Migration Patterns

A large proportion of the workers we interviewed are migrants from rural areas and own small plots of land (between 2-10 acres). As the map below depicts most of them moved to Pune from the surrounding districts of Maharashtra but a few were migrants from out of state. Based on the interviews it is clear that the reasons for their migration primarily include the ongoing agrarian crisis, environmental problems like chronic drought and perceptions of better economic opportunities in Pune. As Parandara (2013) and Narayanamoorthy (2013: 23) describe Maharashtra has been suffering from droughts for many years but recently i.e. 2002-2013, water is being transferred from irrigation to non-irrigation (industrial and domestic) uses in cities like Pune, which has exacerbated the situation. Many of our interviewees who described owning farms mentioned that their small plots of land, which are dependent on rain for irrigation could not produce any crops, which is one of the main reason they migrated to Pune to look for jobs. Others described that there were no job opportunities in their villages and they needed to venture beyond to support their families. In fact in the book we describe how some subcontracting firms are well aware of the poor economic situation in surrounding districts of Maharashtra and thus targeted specific regions to recruit workers. A significant number of the workers we interviewed still had working farms in their villages from where they get some subsistence type produce for use in the family home but it is not enough to support the extended families. Indeed several workers described that they sent money home from Pune to support their family in the village. Most of the workers who migrated to Pune from the surrounding districts had friends, family members or other kin from their village working in the city, who became their initial source of contact. A number of workers reported that they got into the IT sector through these contacts, who already had jobs in this industry.

Source of Map: Government of India, 2010.

