general, the NGOs felt that increased knowledge resulted in behavioural change that led to reduced prevalence.

In Virudhunagar, three out of four NGOs recorded a higher prevalence as compared to the baseline, but the change is not statistically significant for any of these NGOs, those being VaanMuhil, SPEECH and ODAM. TEST is the only NGO which has seen a significant change, with a decrease in prevalence while VaanMuhil, SPEECH and ODAM recorded marginal non-significant increases in prevalence rates at endline. At baseline, VaanMuhil recorded 8.3% prevalence, but at endline it reported an increase to 14%. SPEECH reported a low prevalence rate at baseline with 17%, but at endline it reported an increase in prevalence at 20%. ODAM, which is also located in the same district, saw an increase in prevalence from 13.6% at baseline to 15% at endline.

The study team followed up with VaanMuhil, SPEECH and ODAM on their reported higher percentage of bonded labourer at endline compared to the baseline. NGOs attributed this change to the ban on fireworks which pushed large number of people to vulnerable situations because no alternative employment was available. On October 23rd 2018, the Supreme Court of India ruled that the manufacturing and sale of high-emission fireworks were banned to reduce (air) pollution. On November 13th 2018, 1,070 firework manufacturing units were closed indefinitely due to this ban. Thousands of workers in the factories and along the supply chain (vendors for example) lost their jobs,⁴⁹ harming the Virudhunagar economy. The workers, who used to earn IRS 300–600 per day by making fireworks, are now in search of work.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Reports claim 600,000 jobs have been lost, but it not very clear how this number was calculated. Available at: <https://www.newsclick.in/silenced-lives-firecracker-workers-sivakasi> (2018)

⁵⁰ Virudhunagar District produces and estimated 90% of India's firecrackers.

Table 3 Hotspot level prevalence rate at baseline and endline

District	NGO	Baseline					Endline				
		Total sample	HH with at least one Bonded Labourer	Prevalence %	Prevalence with inflation weights ⁵¹	Sample used with weights	Total sample	HH with at least one Bonded Labourer	Prevalence %	Prevalence with inflation weights	Sample used with weights
Dindugul	SSSSS	270	270	100.0%	100.0%	270	270	90	33.0%	26.8%	270
Dindugul	PEACE TRUST	269	211	78.0%	78.6%	269	270	37	14.0%	13.1%	270
Dindugul	CHILD VOICE	270	246	93.0%	93.3%	270	265	2	1.0%	8.0%	265
Erode	READ	261	233	86.0%	86.2%	261	270	11	4.0%	3.5%	270
Namakkal	WORD	270	207	79.0%	75.0%	270	263	20	7.0%	7.3%	263
Namakkal	DON BOSCO	270	0	0.0%	0.0%	270	265	2	1.0%	0.6%	265
Virudhunagar	ODAM	270	34	13.0%	13.6%	270	265	41	15.0%	15.1%	265
Virudhunagar	TEST	270	255	94.0%	95.2%	270	270	8	3.0%	2.7%	270
Virudhunagar	SPEECH	270	39	14.0%	17.0%	270	268	53	20.0%	20.1%	268
Virudhunagar	VAANUHIL	268	24	9.0%	8.3%	268	264	53	20.0%	14.1%	264
Total =2670		Hotspot-level average using inflation weights within NGO Hamlets			56.1%	2670	Hotspot-level average using inflation weights within NGO Hamlets			11.1%	2697

The baseline data for the NGO⁵² who is no longer supported by the Freedom Fund has been excluded.

The following section examines the likely factors that are associated with the reduction in prevalence of bonded labour. It discusses the changes in prevalence over time using a repeated cross-section of households within the panel of hamlets and NGOs.

⁵¹ The sampling for the survey was done by the village-hamlet as the primary sampling unit (PSU). To obtain the average prevalence within NGO hamlets' we estimated weights using the PSU. Weight = 'population size for each hamlet divided by number of HH in the hamlet sample'. In the baseline report, the hotspot-level prevalence with inflation weight was 53.9. This has changed to 56.1% in this end-line report. The weighting method is the same as in baseline report. Using a one-stage clustered design with stratification, and primary sampling unit (village hamlet), weights are generated by population size for each hamlet divided by number of HH in the hamlet. The one stage-level sampling weight variable is used to compute mean prevalence for each NGO. But as several NGOs dropped out the numbers in the base- and end-line reports change.

⁵² LEAF was taken out of the end-line survey because the Freedom Fund no longer supports them.

3.2.2 Bonded labour Types

From the households that reported any form of bonded labour, the charts below detail the location (i.e. whether inside or outside the village), type of work (in mills or other work), and gender and age of workers.

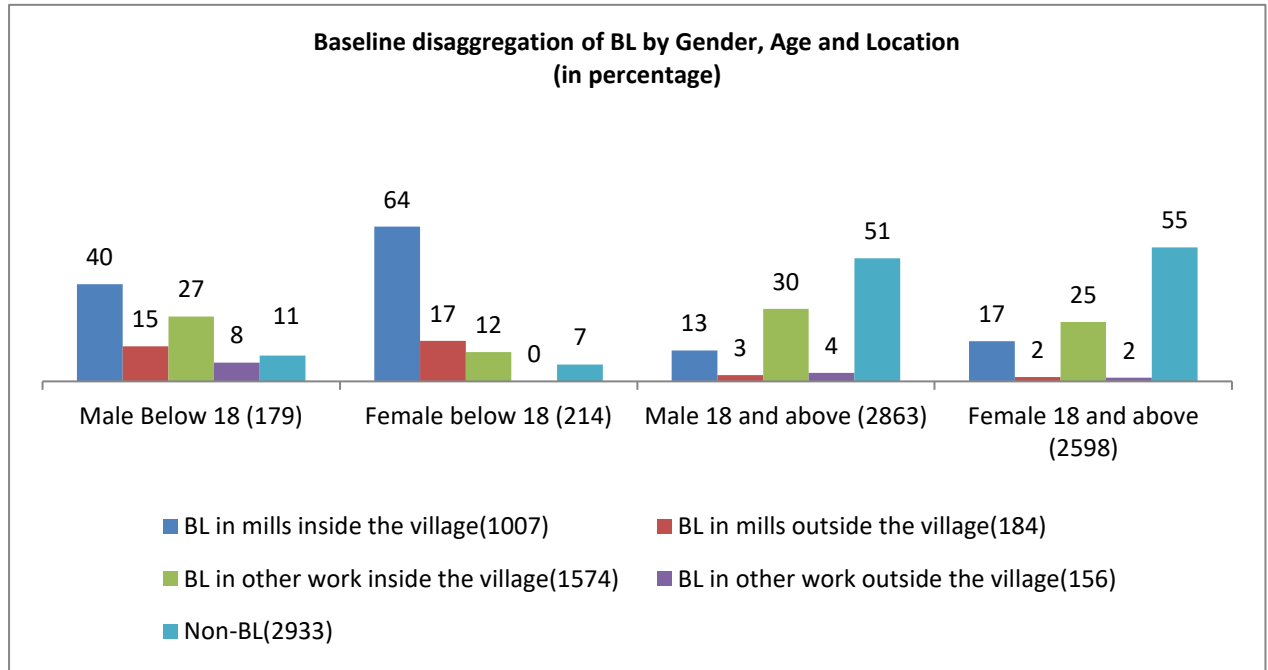


Figure 13 Baseline disaggregation of BL by Gender, Age and Location

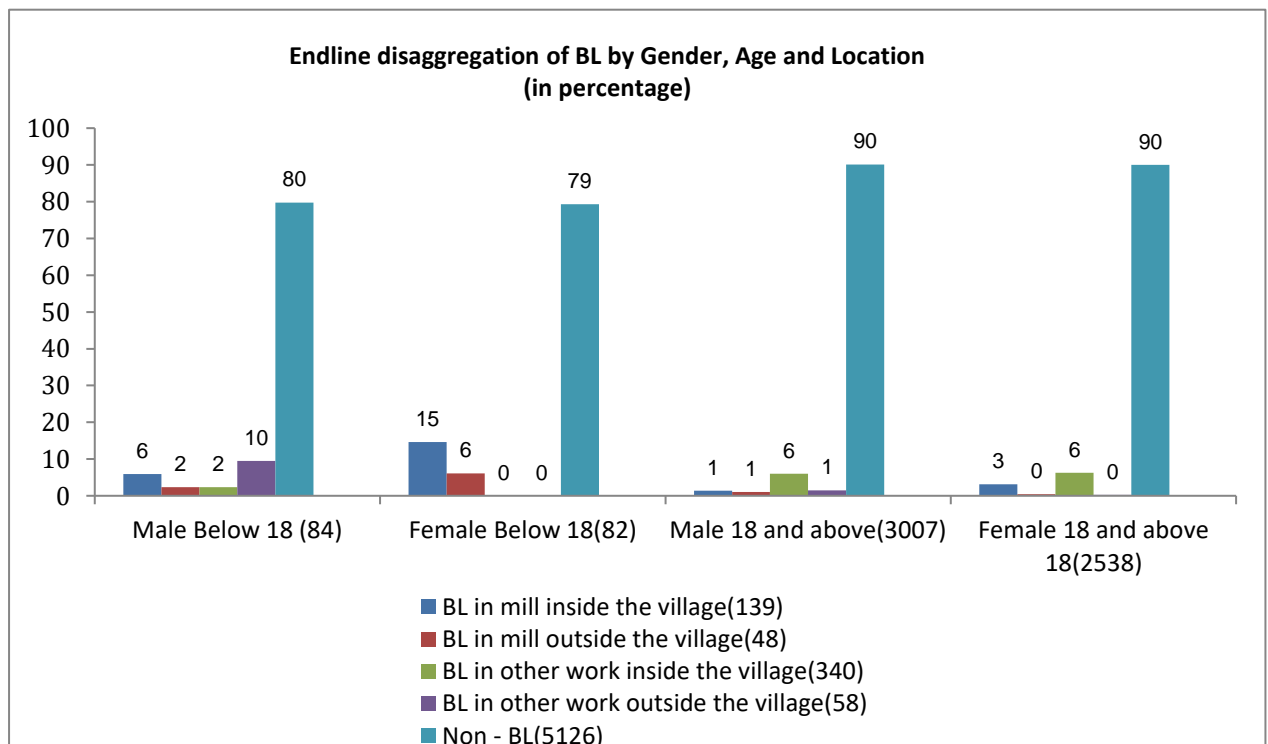


Figure 14 Endline disaggregation of BL by Gender, Age and Location

The above charts suggest that overall bonded labour has reduced. It also shows a large reduction in the number of children under 18 working at all. At baseline, 179 boys were found working, while at endline it was 84. At baseline 214 girls were found working, while at endline it was 82.

Among these workers in the households, the reduction in levels of bonded labour is higher for males and females below age 18 than for adults. At baseline, a greater proportion of minors who were working were in bonded labour, and there has been a particularly sharp reduction of girls in bondage in mills inside sampled village. However, despite this sharp reduction, bondage remains high amongst girls (15%) and boys (6%) by comparison with adults. The corresponding percentages for male and female adults above 18 years are 1% and 3%.

Comparing the outcomes of the baseline and endline data, it is clear that more people in the intervention areas are able to choose where they work after the intervention had taken place. For instance, 11% of boys who chose where they worked at baseline increased to 80% at endline, followed by 7% of girls to 79%. Similarly, 51% of adult males who chose where they worked increased to 90%, and 55% of adult females increased to 90%.

The proportion of adult bonded labourers engaged in other work outside their home villages has decreased by one fourth in the case of males. The number of adult females engaged in work outside their home villages has reduced to 0.

The chart above draws a comparison between those who are working in bonded situations in mills and those working outside mills. From the chart, it can be seen that there has been a drastic reduction in this category as well. This indicates that there has been an overall decrease in bonded labour situation. Those who were bonded in mill work reduced from 45% at baseline to 7% at endline. Those bonded in other work reduced from 65% at baseline to 15% at endline.

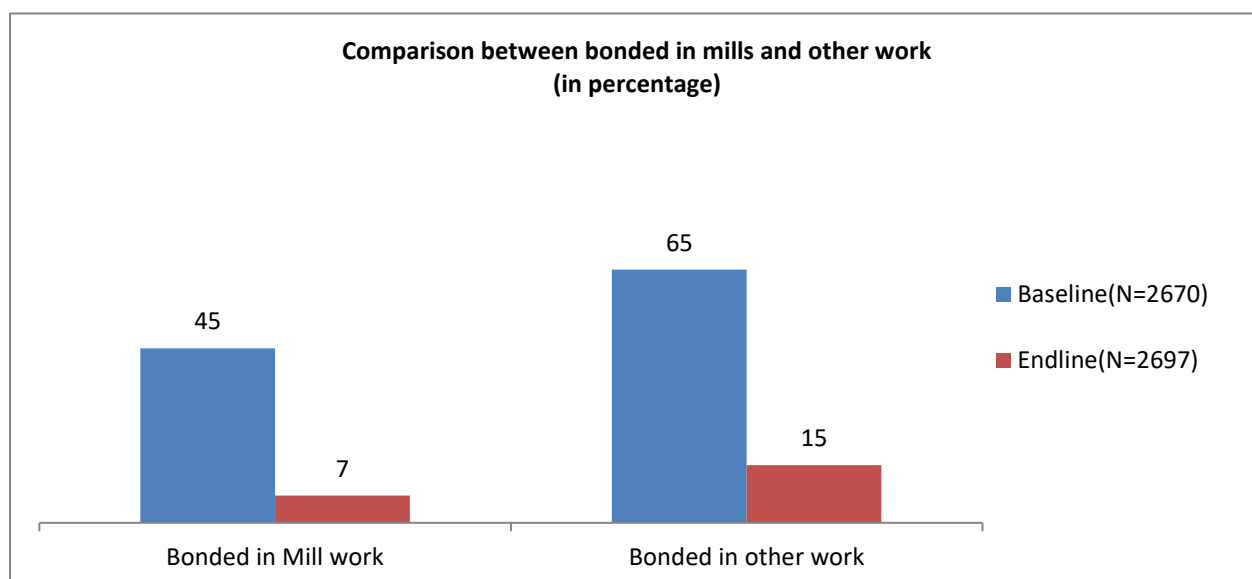


Figure 15 Comparison between bonded in mills and other work

The absolute numbers and percentages of bonded labour among persons aged 17 years and below are detailed in Table 4.

Table 4 Bonded labour among persons aged 17 years and below

Baseline Status of HH with working members (N=2670), Endline Status of HH with working members (N=2697)	No. of bonded labours Baseline	% of HHs with these bonded labourers (N) Baseline	No. of bonded labours Endline	% of HHs with these bonded labourers (N) Endline
Bonded labour in mills outside the village				
Boys 17 years and below in the mills	26	0.8% (24)	2	0.1% (2)
Girls 17 years and below in the mills	36	1.2% (35)	5	0.1% (4)
Boys or Girls 17 years and below in the mills	62	2.2% (59)	7	0.2% (6)
Bonded labour in mills inside the villages				
Boys 17 years and below in the mills	137	4.7% (127)	5	0.2% (5)
Girls 17 years and below in the mills	72	2.5% (68)	12	0.4% (12)
Boys or Girls 17 years and below in the mills	209	7.3% (195)	7	0.6% (17)
Bonded labour in other work inside the village				
Boys 17 years and below other work	48	1.7% (47)	2	0.1% (2)
Girls 17 years and below other works	26	1.0% (24)	0	0.0% (0)
Boys or Girls 17 years and below in other work	74	2.6% (71)	2	0.1% (2)
Bonded labour in other work outside the village				
Boys 17 years and below other work	14	0.5% (13)	8	0.2% (6)
Girls 17 years and below other works	0	0.0% (0)	0	0.0% (0)
Boys or Girls 17 years and below in other work	14	0.5% (13)	8	0.2% (6)
Any bonded labour 17 years and below	359	13.0% (338)	24	1.1% (31)
Working but not in bonded labour				
Baseline Status of HH with working members (N=2670), Endline Status of HH with working members (N=2697)	No. of working non-bonded labour baseline	% of HHs with these working non-bonded labours (N) Baseline	No. of working non-bonded labour endline	% of HHs with these working non-bonded labours (N) Endline
Boys 17 years and below working but not in BL	18	0.5% (16)	67	2.2% (60)
Girls 17 years and below working but not in BL	13	0.4% (11)	65	2.3% (63)
Boys or Girls 17 years and below working but not in BL	31	1.0% (27)	132	4.5% (123)

The above table shows that at endline, there has been a considerable reduction in overall child bonded labour both within and outside the village compared to baseline.

3.3 Demographic and Socio-Economic Linkages with Bonded labour

As the base- and endline surveys took place in the same hamlets, the reported religious affiliations remained similar, with Hindu respondents comprising the vast majority followed by Christians and a very small group of Muslims. Close to 98% of total respondents were Hindus in both the baseline and endline surveys. Hindu respondents are also predominantly from the Dalit (or schedule castes) category, followed closely by “Other Backward Classes”.⁵³ Scheduled castes had the highest levels of bondage at baseline as well as at endline.

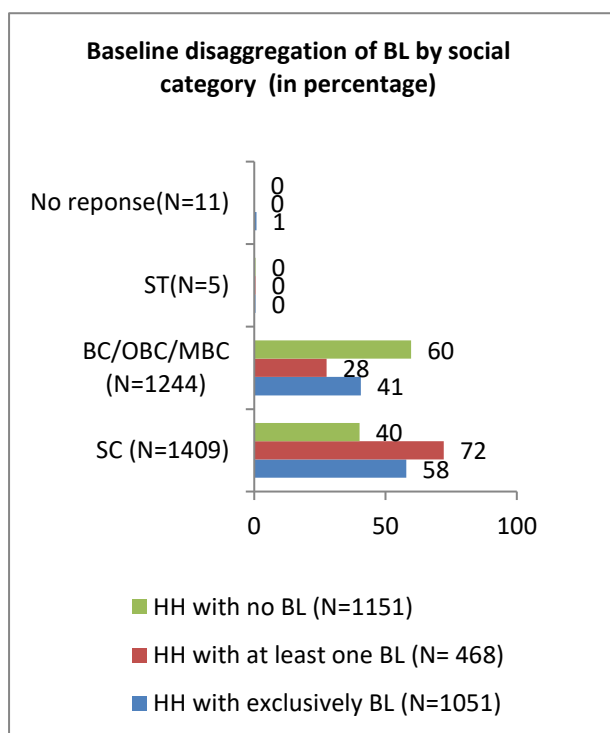


Figure 16 Baseline disaggregation of BL by social category

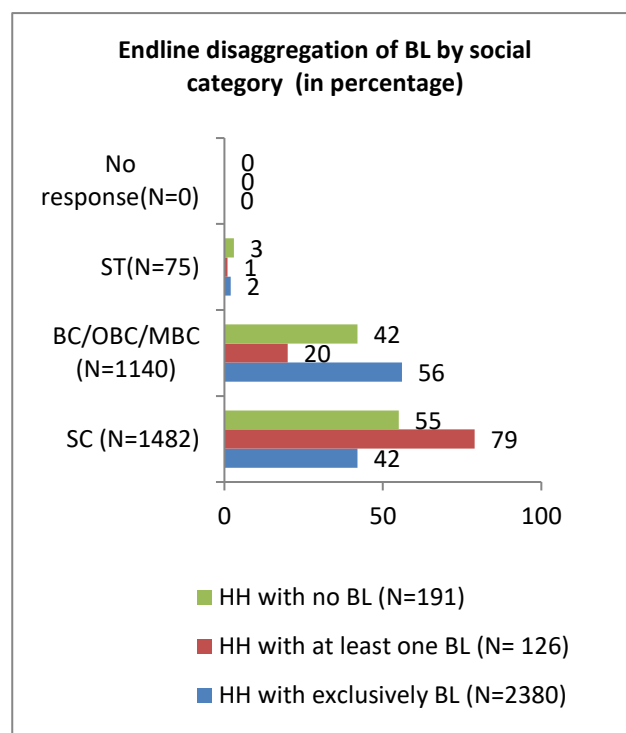


Figure 17 Endline disaggregation of BL by social category

⁵³ The term OBC is an official term and used to classify castes which are educationally or socially disadvantaged. Respondents from tribal areas were low in number, as expected.

3.3.1 Economic Status of Households

In order to understand the economic status of households, the same five parameters were used at baseline and endline: (1) ownership of the land on which they live, (2) ownership of any cultivable land, (3) access to livelihood through MGNREGA,⁵⁴ (4) bank account holder living in the household and (5) membership of a self-help group. The underlying assumption is that a viable economic status, indicated by these factors, would correspond to a lower number of working individuals per household in bonded labour.

The following charts show the linkage of bonded labour in each of these sets of categories:

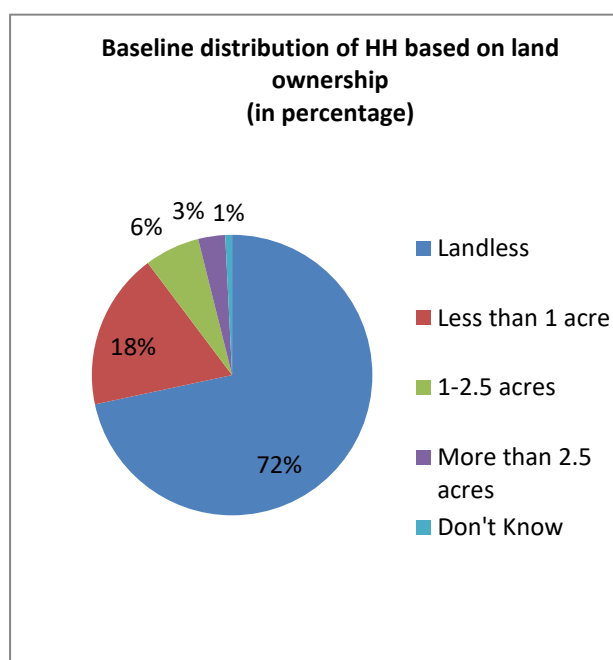


Figure 18 Baseline distribution of HH based on land ownership

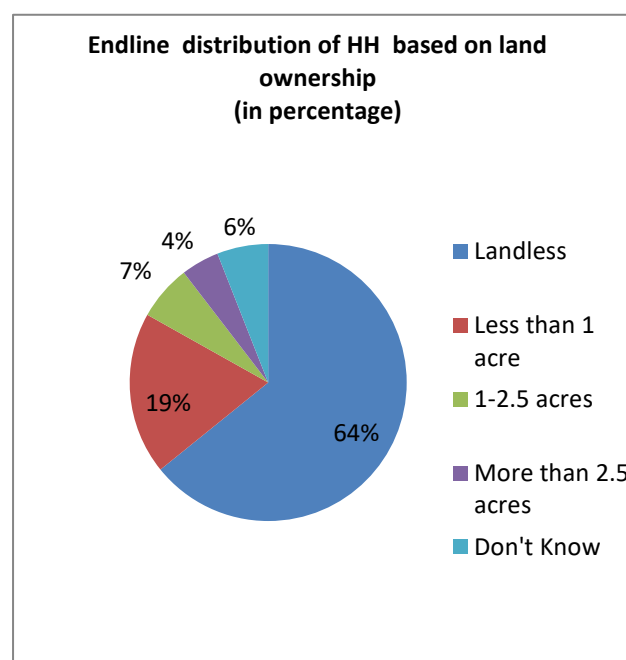


Figure 19 Endline distribution of HH based on land ownership

Respondents were asked to share land ownership⁵⁵ status of the households. Figures 18 and 19 above show that in the baseline survey, 72% (n=1,913) of respondents stated they did not own any land, 18% (n=483) said they owned less than 1 acre, 6% (n=170) said they owned 1–2.5 acres and 3% (n=83) owned more than 2.5 acres of land. Corresponding percentages at endline are 64% (n=1,731), 19% (n=511), 6.4% (n=174) and 4% (n=120) while 6% (n=161) of respondents were not aware of land ownership of neighbours at endline. This suggests that land-ownership has not changed dramatically and is likely to have played a very minor, if any role in the observed reduction in prevalence.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, an act passed by the Government of India in 2005, offering to guarantee hundred days of wage-employment in a year to a rural household. This can be accessed through a card issued by Government authorities.

⁵⁵ Land ownership was been measured in acres, with one acre is roughly equaling to 4,047 square meters.

⁵⁶ We also looked at house lease ownership and found almost no changes in the numbers of people who own leases.

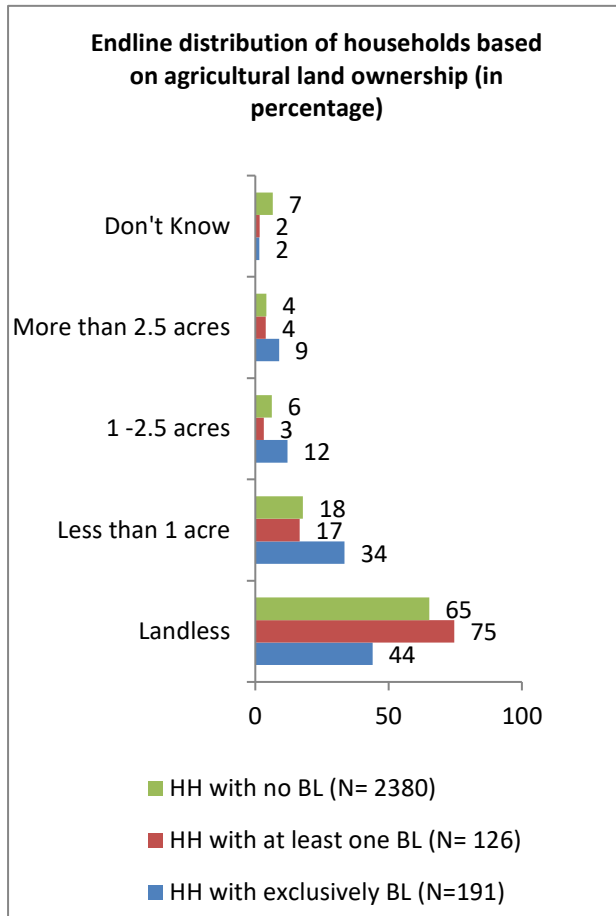


Figure 20 Endline distribution of households based on agricultural land ownership

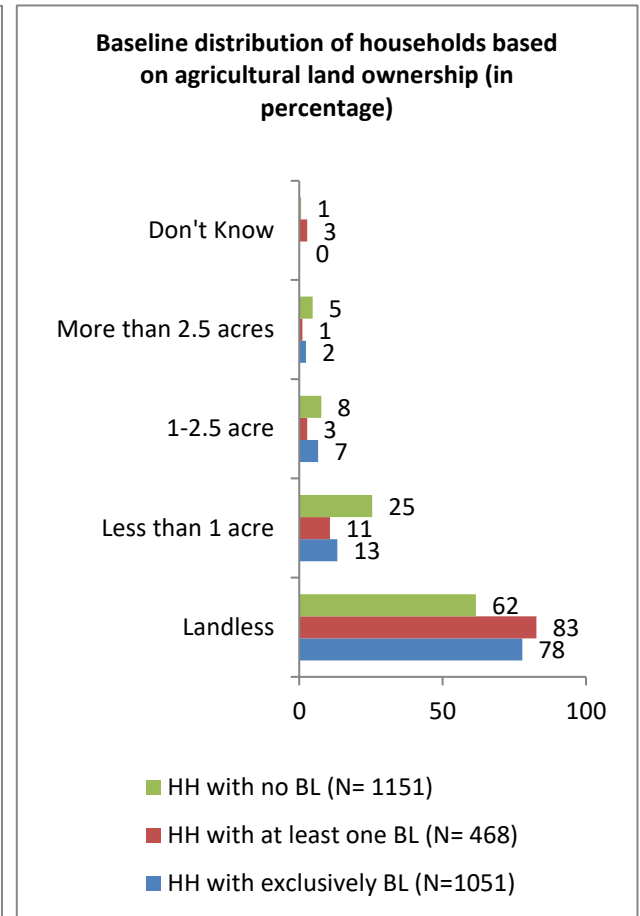


Figure 21 Baseline distribution of households based on agricultural land ownership

The above two figures detail the distribution of households across the various categories of land ownership and the status of bonded labour amongst them. There appears to be no clear statistical association between land ownership and bondage, or house lease and bondage. It is difficult to establish a causal relation between bonded labour according to the land ownership based on these findings. It can be inferred from the figures above that land ownership remains similar across all the three categories. In fact, at endline households with all members in bonded labour have higher land holdings as compared to the other two categories.

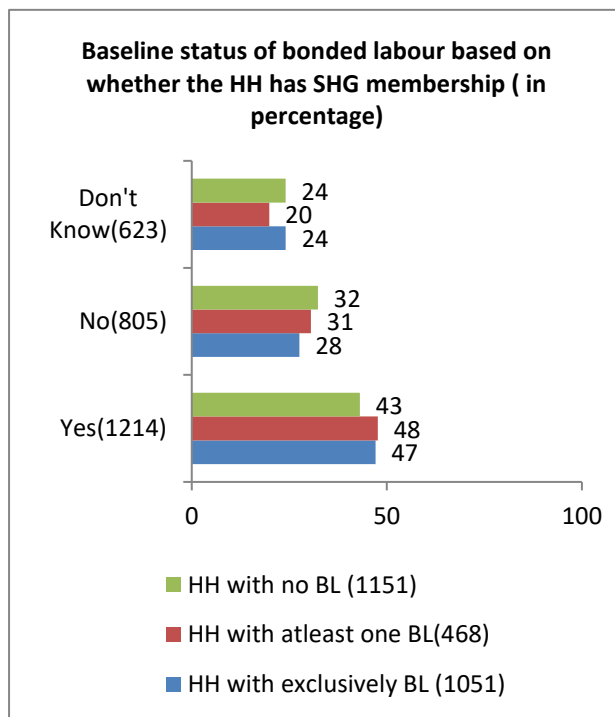


Figure 22 Baseline status of bonded labour based on whether the HH has SHG membership

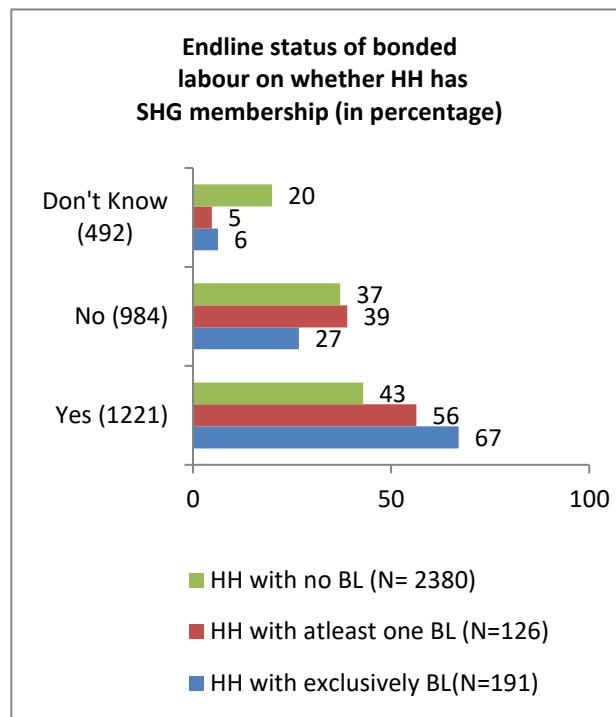


Figure 23 Endline status of bonded labour on whether HH has SHG membership

The above figures show an increase in average self-help group (SHG) membership amongst households with members in bonded labour. At endline 67% of households with all members in bonded labour said they had SHG membership as compared to baseline, where only 47% said yes. SHG membership so increased for households with at least one person in bonded labour from 48% at baseline to 56% at endline. However, for households with no bonded labour, SHG membership remained constant at 43%. This reflects the focus of participating NGOs on helping members participate in Self-Help Groups and linking communities to credit and savings groups. We cannot say that being part of an SHG by itself is correlated to significant change in prevalence of bonded labour. However, since the proportion of households belonging to SHGs changed significantly and many of these households came out of bonded labour, SHG membership should be noted as a factor that may have contributed to reduce prevalence.

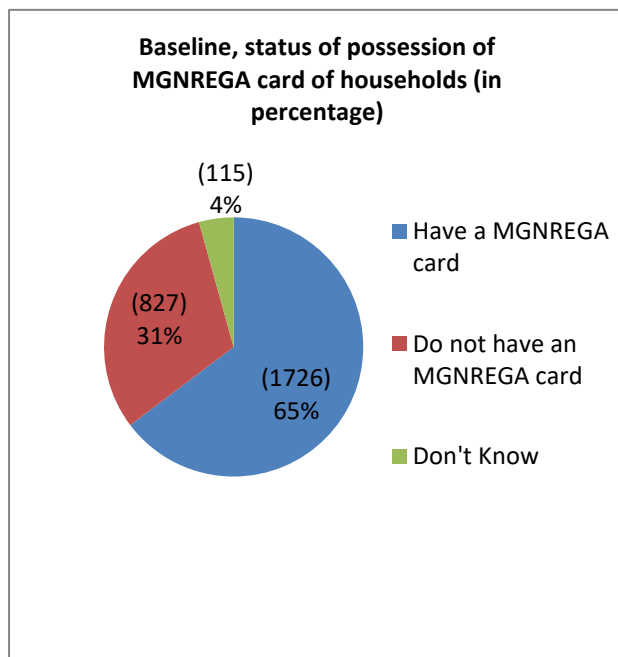


Figure 24 Baseline, status of possession of MGNREGA card of households

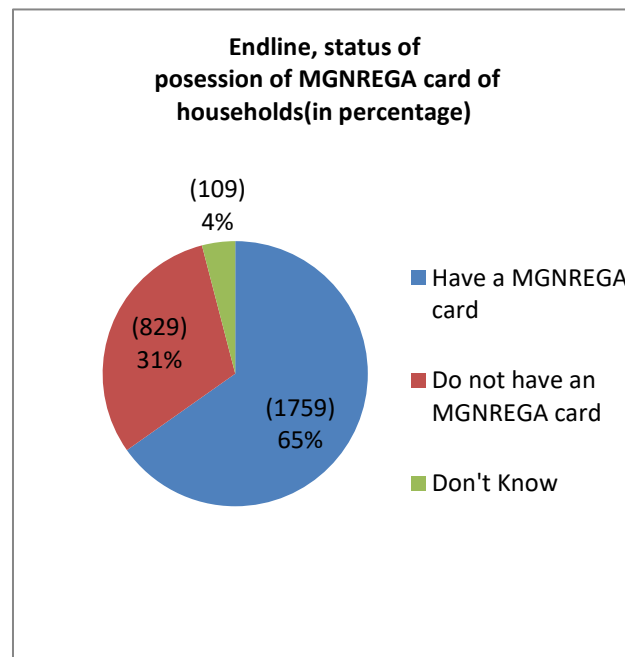


Figure 25 Endline, status of possession of MGNREGA card of households

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), an act passed in 2005, guarantees one hundred days of wage-employment in a year to a rural household. The figures above illustrate possession of MGNREGA cards across households. The possession of MGNREGA card at baseline and endline remains about the same. Through focus group discussions amongst respondents during the study, respondents noted that although many of households have MGNREGA cards, very few of them benefit as a result. They shared that card holders do not get work on regular basis, the days guaranteed under this scheme do not suffice their needs, and they receive less than the guaranteed number of days. The amount of money they receive per day (around INR120)⁵⁷ makes it difficult for them to meet daily expenses. Respondents also shared that when they get work under the scheme, they generally do not get payment on time, which is an issue that has been recognised by the government but not yet fully addressed.⁵⁸ The delay in payment results in card holders taking out loans which then increases the risks of bondage.

⁵⁷ 120 rupees is around 1.36 GBP.

⁵⁸ January 2019 'Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Rural Development: [Payment delays in MGNREGA](#)'

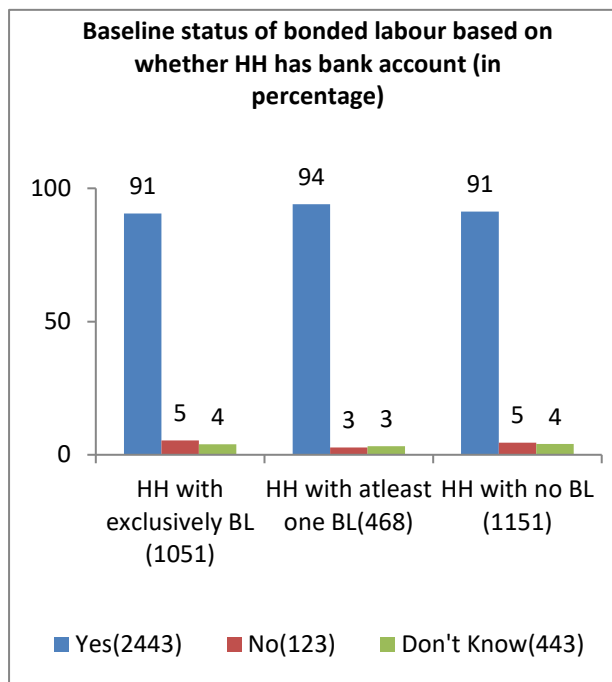


Figure 26 Baseline status of bonded labour based on whether HH has bank account

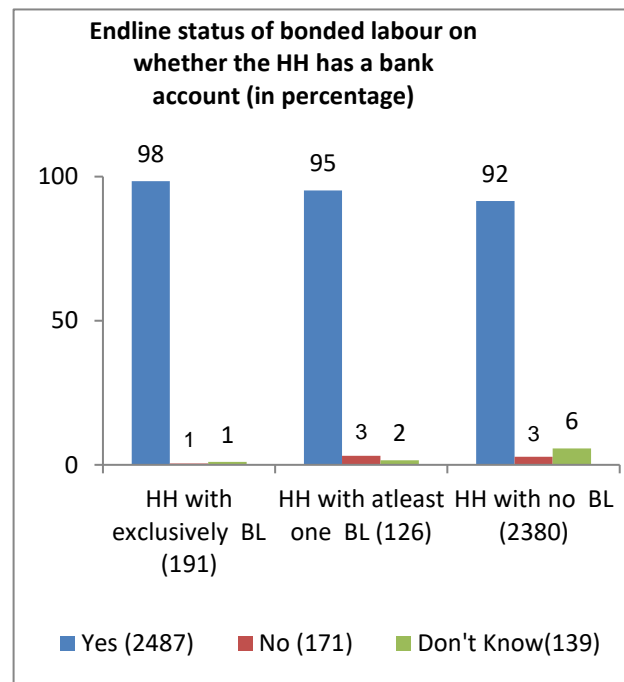


Figure 27 Endline status of bonded labour on whether the HH has a bank account

Figures 26 and 27 above show that most households have a bank account. The number of people with a bank account in the intervention areas is higher than the national average, which suggests that the NGOs and the local citizens groups have been active in helping people to get access to bank accounts. Increasing access to bank accounts has been a priority for the Indian government since August 2014 when Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)⁵⁹ was launched. The scheme has contributed to an increase in the number of bank accounts held in the whole country which probably also affected the intervention areas. In 2011, 35% of people had access to a bank account, which has risen to 80% in 2018 in all of India.⁶⁰ However, they might be inactive.⁶¹ No correlation between having a bank account and the bonded labour status of a household was found in this study.

⁵⁹ 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana' PMINDIA.

⁶⁰ April 2018 'Number of adult Indians with bank accounts rises to 80%' The Economic Times.

⁶¹ With almost half of the bank accounts inactive, India has the highest number of unused bank accounts in the world. Global Findex Data 2018. Report at: [Worldbank](http://Worldbank.org).

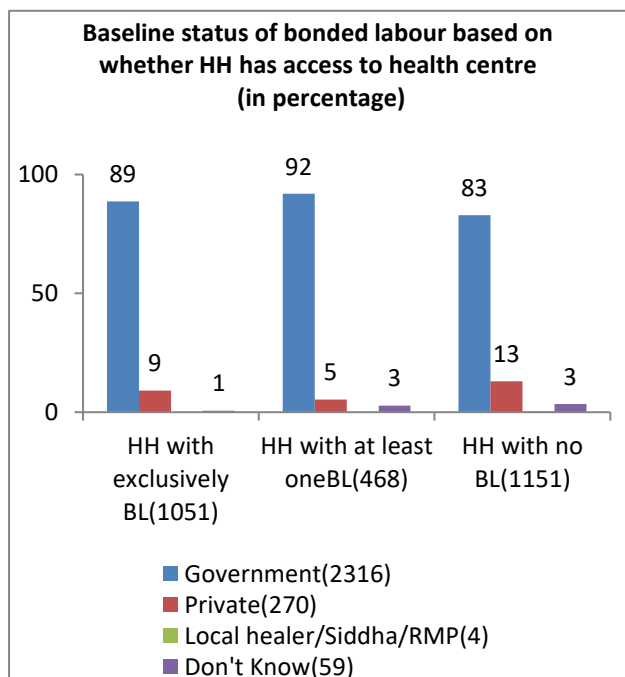


Figure 28 Baseline status of bonded labour based on whether HH has access to health centre

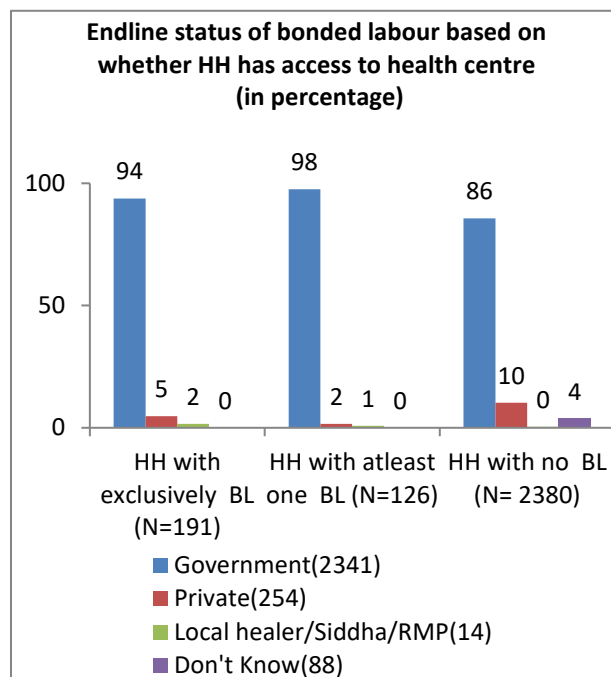


Figure 29 Endline status of bonded labour based on whether HH has access to health centre

3.4 Access to Healthcare for Households

Figures 28 and 29 displays the types of health providers that are available and accessible to the households. During the intervention period, there was been a slight increase in accessibility to government hospitals among all households. The public health system in Tamil Nadu is one of the best performing of the country,⁶² especially on maternal mortality and neonatal survival rate indicators, despite continuous national under spending on health (Jowett et al., 2016).⁶³ The Government of Tamil Nadu has promoted the construction and upgrading of health facilities across the state.⁶⁴ However, this does not mean that the services themselves and the public perception of health services has improved. Research has also found that people prefer private health providers, at least for some services.

⁶² In a [government review](#) of the health system performance per state Kerala, Punjab, and Tamil Nadu ranked on top in terms of overall performance among the larger states.

⁶³ Jowett, M.; Brunal, MP.; Flores, G. and Cylus, J. (2016) [Spending targets for health: no magic number](#), Geneva: World Health Organisation, Health Financing Working Paper No. 1, 16.1

⁶⁴ The Presence of Health Sub Centres has increased (to 8700 in Tamil Nadu) and Public Health Centres in each of the blocks in Tamil Nadu have been upgraded which corresponds to our findings. See: February 2018 [Health coverage: What India can learn from Tamil Nadu](#), Financial Express

3.5 Trafficking⁶⁵

To find work in mills, individuals may obtain a reference from a labour market intermediary, who can be friend, family member or a professional. There are many different types of labour market intermediaries or labour agents. They fulfil a need by mediating the arrangements between individual workers and the organisation with a demand for labour. However, some of these labour intermediaries or agents are involved in trafficking and the use of force or deceit to extract work from people against their will. The payment of advances for work, or dowry schemes with unclear conditions, are among the mechanisms that agents in this hotspot use to force people to work (Burns, Oosterhoff and Joseph, 2016).⁶⁶ Across the hotspot, NGOs have raised awareness about labour rights and the use of advances and other economic traps used by such agents.

The following charts show that the recognition of the potentially harmful role of agents in trafficking workers into mills and into other forms of work has increased from 13% at baseline to 39% at endline among the households in the hotspot. This suggests that awareness campaigns about the mechanisms of getting people into bonded labour have been effective.

⁶⁵ The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, also known as the Palermo Protocol, defines trafficking as:

a) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

b) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficked in persons" even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article.

c) "Child" shall mean any person under eighteen years of age. (United Nations, 2000).

Individuals are trafficked for the purpose of engaging in both forced labour as well as sexual exploitation. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), forced or compulsory labour is defined as "all the work or service which is exacted from any person under the threat of penalty and for which the person has not offered himself or herself voluntarily" (ILO, 2017). Forced labour is observed in many economic activities and industries, including domestic work, construction, agriculture, manufacturing, and forced begging.

⁶⁶ Burns, D.; Oosterhoff, P. and Joseph, S. (2016) *Patterns and dynamics of bonded labour and child labour in the spinning mills of Tamil Nadu: Findings from life story analysis*, Brighton: IDS.

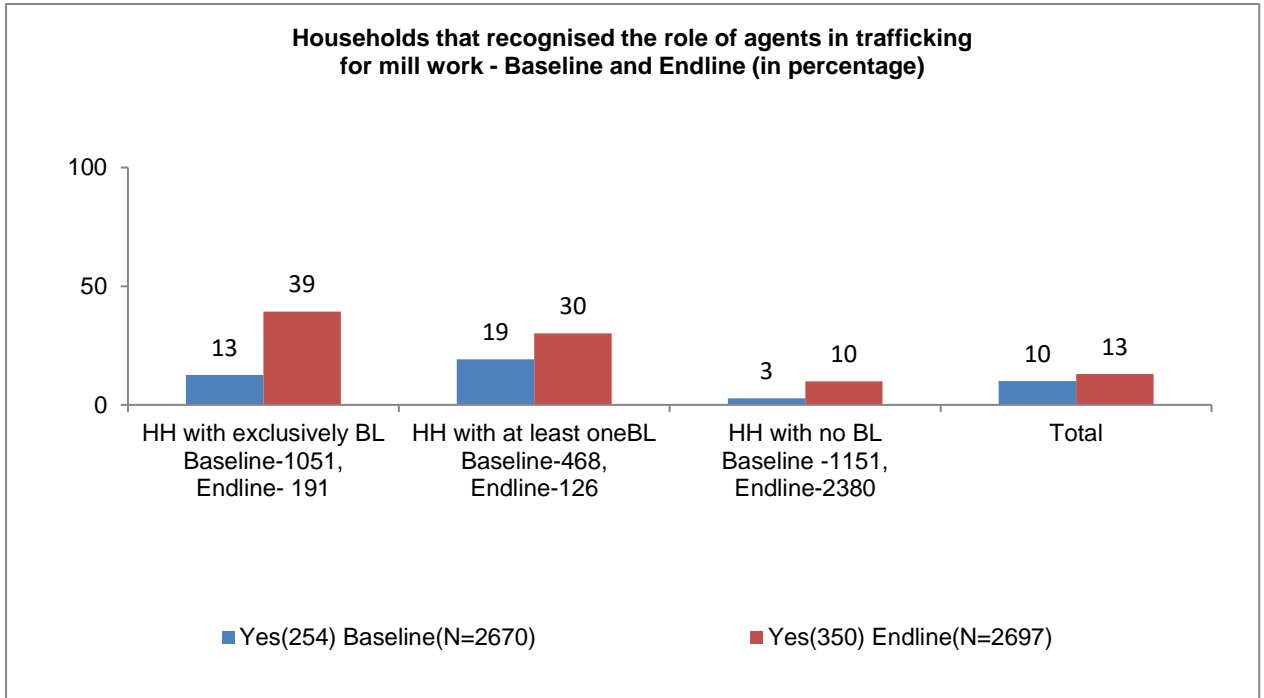


Figure 30 Households that recognised the role of agents in trafficking for mill work - Baseline and Endline

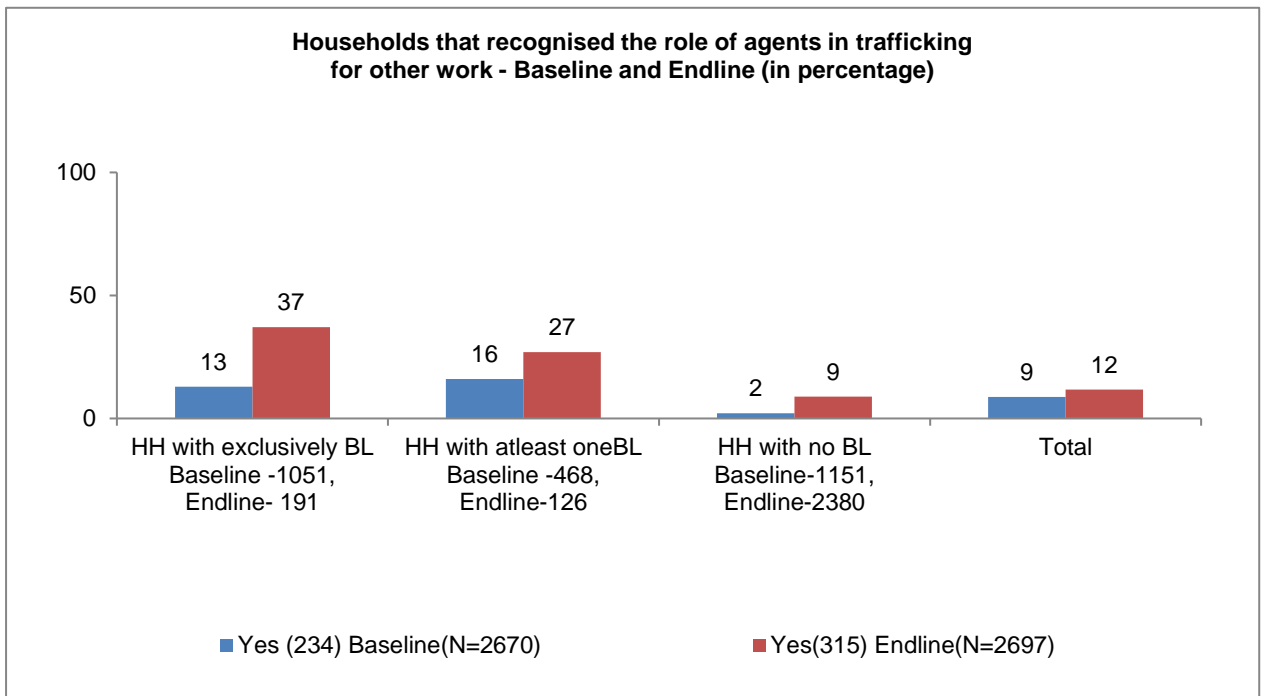


Figure 31 Households that recognised the role of agents in trafficking for other work - Baseline and Endline

3.6 Loans and bonded labour

During the joint life story analysis, both mill workers and NGO staff found clear links between high-risk and high-interest loans, such as those provided by moneylenders, and bondage. Money lenders fulfil a legitimate need of rural residents to access credit, however, they do so by demanding high interest rates which can trap people into debt. Increasing access to safe loans,⁶⁷ for example through SHGs, has therefore been one of the focal areas of the program.

The sources of loans tended to be wide ranging at baseline as well as at endline. The charts below detail the status of bonded labour and its linkages with the sources of loans amongst participants who have taken out loans.

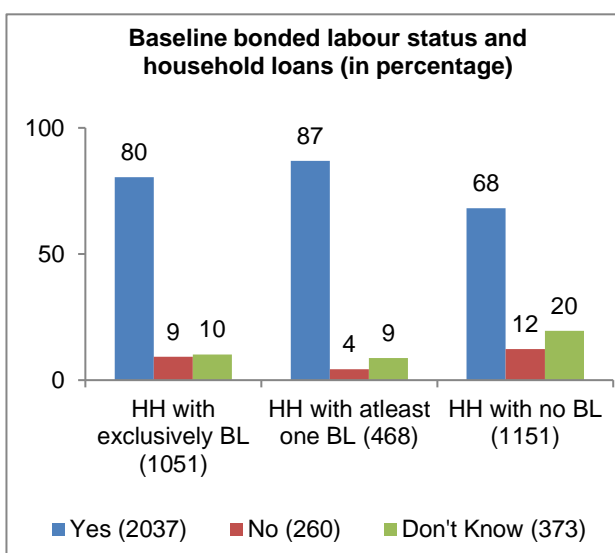


Figure 32 Baseline bonded labour status and household loans

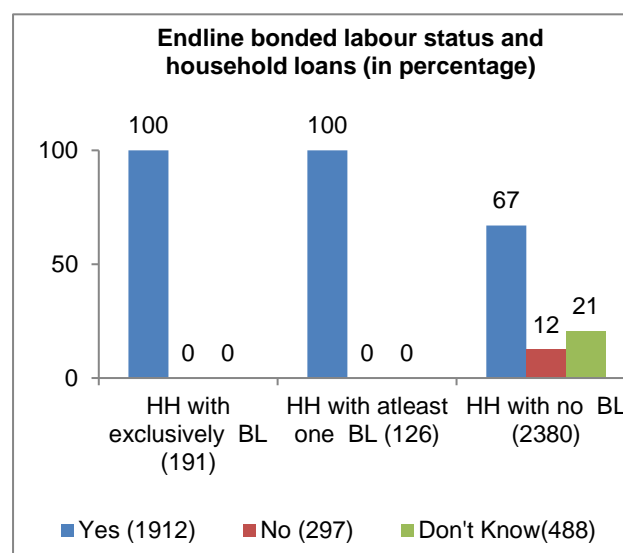


Figure 33 Endline bonded labour status and household loans

⁶⁷ The survey questions first asked if the household currently has a loan, and then asked about the sources of the(se) loans.

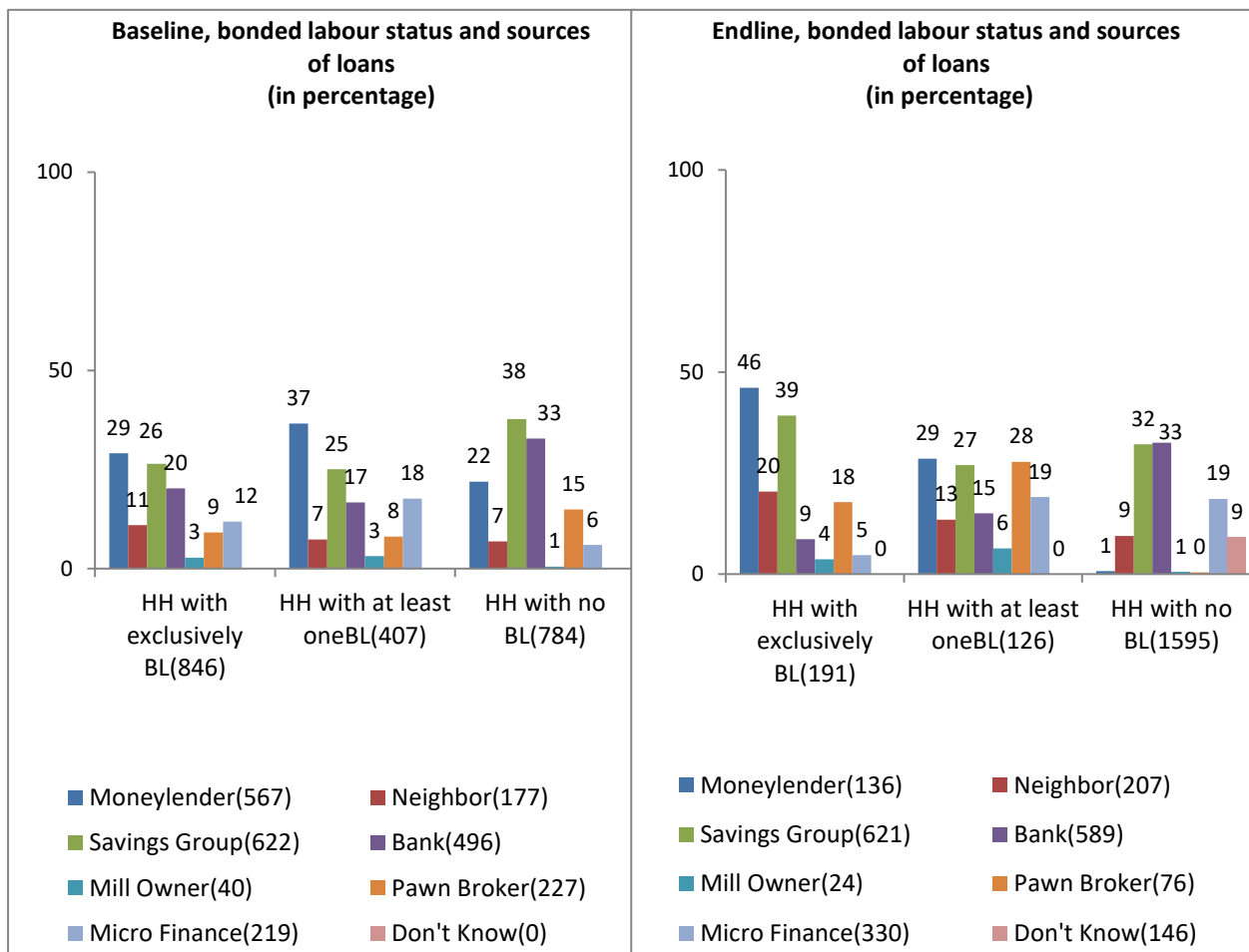


Figure 34 Baseline, bonded labour status and sources of loans

Figure 35 Endline, bonded labour status and sources of loans

Figures 34 and 35 above show that the overall pattern of borrowing has slightly changed. Both at baseline and endline, households without members in bonded labour have better access to savings groups and banks, which are relatively safe compared to money lenders, mill owners and pawn brokers. Households with at least one or all members in bondage still mostly borrow from moneylenders, while only 1% of the households without bonded labour, which includes people who escaped bondage, have taken loans from moneylenders at endline.

Table 5 Baseline Table indicating reasons for taking loans:

	HH with exclusively BL	HH with at least one BL	HH with no BL	TOTAL
Disease	21	35	20	76
To pay outstanding loan	13	23	11	47
Maintenance/Repair	10	20	14	44
Buy house/land	11	13	14	38
Marriage	12	11	11	34
Agriculture	7	3	22	32
Education	11	8	9	28
Higher Education	6	7	6	19
Festivals	3	9	4	16
Accident	4	8	2	14
Large Family	5	6	3	14
Buy Livestock	4	3	5	12
Daily Expenses	4	2	3	9
Death in the family	2	4	2	8
Alcohol	2	3	1	6
Start new business	3	1	2	6
Dowry	1	4	1	6
Luxury goods	1	1	1	3

Table 6 Endline table indicating reasons for taking loans

	HH with exclusively BL	HH with at least one BL	HH with no BL	TOTAL
Disease	17	30	18	65
Education	26	18	14	58
To pay outstanding loan	15	26	14	55
Marriage	19	15	11	45
Maintenance/Repair	15	15	11	41
Festivals	13	17	9	39
Buy house/land	12	10	13	35
Agriculture	20	3	8	31
Buy Livestock	13	9	8	30
Higher Education	14	6	7	27
Dowry	13	7	3	23
Daily Expenses	8	10	4	22
Large Family	6	6	3	15
Luxury goods	3	6	3	12
Death in the family	3	5	2	10
Start new business	3	2	4	9
Alcohol	4	4	1	9
Accident	0	3	1	4

Table 5 and 6 show the reasons reported by respondents for taking loans. Both at the baseline and endline, the reasons consisted of illness for households across the three categories with at least one bonded labour standing at 30%. Followed by households with no members in bonded labour and households with all the members in bonded labour, both at 18%. The issue of illness was also discussed during the action research group meetings, where participants shared that for treatment of major illness, especially those caused due to extreme consumption of alcohol the treatment for which is available generally at the private hospitals, they end up taking loans as treatments are expensive. Other major reasons for taking loans include paying outstanding loans, marriage, buying house/land and maintenance/repair of houses remain the same both at the baseline and endline.

3.7 Early Marriage and Bonded labour

Early marriage, or child marriage is defined here as marital union below the legal age of marriage in India (18 years for girls, 21 years for boys) in the last three years. Tables 7 and 8 detail the prevalence of child marriage. The table below details the incidence of early marriage in households at baseline and endline with different status of bonded labour.

Table 7 Baseline - Child Marriage

	Child marriage among boys	Child marriage among girls	Any child marriage
Exclusively bonded (1036)	1.1%	0.8%	1.6%
At least with one bonded labourer (535)	1.1%	2.4%	3.6%
No bonded labourers (1324)	0.9%	0.5%	1.1%
Total (2895)	1.1%	0.9%	1.7%
45 HH reported Don't know were not included in the analysis			

Table 8 Endline - Child Marriage

	Child marriage among boys	Child marriage among girls	Any child marriage
Exclusively bonded (191)	0.5%	0.8%	1.3%
At least with one bonded labourer (126)	2.4%	0.0%	2.4%
No bonded labourers (2380)	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%
Total (2697)	0.7%	0.0%	0.6%

There is a low proportion of incidence of early marriage recorded among the sample households. The proportion of early marriage among boys both at baseline (1.6%) and endline (0.7%) remains slightly higher than incidence amongst girls.

4 Key findings of the group discussions

The residents of different hamlets expressed unemployment to be one of the main reasons for bonded labour both at baseline and endline. At both baseline and endline, better alternative sources of livelihood, was reported to be a key priority for reducing bonded labour. Additionally, at endline, participants raised the need for alternative safe loans, such as better access to bank loans and SHGs to reduce the demand to borrow money from mill owners and money lenders. Participants also shared that there is still a need for greater awareness on what constitutes a safe source of loans and which situations should be avoided.

In both the base- and the endline reported practices that force people to work, for the people who they borrowed money, include approaching the worker's close family members, local politicians or other powerful people in the villages. Physical and emotional pressure ultimately pushes people who attempt to leave or have left the work back into bondedness.

During discussions on the different stakeholders whom people generally approach when they want to come out of bonded situations, participants mentioned NGO staff, community support groups and family and relatives, as the most important stakeholders at both baseline and endline. At endline, this list of people who could be approached for help had expanded. The list included other stakeholders such as district collectors, child welfare groups, child helpline numbers, district collectors, lawyers, police, etc. This suggests that the program has increased social, and to a certain extent, political capital in the intervention communities.

5 Summary findings

The Freedom Fund supported intervention sites have been chosen well, as they are in areas where there has been a high prevalence of bonded labour.

Bonded labour reduced dramatically in the intervention communities in the period between the base- and endline surveys, from 56.1% to 11.1%.

Some other reports suggest that “modern slavery” in India might be reducing in general. However, the lack of comparable methodologies makes it difficult to draw definite general conclusions on national trends.⁶⁸ Our report brings important bottom-up evidence that shows how interventions targeted at communities, households and individuals affected by bonded labour, have contributed to a likely reduction in bonded labour prevalence in this geographical “hotspot”.⁶⁹

The baseline survey found that half of the participating households were directly affected by bonded labour. Among the participating households, at baseline, 39% (n=1,051) of surveyed households were in exclusive bonded situation and about 17% (n=468) of households had at least one person in bonded labour. At endline, about 7% (n=191) of surveyed households were exclusively in bonded labour and 5% (n=126) of households had at least one person in bonded labour.

At endline, most of the 585 bonded labourers, 51% were men (age 18 and above) 43% were women, 3% (17) were boys (aged 17 years and below) and (3%) 17 were girls (aged 17 years and below).

Most people in the intervention areas at both baseline and endline belonged to the Dalit (or Scheduled Caste) social category, followed closely by Other Backward Classes (OBC).⁷⁰ Most people in the intervention area have a stable lease for the house they live in but are landless. The data does not show a significant linkage between land ownership status and bonded labour.

⁶⁸ The global slavery index was reporting a *flow figure* in 2016 (over past 5 years) and found that approximately 7,989,000 million people were estimated to live in slavery in 2018. This is less than half of the estimated 18 million people in 2016. But 2018 reports a *stock figure* for that year and these two methodologies are not comparable. (Both reports are available at: [Global Slavery Index](#)) Methodologically our data cannot be compared with slavery index (2016 or 2018). GSI identifies risk factors of modern slavery using national surveys to identify variables were statistically associated with victims. The risk factors are used to build a statistical model that best predicts slavery at individual level. And these Individual predictions are aggregated to risk scores at the country level. The number of victims is estimated by applying the estimated prevalence to population data for each country. An estimate of state-imposed forced labour was then added. What we do is estimate intervention area-specific estimates of prevalence and these estimates go towards bringing micro/bottom-up evidence on prevalence from hotspots. Another report suggest that ex-child labour did go down: Save the Children (2016) [‘Statistics of Child Labour in India State Wise’](#), but there are differences by states. A systematic literature review of the effects also found no comparable studies that looked at changes in incidence and prevalence of interventions on modern slavery [Evidence Map and Rapid Evidence Assessment on Modern Slavery](#).

⁶⁹ The term [hotspot](#) comes from the Freedom Fund and is used to describe a geographical area with particularly high levels of bonded labour.

⁷⁰ Other Backward Class (OBC) is a collective term used by the Government of India to classify castes that are educationally or socially disadvantaged.

Households in the intervention communities in this hotspot in Tamil Nadu have been able to change the characteristics of their working relationships, which led to a reduction in bonded labour through a combination of interventions, at the heart of which is collective local mobilisation and action through community support groups, adolescent girls and boys groups, worker groups and credit and savings groups.

The program is facilitated by different NGOs. There is variety between the communities, the intervention characteristics and components. These components include; community-based groups; access to entitlements; improving performance of schools; activation of government livelihoods programmes; rescue and rehabilitation; awareness raising and legal support; community support groups (CSG); adolescent girls and boys groups; NGO's interventions at the factories strengthening the Internal Complaint Committees; formation of action research groups (ARGs). Furthermore, collaborations between local groups, local government bodies and the private sector took different forms based on local needs and capacities. This rich diversity means that we cannot say which intervention is the "magic bullet" that can be scaled up to ensure universal success. What we can say is that a bottom-up approach that stimulates and facilitates collective organisation and local action, is effective in reducing the prevalence of bonded labour in the intervention communities living with bonded labour. Systematic reviews of the evidence of "what works" in interventions that aim to reduce the prevalence of modern slavery in South Asia (Oosterhoff et al., 2018)⁷¹ agree that community-based approaches are effective in reducing prevalence of trafficking (Jensen, Oosterhoff and Pocock, 2019)⁷² at community and village levels.

There are substantial geographic variations within our sample. In Virudhunagar, three out of four NGOs recorded a slightly higher prevalence at the endline compared to the baseline, though this change was non-significant. All participating NGOs attributed this change to the ban on fireworks in November 13th 2018, to reduce Barium and nitrate pollution. This has caused job loss for people who worked in the factories, or in other parts of the firework supply chain.⁷³ Without alternative livelihood, a large number of people have been pushed into vulnerable situations which could be part of the explanation for the increased bonded labour.

Caste, gender, age, and loan-taking are key factors at the individual and household level related to bonded labour in this hotspot. Access to Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and a bank account did not reduce bonded labour.

⁷¹ Oosterhoff, P.; Yunus, R.; Jensen, C.; Somerwell, F. and Pocock, N.S. (2018) [Modern slavery prevention and responses in South Asia: An evidence map](#), London: Department for International Development.

⁷² Jensen, C.; Oosterhoff, P. and Pocock, N. (2019) *Human Trafficking in South Asia: Assessing effectiveness of interventions*, London: Department for International Development.

⁷³ Media reports estimate this at 600,000 (2018). But it is not clear how this number was calculated. Available at: <https://www.newsclick.in/silenced-lives-firecracker-workers-sivakasi>

Access to safe loans has increased slightly since the baseline, but among households with at least one or all members in bondage, the money lender remains the main source for credit. Households without a member in bondage, many of whom only very recently emerged from bondage, did not take money from the moneylenders. This suggests that the grip of the money lenders over people's labour has decreased.

Health expenses, especially emergency health expenses, which were the main reason why people took out high-risk loans that could trap them in bonded labour, are still the main reason for taking out a loan among all households in the intervention areas. The healthcare system in Tamil Nadu consists of a mix of public and private sectors, and research suggests people prefer private sector treatment for certain services (Kanmony, 2018),⁷⁴ but there is a scarcity of data relating to private sector health services. Some progress was made in terms of access to public health services, and the number of government health facilities has increased, reflecting public investments in building and upgrading health facilities. Whether the quality of the services, or beneficiary perception of this quality, has improved is a different question.

6 Conclusion

This study suggests that a targeted approach which focuses on a hotspot with high levels of bondage using a variety of community-based interventions, community mobilisation and organisation is particularly effective in reducing the prevalence of bondage.⁷⁵ It also corroborates the central idea of the hotspot approach, that slavery eradication should come from within communities, and that NGO activity should be designed to enable and facilitate this through collective action.

Community-based groups, specifically community support groups that receive a range of support to build their capacity to work against bonded labour, were a consistent factor across the hotspot. NGO reports and observations show that these groups are very diverse in the scope and intensity of their activities, the local contexts in which they operate, and the kinds of support they can mobilise.

The community groups observed by this study engaged in multiple similar activities. These include (1) collective bargaining for multiple purposes (e.g. for getting entitlements, for improving schools, for changing exploitative work arrangements); (2) accessing improved livelihoods in various ways such as assessment of suitable livelihood opportunities with the technical support

⁷⁴ Kanmony, J. C. (2018) Alternate Healthcare Systems and Their Utilization with Special Reference to Kanniyakumari and Tirunelveli Districts of Tamil Nadu, India, *Economic Research*, 2(4), 11–26

⁷⁵ The findings in this report are similar to our findings on interventions to reduce the prevalence of bonded labour in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh in North India, which also has a variety of community-based interventions, community mobilisation and organisation. What these community-based groups do varies, and each hotspot is unique, but in both community-based groups play a central role. However, there may be interventions that have similar or better results that have not yet been identified as they were, for example, not yet published.

of Alternative Livelihood Consultants (ALC); and (3) awareness about legal rights and about the illegality of trafficking, bonded and child labour. A film-based toolkit⁷⁶ was used by adolescent groups and by adult groups to stimulate dialogue and action on key issues that had been identified through the initial life story analysis. This toolkit created very strong engagement and ownership of the efforts for preventing risky recruitment and working together for safe and decent work. The hotspot also invested in a community facilitator (often a former mill worker) to lead the groups in each community. These interventions are all combined and often take place at the same time, which is important, because it allows a concerted yet flexible response to different problems that can contribute to bondage in these communities.

We cannot extrapolate from this data to estimate prevalence of bonded labour beyond the intervention area in Tamil Nadu, or with comparable approaches and combinations of interventions. Lack of generalisability is one of the reasons why data in this socially diverse and complex intervention area cannot be extrapolated. Some of the intervention areas have unique socio-economic characteristics, including the presence of particular industries, such as flowers or firecrackers, or other NGO interventions that may not be present in other areas. Prevalence data builds an understanding of the socio-cultural and economic profile of families affected by bonded labour such as gender and caste backgrounds and their relations to the labour market rather than demonstrate causal analysis. Therefore, the results of this study are useful to inform program design and the selection of communities and households in other high prevalence areas.

⁷⁶ The toolkit is private, but an example video and some curriculum excerpt can be found here: <http://www.novofilm.co/portfolio/call-me-priya/>

Annex 1: Baseline Validation Report (August 2016)

Background

A study to determine baseline prevalence of bonded labour and trafficking in Tamil Nadu is being conducted by eleven partner NGOs of Freedom Fund. As part of this prevalence study, as a quality control mechanism, a validation of the data was undertaken by Praxis to explore the extent of deviation from the data collected by the partners and to understand the reasons for this. Such an exercise can confirm likelihood of reliability of answers and consistency of use of survey questions and criteria.

Sample

The first step was to generate the sample. The validation visits were to be done in five per cent of the total of 2,970 households (i.e. 155 households) and visits were done in all 11 NGOs covered under the study. In each of the organisations, data for between nine and twelve households was to be collected from one location per organisation. The locations were those where the partner NGO had already collected data previously. The data were checked halfway during the process of data collection to allow lessons to be learned and to improve the process if needed. The locations and households were selected randomly. In certain locations, data was collected for more than twelve households. The same member of the household who served as the respondent was interviewed both times.

The organisation randomly selected the households for responses in the validations and the number of households for which data was collected is presented in the table below:

Sl. No.	Organisation	No. of households	Sl. No.	Organisation	No. of households
1	WORD	9	7	Child Voice	14
2	LEAF	12	8	Don Bosco	9
3	TEST	21	9	READ	21
4	ODAM	15	10	SPEECH	15
5	PEACE	15	11	SSSSS	12
6	Vaan Muhil	12			

Validation Results

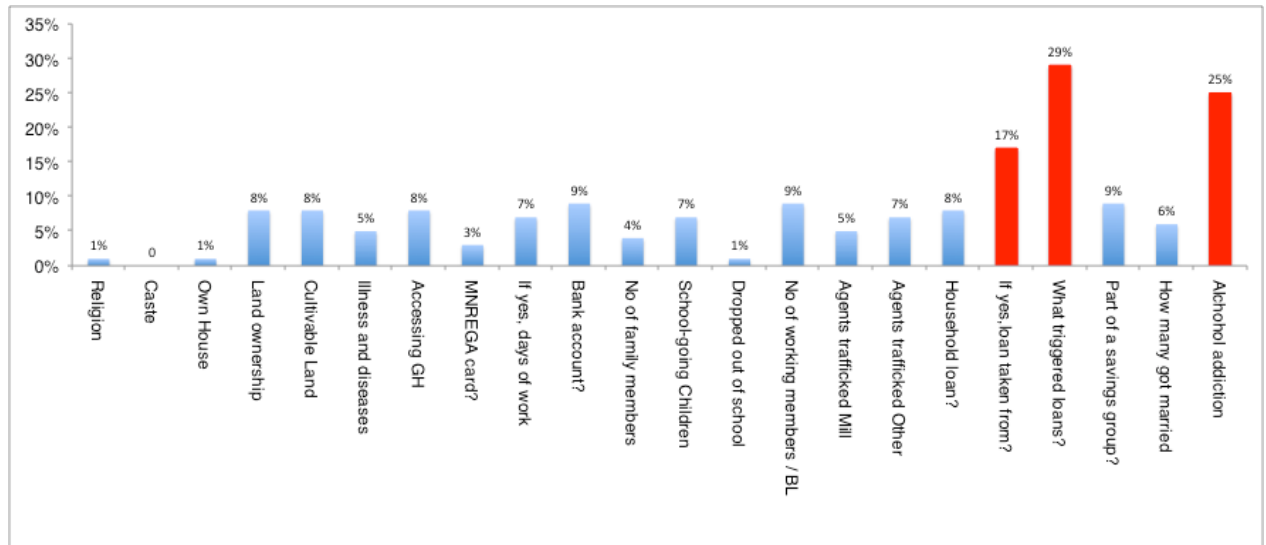
The schedules with 21 questions were redone with respondents from 155 households. The table below as well as the graph present the numbers of households (of 155 households) that had a different response from when the data was earlier collected. The table also provides an explanation in cases where the variance is more than 10 per cent.

S. No	Questions	Number of households	Number of HH with variance in response	% of HH with variance in response	Reason for variance (detailed for all variance above 15%)
1	Religion	155	1	1%	
2	Caste	155	0	0%	
3	Do you own the land you live on?	155	2	1%	
4	Land ownership in acres (landless, less than an acre, 1–2.5 acres and more than 2.5 acres)	155	12	8%	
5	Size of the land under cultivation (landless, less than an acre, 1–2.5 acres and more than 2.5 acres)	155	13	8%	
6	Where do you go for illness and diseases (Government facility, private, local healer, don't know)	155	7	5%	
7	Any difficulty in accessing free government health care (yes or no)	155	13	8%	
8	Does the family have an MNREGA card? (yes or no)	155	6	3%	
8	If yes, for how many days of work did the person get payment in last one year?(0 days, 1–25 days, 26–50 days, 51–75 days, 76–100 days)	155	11	7%	
9	Bank account? (yes or no)	155	14	9%	
10	Number of family members in this	155	7	4%	

S. No	Questions	Number of households	Number of HH with variance in response	% of HH with variance in response	Reason for variance (detailed for all variance above 15%)
	house				
11	Number of school going children between 5–14 years and their ages	155	12	7%	
12	Number of dropouts and age at which they dropped out	155	2	1%	
13	Number of working members in the family (who are currently working) and their status of bonded labour inside or outside the village, in mills or elsewhere or none of these	155	14	9%	
14	Have agents trafficked persons in the last one year for mill work?	155	9	5%	
15	Have agents trafficked persons in the last one year for other work?	155	12	7%	
16	Has the household currently have a loan?	155	12	8%	
17	If yes, from where the loan has been taken from?	155	31	17%	Some of the respondents are not sure about the loan taken by the neighbours
18	What has triggered loans in these houses?	155	46	29%	There are 18 options for this question and respondents can give multiple answers. Given this vast choice, the respondents chose more

S. No	Questions	Number of households	Number of HH with variance in response	% of HH with variance in response	Reason for variance (detailed for all variance above 15%)
					reasons during validations. It has been discussed with partner NGOs that they need to spend more time on this question, for the respondents to think of more reasons, which have triggered loans. The NGOs have taken note of it and have given more time while discussing this question in the field.
19	Anyone in the family, part of a savings group?	155	15	9%	
20	How many BOYS or GIRLS got married in the following ages in the last three years within the family? (Boys under 21 and girls below 18 and 18)	155	9	6%	
21	Alcohol addiction in the family?	155	39	25%	Many households were unsure about the number of days of consumption, so there are changes in frequency of days in a week. Some are not interested in revealing information on alcoholism in neighbour' houses.

Variance in data as per validations



■ = Variance above 11%

The table below presents a summary of the number of variances for each question, disaggregated by NGO partner.

NGO-wise variance across questions as per validation visit

Questions	Child Voice	Don Bosco	ODAM	PEACE	READ	SPEECH	SSSSS	Vaan Muhil	TEST	WORD	LEAF	Total
Gender											1	1
Relation with the head of the family												0
Religion					1							1
Caste												0
Do you own the land you live on?		1					1					2
Land ownership in acres (landless, less than an acre, 1–2.5 acres and more than 2.5 acres)	5					2	4		1			12
Size of the land under cultivation (landless, less than an acre, 1–2.5 acres and more than 2.5 acres)	4		1		1	1	2	2	2			13
Where do you go for illness and diseases (Government facility, private, local healer, don't know)				2		2	1	1		1		7
Any difficulty in accessing free government health care (yes or no)		1		4	1	3	1		1		2	13
Does the family have an MNREGA card? (yes or no)			1			1		1	3			6
If yes, for how many days of work did the person get payment in last one year? (0 days, 1–25 days, 26–50 days, 51–75 days, 76–100 days)	1	1		1	3	1	4					11
Bank account? (yes or no)	2	1	3			2		2	1	2	1	14
Number of family members in this house			1		2			1	1		2	7
Number of school-going children between 5–14 years and their ages	2	2		2	1	2	1			2		12
Number of dropouts and age at which they dropped out			1					1				2
13. Number of working members in the family (who are currently working)												
BOYS under 14 years												
BOYS 15–18 years						1						

*Participatory statistics to measure prevalence in bonded labour hotspots in Tamil Nadu:
Findings of the base- and endline study*

Questions	Child Voice	Don Bosco	ODAM	PEACE	READ	SPEECH	SSSSS	Vaan Muhil	TEST	WORD	LEAF	Total
MEN over 19 years	1	1	1			1	1					
GIRLS under 14 years												
GIRLS 15–18 years												
WOMEN over 19 years							1					
13. Number of BONDED LABOURERS in the family (who are currently working)												
BL BOYS under 14 years												
BL BOYS 15–18 years												
BL MEN over 19 years			1	1	1				1	1		
BL GIRLS under 14 years												
BL GIRLS 15–18 years				1								
BL WOMEN over 19 years									1			
Have agents trafficked persons in the last one year for mill work?				3	1	1	1		3			9
Have agents trafficked persons in the last one year for other work?			1	4	1	3	1		2			12
Does the household currently have a loan?			2			1		3		4	2	12
If yes, from where the loan has been taken from?	8	4	4	4	1	1	2			3	4	31
What has triggered loans in these houses?	7	4	8	7	4		3	3	1	3	6	46
Anyone in the family, part of a savings group?		2		3	1	3	3	2	1			15
How many BOYS or GIRLS got married in the following ages in the last three years within the family? (Boys below 21 and girls below 18 and 18)	1	2		1			3	1			1	9
Alcohol addiction in the family?	8	2		4	2	4	5	2	6	2	4	39
	39	21	24	37	20	29	34	19	24	18	23	

Annex 2 Endline Validation Report

Validation of Prevalence Endline Study in Tamil Nadu Planning, Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation Activities Related to The Freedom Fund South India Hotspot

Submitted by Praxis
August 2018

PRAXIS
Institute for Participatory Practices

Background

Freedom Fund is supporting the work of 13 NGO partners in Tamil Nadu (South India hotspot) in combatting modern day slavery and bonded labour. As part of planning, learning, monitoring and evaluation activities for this South India Hotspot, a baseline prevalence study using participatory statistics, was carried out in 2016. Having reached the end of their programme, an endline prevalence study is being carried out in the same locations supported by 10 partner NGOs, to understand the changes in the situation of bonded labour in spinning mills and other professions.

NGO partners were trained in the data collection process in June 2018 and by July 2018, they began data collection in six hamlets each, where the baseline study was done. A quality control measure in place for the endline was a validation study to explore the extent of deviation from the data collected by the partners and to understand the reasons for the same. After partners collected data in the first sample hamlet, they shared the same with the Praxis team and received inputs on the process and quality of data. Any clarifications, errors and discrepancies were sorted out before the team proceeded to collect data in the second hamlet. The validation study was timed such that it would be done after data collection in two hamlets.

The first step was to generate the sample for spot-checks. Spot-checks were to be done in **five** per cent of the total of around 2,700 households i.e.144 households. The sample of partners chosen for the validation is below:

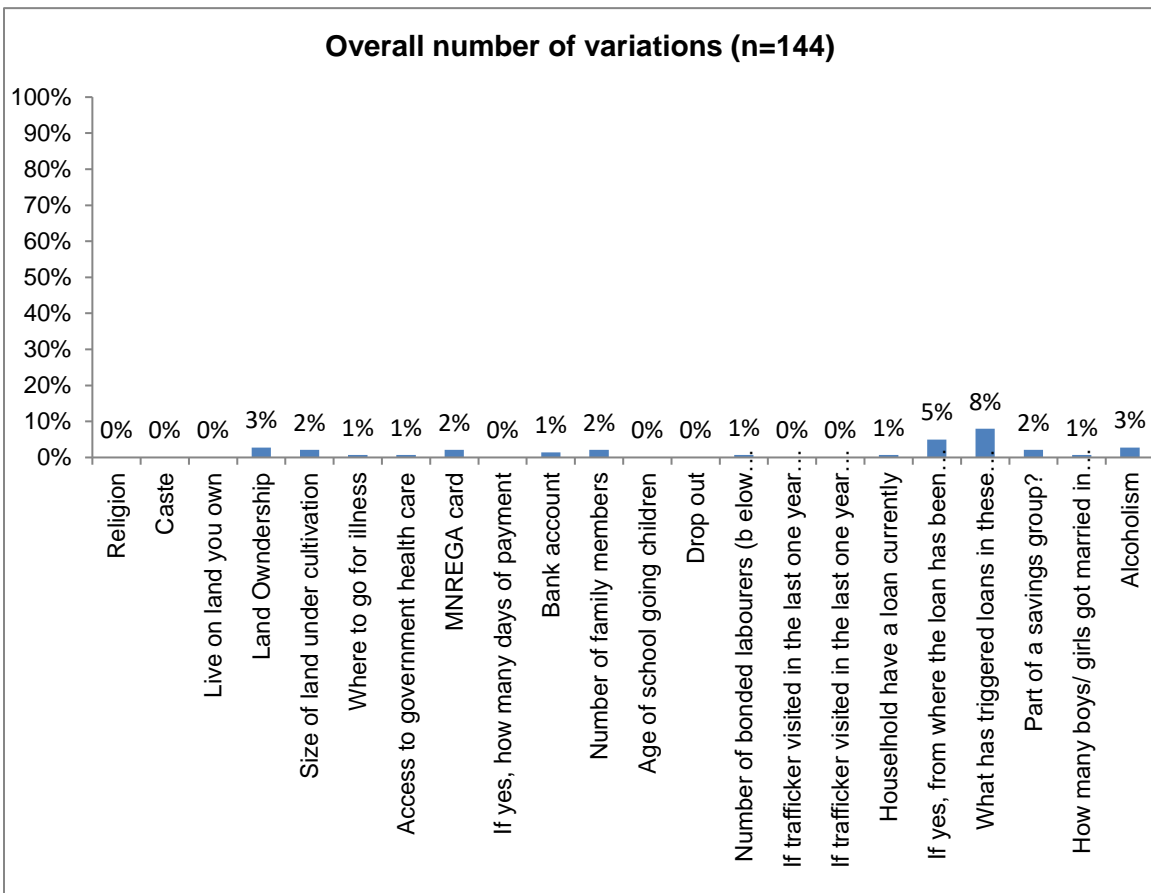
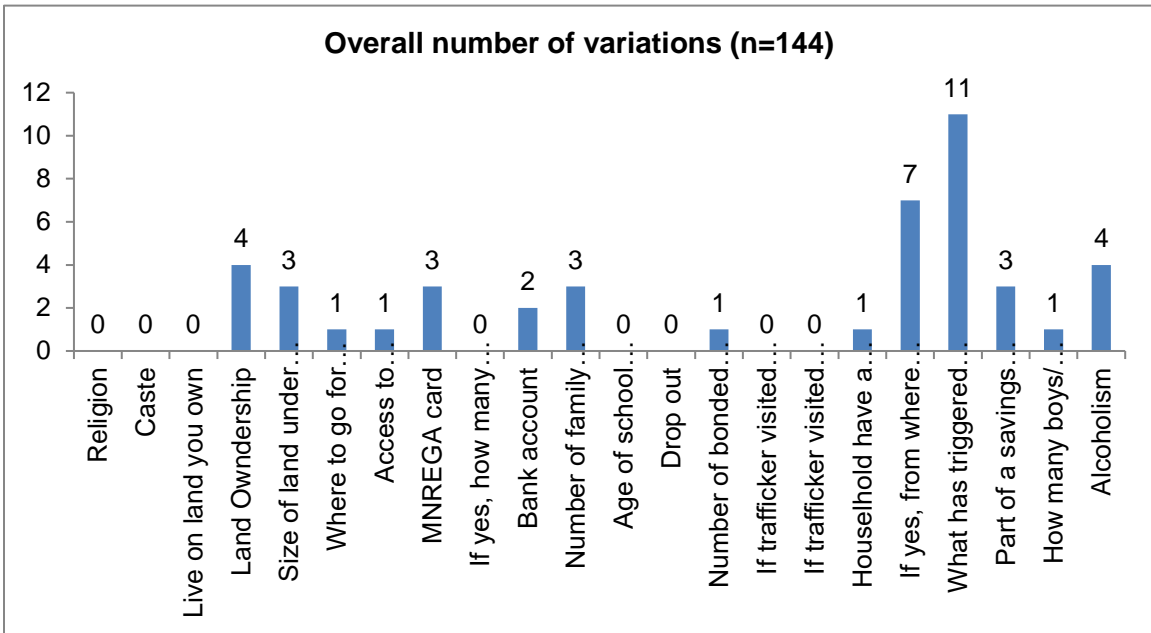
1. TEST
2. Child Voice
3. READ
4. PEACE
5. SPEECH
6. SSSSS
7. VaanMuhil
8. Don Bosco

One hamlet per NGO partner was visited as part of the validation exercise (six hamlets in all) and within each hamlet, six respondents who were part of the initial data collection process were requested to be part of this validation process (six respondents per hamlet shared data about eighteen households in all - making it 144 households across the sample).

The pictorial tool with 21 questions was re-canvassed with respondents. The tables and graphs below detail the specific findings of the validation exercise. Where a variance of eight per cent or more was seen, an explanation for the same has been provided.

	Question	Variance		Reason for variance	
		No.	%		
1	Religion	0	0%		
2	Caste	0	0%		
3	Live on land you own	0	0%		
4	Land Ownership	4	3%		
5	Size of land under cultivation	3	2%		
6	Where to go for illness	1	1%		
7	Access to government health care	1	1%		
8	MNREGA card	3	2%		
	If yes, how many days of payment	0	0%		
9	Bank account	2	1%		
10	Number of family members	3	2%		
11	Age of school going children	0	0%		
12	Drop out	0	0%		
13	Number of bonded labourers (below 14, 15–18 and above 18)	1	1%		
14	If trafficker visited in the last one year for mill?	0	0%		
15	If trafficker visited in the last one year for other work?	0	0%		
16	Household have a loan currently	1	1%		
17	If yes, from where the loan has been taken from?	7	5%		
18	What has triggered loans in these houses?	11	8%		Only limited multiple responses had been indicated when originally canvassed. Few options got added during the validation study (mainly at 4 NGOs)
19	Part of a savings group?	3	2%		
20	How many boys/ girls got married in the last three years within the family?	1	1%		
21	Alcoholism	4	3%		

The graphs below detail the variations:



Annex 3 Baseline Hamlet Level Discussions on the Survey Results

Community feedback and discussions

Discussions on the results of the survey took place after the participants had completed the questions. The facilitators tallied up the prevalence data from the forms to facilitate a discussion on the prevalence results. The facilitators wrote down the answers that had reached a group consensus, and one group could give multiple answers to a question. All the participants were encouraged by the facilitators to take part in the discussion.

Questions for open discussion

1. What happens when someone attempts to come out of bonded labour?
2. Who supported the people who managed to escape from bonded labour?
3. Who can help people to come out of bonded labour?
4. What can be done to reduce and respond to bonded labour (from your perspective)?

Reasons for the existence of slavery	N	%
No work other than mill work	59	28%
High interest loan needs to be repaid	33	16%
The family is in poor condition	17	8%
Agriculture failure and there is no other work	16	8%
Marriage expenses (Dowry)	12	6%
Alcoholism among head of the HH. This forces women and children to take responsibility for family finances	10	5%
Large family size	9	4%
No transport facility results in dropout	8	4%
Mills provide transport facility	8	4%
Even though educated, can't able to find a suitable jobs so continue in mill work	8	4%
Irresponsible parents and husband. which results in people going into bonded labour to meet family expenses	7	3%
Siblings marriage and children's education	5	2%
Delayed payment for 100 days work	5	2%
Lack of awareness on importance of education among parents	4	2%
Intergenerational bonded labour	3	1%
Advance money and bonus is an incentive to go for mill work	2	1%
Village on the hill side do not get government schemes so going for mill work.	1	0%
Familial relations in agriculture	1	0%
Landlessness	1	0%
	209*	

NB: 209 is multiple answers

Absence of alternative work, loan taken with high interest by the people, poverty and the failure of agriculture mentioned as the major factors for the existence of slavery.

What happens when one attempts to come out of slavery?	N	%
Forced to return advance money with interest	28	17%
Family's poor economic condition forces them to stay in mill	26	16%
Mill threatens them in multiple ways	17	10%
Parents insist children continue working in the mills	17	10%
Fear of losing livelihood if they come out of the mill work	14	9%
Fear of siblings/children's education will be affected	13	8%
Mill owners persuade/ use family members, local people and leaders to persuade people to go back	10	6%
Supervisors force them to stay back	7	4%
They undergo stress expecting the backlash from the mill and family	7	4%
Marriage savings will get affected	6	4%
Family persuade their children to continue working in mill	6	4%
Company will give them a higher workload	6	4%
Agents will not allow them to leave	2	1%
Mill owners put pressure them to pay the advance amount immediately	2	1%
Mill owners will not allow	1	1%
Flower vendors give them interest free loan and demand that they stay as slaves	1	1%
	163	

NB: 163 is multiple answers

The list of responses given above shows that employers would force them to repay the money with interest immediately, which they cannot repay. The family's poor economic situation and the absence of a fall-back system for their survival is what makes them continue as slaves. Mill owners will threaten them in many ways to prevent them attempting to leave the work. Parents insist children continue working in the mills when they want leave.

Number of people who came out of slavery	N
One	18
Two	5
Three	5
Four	1
Five	1
Six	1
Few*	6

*4 from Dindugul and one each from Virudunagar and Erode.

In total, 58 people escaped from slavery from within the study locations (Dindugul 19, Virudunagar 14, Namakkal 14 and Erode 11). Some of them could not recall the actual number of people who had come out of slavery.

People/groups that have supported people in their escape from slavery	
CSG, Panchayt President, Police, VAO and RI	11
NGO	4
Self-initiative	4
Parents	5
Parents, Friends and self-initiative	3
Don't remember	2
Village head	1

People who were supported in their escape from slavery had substantive support from both their family and the CSG.

People/groups that may be approached for assistance in escaping slavery	N	%
Panchayat President	30	16%
Parents and relatives	20	11%
Police	19	10%
Village head	17	9%
NGOs	15	8%
Community Support Group	11	6%
Ward Councillor	10	5%
Volunteers	7	4%
Thasildhar	6	3%
Village administrative officer	6	3%
1098 emergency	5	3%
Revenue inspector	5	3%
Agents	4	2%
SHG members	4	2%
Social workers	4	2%
Trusted people	3	2%
VIP in the village	3	2%
Educated youth	2	1%
Politicians	2	1%
Teacher	2	1%
Workers collective	2	1%
Anganwadi Incharge	1	1%
Mill owner	1	1%
Older people in the village	1	1%
People who are on good terms with the company	1	1%
Those who work in the same mill	1	1%
Village Leaders	1	1%
	183	

NB: 183 is multiple answers

There was widespread awareness about who could be approached to facilitate the escape from slavery - such as the Panchayat President, parents and relatives, police, village head, NGOs, Community Support Group and Panchayat Raj member (Ward Councillor). However, a few also stated that the 'mill agent' was someone who could help slaves to leave slavery.

Ways to reduce/address slavery	N	%
Provision of vocational training and entrepreneurship skills with a loan facility	51	18%
Provision of loans with less interest for farmers, self-employment and SHG	39	13%
Complete ban on alcohol consumption	21	7%
Government provision of suitable jobs for educated youth	17	6%
Awareness of the importance of education among the parents and villagers	15	5%
Free higher education for children beyond the 12th standard	14	5%
Provision of public transport facility to address the issue of dropouts	13	4%
Address the reasons leading to children dropouts	13	4%
Awareness of issues and consequences of modern slavery among the parents, children and villagers	11	4%
Alternative employment / livelihood opportunities need to be created for adults and youths	10	3%
Entrepreneurial skill training to boys and girls after education	10	3%
Job opportunities for those who are educated	7	2%
MGNREGA for all in the village	7	2%
Livelihood opportunities for the parents of the working girls and boys	6	2%
Abolition of the dowry system	5	2%
Diploma courses/training for girls (beautician course, tailoring)	5	2%
Improvement of basic infrastructures (road, water and sanitation and education)	5	2%
Compulsory schooling for both boy and girls	4	1%
Improvements in the infrastructure and quality of education in public schools	4	1%
Education support programme for low performing students	4	1%
Strong laws to stop slavery (should be enacted)	4	1%
More industries and factories in the area	3	1%
Increase in wages in the mills will stop workers taking loan/advance from mill owner	3	1%
Special welfare schemes for the villagers working as slaves	3	1%
Provision of loans for higher education	3	1%
Water availability for agriculture	2	1%
Rehabilitation programmes for alcoholics	2	1%
Protest and demands	2	1%
Skill building by NGOs	2	1%
Free education for orphan children	1	0%
Standard income for families	1	0%
	291	

NB: 291 is multiple answers

Respondents suggested the following for addressing the issue of slavery:

- Vocational training and entrepreneurship skills with a loan facility
- Provision of loans with less interest for farmers, self employed people and SHG
- A complete ban on alcohol in the state
- Government provision of suitable jobs for educated youth
- Awareness of the importance of education among the parents and villagers
- Free higher education for children beyond the 12th standard

Annex 4 End line Hamlet Level Discussions on the Survey Results

Community feedback and discussions

Discussions on the results of the survey took place after the participants had completed the questions. The facilitators tallied up the prevalence data from the forms to facilitate a discussion on the prevalence results in 60 hamlets. Discussions did not take place in hamlets where there was no, or very few, cases of bonded labour found. Similar to the baseline, even at the endline facilitators asked the five questions below, observed the interactions and made sure that every participant was given a chance to speak.

1. What are the reasons for existence of bonded labour?
2. In your opinion what happens to people who attempt to come out of bonded labour?
3. If anyone has managed to escape from bonded labour who helped them?
4. Who does the community approach to help people in bonded labour?
5. What are the ways to reduce/ address bonded labour from your perspective?

The residents of different hamlets expressed unemployment to be one of the main reasons for their situation of bondedness. This was found to be the core reason during the baseline and continues to be the same during the endline, which indicates that there is still a greater need of improving this situation. During the baseline and the endline, providing people with better alternative sources of livelihood was discussed as one of the major steps to curb the situation of bonded labour. In addition to this, during the endline, people also raised their concern about the need of taking loans from safer sources and stopping people from approaching mill owners and money lenders for borrowing money. They further shared that there is need of awareness amongst people on what constitutes as safe sources of loans. Forcing people to work under the same person in a bonded situation, approaching the worker's close family members, local politicians or other powerful people in the villages have been discussed to be a common practise both during the baseline and endline, which ultimately pushes those people who attempt to leave or have left the work back into bondedness. While discussing about the different stakeholders whom people generally approach when they want to come out of the bonded situation, NGO staffs, community support groups, family and relatives were mentioned as the most important stakeholders during baseline and endline process. However, it can be seen that during the endline, this list has expanded to include other

stakeholders such as district collectors, child welfare groups, child helpline numbers, district collectors, lawyers, police, etc.

Reasons for existence of slavery	N	%
The heads of the family are unemployed due to their alcoholic habit	22	17
Unemployment/Lack of job opportunities	18	14
Getting loans/advance for meeting family expenses	15	12
Lack of rainfall affects the farmers	11	8
Lack of awareness on importance of education and situations related to bonded labour	10	8
To repay the debt to money lender one borrows money from mill owners where their children work	6	5
Repay the loan taken for marriage or education	10	8
Large size of the family	5	4
To pay the interest amount	4	3
Drug Addiction/ alcoholism amongst the other family members	4	3
Irresponsible heads of the family due to which children are forced to go to work	4	3
Only mills provide employment, no other opportunities	4	3
Low wages at other places of work	4	3
Intergenerational bondage for generating loans	3	2
Mills provide loan without interest and they provide for huge amount	3	2
Children are sent to work to the mills from where the parents take loans	3	2
To repay the debt to money lender one borrows money from mill owners where their children work	2	2
Lack of income and not able to send the children to school and they were sent to work	1	1
	129	

NB: 95 is the total number of multiple answers.

The table mentioned above indicates various reasons for existence of bonded labour situations. Amongst others, unemployment, borrowing of loans/advances and its

repayment, lack of rainfall, lack of awareness on importance of education and issues related to bonded labour seems to be the glaring reasons for the same.

NB: 91 are the multiple numbers of answers.

What happens when one attempts to come out of bonded situation	N	%
No other employer provides loans, so people are pushed to join the work at mills or under money lenders	28	28
Family situation forces them to join the same work	20	20
The mill owner threatens to continue working under them even if people get other job opportunities	12	12
The mill owners have contacts with influential people such as the worker's family, powerful locals and local politicians	12	12
No other job opportunities lead them to join the work again	8	8
Forced to pay back all the loan at once from their employer	7	7
In cases of intergenerational bondage, forced to continue to work until the repayment of loans	7	7
Forced to work and paid less	4	4
Not allowed to go back to their native place	2	2
	100	

The above mentioned, indicates the situations to which a person who attempts to escape the bonded labour situation, is exposed to. Some of the crucial situations include: inability to find any other work place where the employees are provided with loans; family situation, especially financial condition pushes them to join the work again; threatening from the side of the mill owners forces them to continue their work; mill owners contact with the influential people, again forces the worker's to re-join the work; lack of other job opportunities.

Number of persons who came out of bonded situation	N
One	7
Two	5
Five	2
Seven	1
Eight	1
Eleven	1
Twelve	1
Few*	4

*Four responses mentioned few people. All the four responses came from Dindugul district. In total 46 people living in the intervention areas of the NGOs have managed to escape from bonded labour out of which 41 are from to Dindugul, 8 from Virudhunagar, 5 from Erode and 1 from Nammakal district.

People who can be approached in coming out of bonded labour	N	%
NGO staffs	20	28
Village Heads	11	15
Community Support Group	8	11
Supervisors/Agents	7	10
Government Bodies	4	6
Child Welfare Group	3	4
Family members	3	4
Community	3	4
Child Helpline	2	3
Police	2	3
Relatives	2	3
SHGs	2	3
Lawyers	1	1
Loans offered by banks	1	1
District Collectors	1	1
Women Helpline Number	1	1
Ward Members	1	1
	72	

NB: 55 are multiple numbers of responses.

The table lists down different stakeholders whom people approach to for coming out from bonded situation. NGO staffs have been mentioned to be the most approached stakeholder amongst the others, followed by the village heads, community support group, supervisors/agents, government bodies.

Table 5: Ways to reduce/address bonded situation	N	%
Self-employment opportunities, training	20	14
Provide skill development training	15	10
Need of increased awareness on bonded labour	11	8
Awareness on consequences of taking loans/advances form unsafe sources	10	7
Increase awareness on importance of education amongst the children	10	7
Demanding unanimously for minimum wages at the mills whenever they are denied of it	8	6
Getting loans from banks or SHGs	7	5
Ban on liquor shops and narcotic drugs supply	7	5

Creating better livelihood opportunities	6	4
Provide vocational training and entrepreneurship training along with loan facilities	5	3
Discouraging practices taking loans from the money lenders inside the village	5	3
Proper implementation of government schemes	4	3
Promoting education and monitoring on the rates of dropouts	4	3
Improvising agricultural sector - providing with a safety for farmers at times of crop failure	4	3
Arrange skill development trainings for uneducated children	3	2
Need to support to avail of benefits from the government schemes	3	2
Awareness on importance of savings	3	2
Providing better job opportunities to women	3	2
Provide 100 days of employment under MGNREGA scheme	2	1
Need of increased awareness amongst the parents on better childcare	2	1
Prioritising the areas of expenditure	2	1
Avoid the practices of borrowing loans from the mill owners	2	1
Facilities to provide small amount of loans	2	1
Providing educational and financial support from the side of the government	1	1
Availability of housing schemes	1	1
Government's focus on restraining of child labour	1	1
Formation of separate body at Panchayat level to monitor the situation of child labour	1	1
Need of increased awareness on effect of addiction to alcohol	1	1
Awareness on importance of education amongst the children who drop out from the schools	1	1
Avoid approaching to the agents for jobs	1	1
	145	

NB: 115 are numbers of multiple responses.

The table above suggests steps that can be taken to prevent people from bonded situation. Providing self-employment opportunities to people, providing skill development trainings, increase awareness on what situations can lead to bonded labour, awareness on consequences of borrowing loans from unsafe sources, need of identifying safer sources of loans such as banks, SHGs.

Annex 3

Distribution of school going children and bonded labour status

Baseline:

School going children	Exclusively bonded labourers (N=1051)		At least with one bonded labourer (N=468)		No bonded labourers (N=1151)	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Age in years						
5	33	29	8	6	36	15
6	33	35	16	17	34	19
7	40	29	17	8	42	26
8	44	38	19	5	32	23
9	30	27	14	5	36	21
10	51	30	18	7	36	38
11	30	37	11	10	19	24
12	48	33	10	18	36	42
13	42	45	25	13	55	36
14	56	47	20	20	57	45
No. of children	407	350	158	109	383	289
No. of HHs	339	286	145	99	348	245
% of HHs with school going children	32%	27%	31%	21%	30%	21%

Endline:

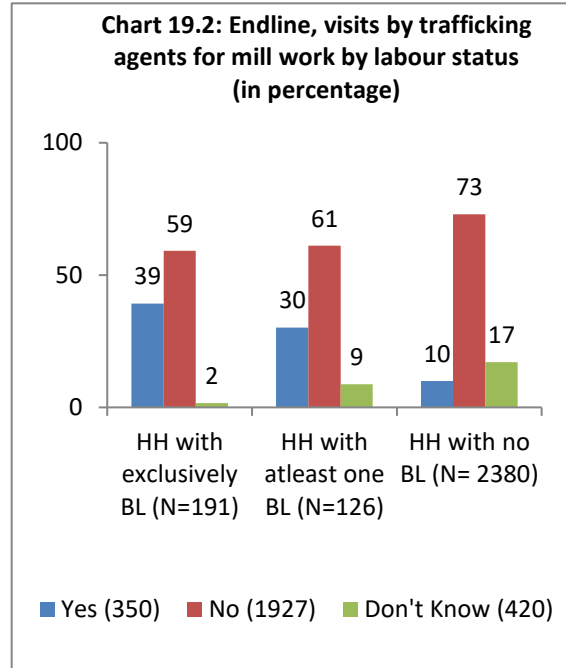
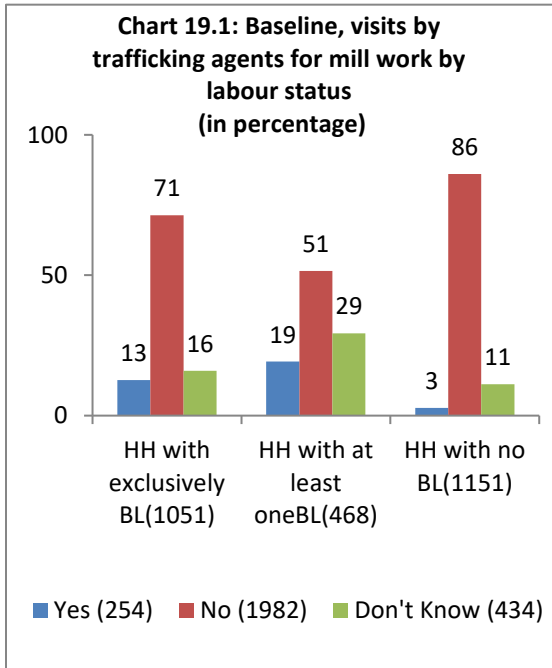
School going children	Exclusively bonded labourers (N=191)		At least with one bonded labourer (N=126)		No bonded labourers (N=2380)	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Age in years						
5	5	6	5	2	109	40
6	5	7	5	3	73	82
7	8	4	2	3	79	58
8	6	2	6	7	72	74
9	12	6	3	2	57	69
10	11	3	4	4	77	49
11	6	7	2	2	69	51
12	16	8	4	5	85	51
13	7	11	8	3	80	69
14	14	9	3	6	110	66
No. of children	90	63	42	37	756	563
No. of HHs	65	55	33	29	603	461
% of HHs with school going children	34%	29%	26%	23%	25%	19%

From the tables above, it can be inferred that in the households with exclusive bonded, there has been a slight increase i.e. from 32% in the baseline (HH with boys going to school) to 34% in the endline similarly from 27% in the baseline (HH with girls going to school) to 29% at the endline. Further, comparing the data for households with at least one bonded labour, it can be inferred that there is a slight decrease in percentage from 30% in the baseline (HH with boys going to school) to 26% in the endline. However, there is a slight increase from 21% in the baseline (HH with girls going to school) to 23% in the endline.

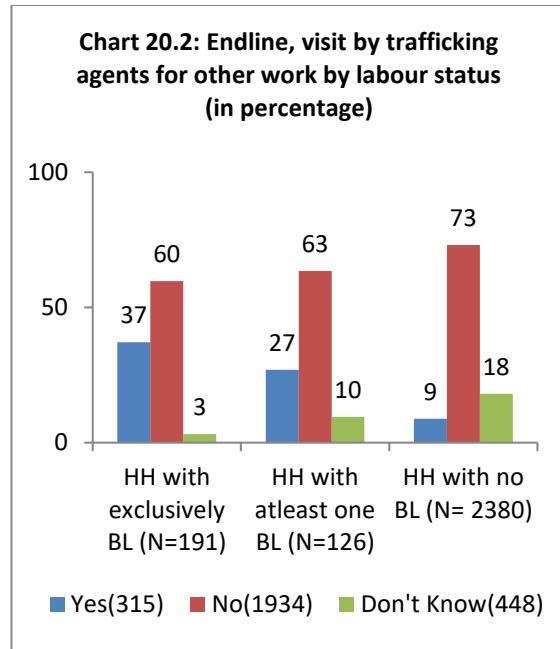
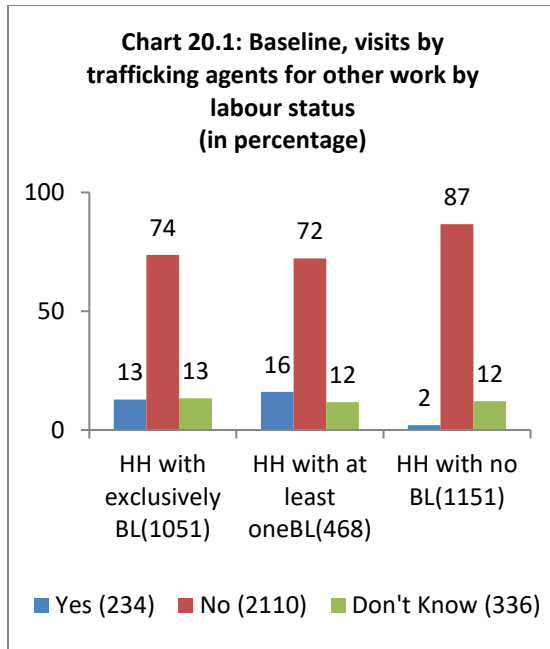
For the households with no bonded labour there is a decrease in percentage from 29% in the baseline (HH with boys going to school) to 25% in the endline and from 21% in the baseline (HH with girls going to school) to 19% in the endline. This decrease for the

households with at least one and no bonded labour can be due to the drastic change in total number of households belonging to all the three categories in the endline as compared to the baseline.

Annex 4



Role of Agents in trafficking people to mills or for other work



Charts 19.1,19.2, 20.1 and 20.2 illustrate the role of agent in trafficking people. The response in baseline with 71% and endline with 59% from the households with all the members in bonded labour, indicated that agents do not have much role in trafficking people to the mills and 13% of household with all members in bonded labour in the baseline and 37% in the endline recognised the role of agents in trafficking people for other work. However, the acknowledgement regarding role of traffickers for both mill and other work seems to be higher in the endline as households with members in bonded situation in the endline reported their visit at 39% and households with at least one member in bonded labour reported it to be at 30% as compared to baseline where the response was reported at 13% and 19% respectively.