

# Why does child labour occur?



1. View of the slums in Jaipur, India. In 2014, Jaipur had an estimated population of 3.3 million and growing. People migrate to cities like Jaipur from rural villages seeking employment. However, it can be difficult for adults to find regular work and earn enough to cover their family's living expenses.

In urban environments the poorest families often live in slums like this one in Kanpur, India. Poor urban communities are vulnerable to any rise in prices in essential items like food and water. Children in this community work as rag-pickers in order to earn money to help their families buy food.

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**3.** Premvati's husband is gone and so her nine-year-old son, as the oldest child, must work all day sorting vegetables at a market. The money he earns is needed in order for the family, including his younger brothers and sister, to survive.

Natural disasters, like the flooding in India in 2014, can exacerbate the circumstances that lead to child labour. Families' lives are disrupted, and they can face the difficult and expensive challenge of rebuilding.

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A rural village in the Himalayan foothills. In poor rural communities children may be withdrawn from school before finishing their education in order to work in their family's business or farm, or help around the household. They may be expected to take over the work from their parents, who inherited it from their parents, and so on back through generations.

Sobha, 38, is a mother of three. She works as an agricultural labourer. Despite circumstances that can push families into child labour, such as the loss of her husband, she has been able to keep her children in school. Her children help her out in the household and on the farm, but only after they've finished their schoolwork.

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**7.** Dinesh\* is nine years old. His family live in a rural village, and are extremely poor. The whole family works in rope-making in order to earn a living. While his parents spin the wheel, he and his brother run 50 metres each way twisting the material.

Dinesh's sister winds the rope into bundles around her neck. There are 20 ropes in each bundle weighing around 10 kilograms. The family as a whole earns 40-50 rupees per day. Their parents would like the children to go to school, but if the family doesn't all work they go hungry.

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\* Name changed to protect identity





**9.** Khalid\* works at a brick kiln. He gets up at lam to go to work. It takes an hour to walk to the kiln. His whole family, including his brothers and sisters work. They are “debt-bonded” labour – they have to work in order to repay a loan.

Khalid works as a manual labourer at the kiln. The family may make as many as 400-600 bricks each day.

**10.**



\* Name changed to protect identity





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Misarun, now 30 years old, started working when she was 10, and at age 15 was married off to a man more than three times her age. He couldn't work, so she had to keep working in order to take care of him and his children. The people in her community sort and break river stones that are used as material for construction.

The work in Misarun's community is often a generational occupation, involving several generations of the same family. She speaks of her own childhood, "We had to work. Just like eating, working was a normal daily activity for children."

Children, like the girl pictured, use a 1.5 kilogram iron cylinder to break the stones into smaller pieces.

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