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The Contribution of the Bidi Industry to Employment Generation and Income Creation in India: A Socio-Economic Analysis of Workers, Wages and Livelihoods

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ABSTRACT

The bidi industry is one of India's traditional labour-intensive industries and has historically provided employment to a large number of workers, particularly women and economically vulnerable households. The industry is predominantly organised through small-scale, decentralised and home-based production, enabling individuals with limited formal education and few alternative employment opportunities to participate in income-generating activities. According to the Ministry of Labour and Employment, 49.82 lakh registered bidi workers were reported in India, demonstrating the continuing importance of the sector as a source of livelihood. Earlier government data also indicated that 36.25 lakh of these registered workers were women.

This paper examines the contribution of the bidi industry to employment generation and income creation in India. It focuses on the structure of employment, the participation of women, wage conditions, household income, labour informality, government welfare measures and the challenges faced by bidi workers. The study is based on secondary data obtained from Government of India publications, labour legislation and published academic research. The analysis indicates that the bidi industry provides significant employment opportunities, especially in rural and semi-urban areas, but the economic benefits received by workers are constrained by low wages, piece-rate payment systems, informal employment arrangements, contractor dependence and gender-based income disparities. Research using nationally representative data has also found that bidi workers' wages were substantially lower than wages in other manufacturing industries.

Government interventions through labour welfare programmes have provided support in the areas of health, education and housing. Recent labour-policy reforms have further strengthened provisions concerning minimum wages, social security, occupational safety and gender equality. However, the long-term welfare of bidi workers requires not only protection of existing employment but also improved income opportunities, skill development and access to alternative livelihoods.

The paper concludes that the contribution of the bidi industry should be assessed not merely in terms of the number of jobs created but also in terms of the quality, adequacy and sustainability of the income generated. Strengthening social protection, improving wage implementation, empowering women workers and creating alternative livelihood opportunities can improve the socio-economic conditions of bidi-dependent households.

Keywords: Bidi Industry, Employment Generation, Income Creation, Bidi Workers, Women Workers, Informal Sector, Wages, Rural Livelihoods, Labour Welfare, India

Introduction

Employment generation is one of the most important requirements for economic development because employment provides individuals with income, improves household consumption and contributes to social and economic security. In India, a large proportion of workers continue to depend on informal and labour-intensive activities for their livelihoods. Traditional industries that require relatively low levels of capital and technical skills remain particularly important for households with limited access to formal employment.

The bidi industry represents one such labour-intensive sector. Bidi production involves the preparation of tobacco, cutting and shaping leaves, rolling tobacco into leaves, tying the rolled product, sorting, bundling and packaging. Much of this work has historically been organised through decentralised production systems, including home-based work.

The industry has a distinctive socio-economic significance because it provides employment to workers who may have limited educational qualifications and limited access to alternative occupations. Women constitute a particularly large proportion of the bidi workforce. Government data reported 49.82

lakh registered bidi workers, of whom 36.25 lakh were women.

The industry is therefore important from the perspective of employment generation. At the same time, employment in the sector has several limitations. Workers may be paid on a piece-rate basis, depend on contractors or intermediaries, and have limited bargaining power. Academic research using National Sample Survey Office and Annual Survey of Industries data found that bidi workers earned substantially lower wages than workers in other manufacturing industries and identified significant gender differences in wages.

This creates an important economic question: **Does the bidi industry merely provide employment, or does it provide adequate and sustainable income to the households dependent upon it?**

The present study examines this question by analysing the contribution of the bidi industry to employment and income in India.

Background of the Bidi Industry in India

The bidi industry has developed as a traditional, labour-intensive manufacturing activity in India. Unlike capital-intensive industries that require large factories and sophisticated machinery, bidi production can be undertaken with relatively simple tools and limited investment.

One of the distinctive features of the industry is its decentralised production structure. Production may involve manufacturers, contractors, intermediaries and home-based workers. This structure has allowed bidi production to spread across several states and rural and semi-urban communities.

The Government of India has historically recognised the bidi industry as an important source of employment. A government publication described the bidi industry as primarily a home-based, labour-intensive industry and reported employment of approximately 55 lakh workers at that time, with identity cards issued to nearly 49.80 lakh workers.

More recent government data report 49.82 lakh registered bidi workers.

The differences between historical estimates and more recent registered-worker figures should be interpreted carefully because employment estimates can vary according to the definition of a worker, registration status, survey methodology and reference period.

Nevertheless, the available evidence clearly demonstrates that the industry has been an important source of livelihood for millions of workers.

Statement of the Problem

The bidi industry presents a significant socio-economic paradox.

On one side, it generates employment for a large number of workers, particularly women and people from economically disadvantaged households. The industry's home-based nature allows workers to participate in production without relocating to industrial centres.

On the other side, employment in the sector is often characterised by low earnings, piece-rate payment and informal employment relationships. Workers may have limited bargaining power and may depend on contractors or intermediaries for the supply of raw materials and collection of finished products.

A study of employment and wages in the Indian bidi industry found that bidi workers earned only a fraction of the wages received by workers in other manufacturing industries. It also found that women, despite constituting the majority of workers, earned less than male workers.

Therefore, measuring the contribution of the bidi industry only through the number of workers employed provides an incomplete picture.

The present study focuses on both dimensions:

Employment generation + income generation + quality of employment.

Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of the study are to examine the contribution of the bidi industry to employment generation in India; to analyse the contribution of bidi employment to household income; to examine the participation of women in the bidi workforce; to analyse the wage and income conditions of bidi workers; to examine the employment structure and the role of contractors and intermediaries; to identify the major socio-economic problems faced by bidi workers; to examine government welfare measures for bidi workers and their families; to assess the importance of skill development and alternative employment opportunities; and to suggest appropriate policy measures for improving employment and income security among bidi workers.

Employment Generation through the Bidi Industry

Employment generation is the most visible economic contribution of the bidi industry.

The labour-intensive nature of bidi production means that the industry can absorb workers without requiring large investments in machinery. This is particularly important in regions where formal industrial employment opportunities are limited.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment reported 49.82 lakh registered bidi workers in India in 2025.

This scale of employment indicates the importance of the sector as a livelihood source.

Employment associated with bidi production can broadly be divided into direct and indirect employment.

Direct Employment

Direct employment includes:

- Bidi rolling
- Tobacco preparation
- Leaf preparation
- Sorting
- Tying
- Bundling
- Packing
- Quality checking

Indirect Employment

The industry also supports employment in activities associated with:

- Tendu-leaf collection and supply
- Tobacco supply
- Transportation
- Packaging
- Distribution
- Wholesale activities
- Retail trade
- Contracting and intermediary activities

Thus, the employment contribution of the industry extends beyond the actual process of bidi rolling.

Home-Based Employment

One of the most important characteristics of the bidi industry is the prevalence of home-based production.

Home-based work provides certain advantages to households:

- No daily commuting requirement
- Possibility of combining paid work with household responsibilities
- Participation of women
- Employment for workers with limited formal education
- Flexibility in organising household labour

For women in particular, home-based production may provide an opportunity to earn income while continuing to perform unpaid domestic work.

However, home-based employment can also make labour regulation more difficult. When work takes place inside private homes, monitoring working conditions, recording hours and enforcing labour standards may become more difficult.

This creates a central policy challenge: **how can workers receive the benefits of flexible home-based employment while also receiving adequate wages and social protection?**

Women's Participation in the Bidi Industry

Women occupy a central position in the bidi workforce.

Government data reported that 36.25 lakh out of 49.82 lakh registered bidi workers were women.

This means that women constituted approximately **72.8 percent** of the registered workforce covered by those figures.

Table 1: Registered Bidi Workers in India

Indicator	**Number**
Total registered workers	49.82 lakh
Women workers	36.25 lakh
Approximate share of women	72.8%

Source: Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India.

The high participation of women can be associated with the home-based nature of production and the relatively low entry requirements of the activity.

For many women, bidi work represents an accessible source of cash income.

However, women's participation in employment should not automatically be interpreted as economic empowerment.

Research on the bidi industry found that women earned less than men even though women constituted the majority of workers.

Therefore, the sector demonstrates an important distinction between **labour-force participation** and **economic empowerment**.

Contribution to Household Income

Income from bidi production can be an important component of household resources, particularly among low-income families. Households may depend on bidi income to meet various essential expenditures, including food, children’s education, healthcare, clothing, housing, debt repayment, transport, household consumption, and savings. The importance of this income should therefore be understood in the context of household economic vulnerability, as even a modest income can make a significant contribution to the economic survival and livelihood security of low-income households. However, the level of income earned from bidi employment depends on several factors, including the number of bidis produced, piece-rate payments, availability of raw materials, worker productivity, rejection of finished products, number of working days, contractor arrangements, availability of household labour, and seasonal conditions. Consequently, while bidi employment may provide an important source of income for households, it does not necessarily ensure stable or secure income, as earnings can fluctuate according to production conditions, payment rates, availability of work, and other socio-economic

factors.

Wage Conditions in the Bidi Industry

Wages are one of the most important indicators of employment quality.

The bidi industry has traditionally relied heavily on piece-rate payment. Under such a system, workers are paid according to the quantity of acceptable bidis produced rather than simply according to hours worked.

Piece-rate payment can encourage productivity, but it can also place considerable pressure on workers to increase output.

A major study published in *Frontiers in Public Health* examined employment and wage trends using nationally representative data. The study found that bidi workers' wages were substantially lower than those of workers in other manufacturing industries. For 2010–11, the study reported average annual wages of approximately ₹14,921 for bidi workers in the registered sector and estimated that this represented only 17 percent of the annual average wage of workers in registered manufacturing.

Gender Wage Inequality

The economic position of women workers deserves particular attention because women form the majority of the bidi workforce.

The evidence indicates that the large participation of women has not necessarily translated into equal economic returns.

Research found that female bidi workers earned less than male workers and identified significant wage disparities.

This has important implications for household income.

If women are major contributors to household production but receive lower wages, the household may remain economically vulnerable despite high female labour-force participation.

The issue therefore requires attention to:

- Equal remuneration
- Transparent piece-rate systems
- Direct payment mechanisms
- Worker registration
- Social-security access
- Financial literacy
- Women's access to bank accounts
- Skill development
- Alternative employment

Recent labour reforms have also strengthened the policy emphasis on prohibiting gender discrimination in wages and employment conditions. Government information published in 2025 highlighted protections against gender discrimination under the new labour-code framework.

Role of Contractors and Intermediaries

Contractors and intermediaries have historically played an important role in the organisation of bidi production.

They may distribute raw materials to workers, collect completed bidis and facilitate payments.

The contractor system can provide organisational flexibility, but it can also create problems for workers.

Potential problems include:

- Lack of direct relationship with the manufacturer
- Limited bargaining power
- Difficulty establishing employer responsibility
- Uncertainty regarding wages
- Rejection of finished products
- Irregular availability of work
- Limited awareness of legal rights

Research on the Indian bidi industry found that employment was primarily organised through contractors.

The contractor-based system therefore needs to be considered when evaluating the quality of employment and income generation.

Socio-Economic Importance of Bidi Employment

The bidi industry has significance beyond direct wages.

For households with limited employment opportunities, bidi production can serve as a livelihood strategy.

Its economic importance can be understood through four dimensions.

Employment

The bidi industry provides employment to millions of registered workers and serves as an important source of livelihood, particularly for workers belonging to low-income and economically vulnerable households. The availability of employment in bidi production provides income opportunities to individuals who may have limited access to formal or alternative employment opportunities.

Household Income

Bidi wages constitute an important source of household income for many workers and contribute to meeting essential household expenditures and consumption needs. Income earned from bidi production may be used for food, education, healthcare, housing, clothing, debt repayment, and other daily requirements. Thus, bidi employment can play an important role in supporting household livelihoods**.**

Women's Economic Participation

The significant participation of women in the bidi workforce provides an important avenue for women to earn cash income and contribute to household economic resources. Women's involvement in bidi production can enhance their participation in economic activities and provide them with an additional source of income. However, the low level of wages and the nature of employment may limit the extent of economic security derived from such work.

Local Economic Activity

The bidi industry also contributes to local economic activity through its linkages with various associated activities, including the transportation of raw materials and finished products, supply of raw materials, processing, marketing, and distribution. These interconnected activities generate additional employment and income opportunities within local communities. Therefore, the bidi sector can contribute to local economic activity and livelihood generation, even though individual worker earnings may remain relatively low.

Government Welfare Measures

The Government of India has implemented specific welfare measures for bidi workers and their families.

The Labour Welfare Scheme currently covers three major areas:

1. Health

2. Education

3. Housing

The Ministry of Labour and Employment reported in March 2025 that the scheme was being implemented through Labour Welfare Organisations in 18 regions. It reported healthcare through 10 hospitals and 279 dispensaries and educational assistance for children of bidi workers ranging from ₹1,000 to ₹25,000 per student per year depending on the class or course.

Housing assistance has also been provided under the Revised Integrated Housing Scheme, which has been converged with the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.

Table 3: Major Welfare Measures

Area	**Government Support**
Health	Hospitals, dispensaries and specialised treatment support
Education	Scholarships/financial assistance for children
Housing	Housing assistance through relevant government schemes
Social Security	Access to broader schemes for unorganised workers
Skill Development	Training for alternative employment

Source: Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India.

Educational Support for Children of Bidi Workers

Education support is particularly important because low-income households may struggle to finance children's education.

The Government's Labour Welfare Scheme provides financial assistance to the wards of bidi workers.

In April 2025, the Ministry of Labour and Employment reported that ₹32.51 crore had been disbursed to 92,118 wards of bidi, cine and non-coal mine workers who applied for scholarships for the academic year 2024–25.

More recent government information in 2026 continues to report educational assistance ranging from ₹1,000 to ₹25,000 per student per year, with payments being transferred through the Direct Benefit Transfer system.

Such interventions can indirectly improve the long-term economic position of bidi-worker households by reducing the financial barriers to education.

Health and Welfare Support

Bidi workers may face occupational and general health challenges associated with the nature of the work and their socio-economic circumstances.

The Labour Welfare Scheme provides healthcare through a network of hospitals and dispensaries and provides financial support for treatment of specified serious illnesses.

Government welfare provisions are therefore important because health expenditure can place a significant burden on low-income households.

When a worker becomes ill, the household may face two simultaneous problems:

1. Loss of income.

2. Increased medical expenditure.

Health support can therefore contribute indirectly to household income security by reducing the financial impact of illness.

Labour Legislation and Protection

The Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966 was enacted to provide for the welfare of workers in bidi and cigar establishments and to regulate conditions of work. The legislation includes provisions concerning matters such as cleanliness, ventilation, drinking water, welfare facilities, working hours, wages for overtime and leave.

The legislation represents an important attempt to extend labour protection to a sector with distinctive employment arrangements.

However, implementation becomes more complicated when production is decentralised and carried out in workers' homes.

This makes worker identification, registration, wage monitoring and enforcement particularly important.

Recent Labour-Code Developments

The policy environment surrounding bidi workers has also evolved through India's labour-code framework.

Government information published in December 2025 highlighted provisions relating to minimum wages, floor wages, wage slips, working hours, social security, annual health check-ups, paid leave and prohibition of gender discrimination.

The significance of these reforms for bidi workers lies in the possibility of strengthening formal recognition and labour protection.

However, the effectiveness of any legal framework depends on implementation.

For home-based workers, enforcement requires effective mechanisms for:

- Worker registration
- Identification of employers
- Wage transparency
- Payment records
- Social-security enrolment
- Grievance redressal
- Occupational safety

Skill Development and Alternative Employment

The long-term economic security of bidi workers cannot depend entirely on continued employment in the bidi industry.

The Government has recognised the importance of alternative employment and skill development. The Ministry of Labour and Employment, in collaboration with the National Skill Development Corporation and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, has provided skill-development training to bidi workers and their dependants to facilitate alternative employment.

Alternative livelihood opportunities may include:

- Tailoring
- Garment production
- Food processing
- Handicrafts
- Retail activities

- Small enterprises
- Digital services
- Agricultural activities
- Self-help group enterprises
- Vocational occupations

Skill development should ideally be combined with access to credit, market linkages and employment placement.

Training alone may not be sufficient if workers cannot obtain productive employment after completing training.

. Major Challenges Faced by Bidi Workers

Low Wages

Low earnings remain one of the major concerns faced by bidi workers. Historical research has highlighted substantial wage disadvantages among bidi workers when compared with workers employed in other manufacturing sectors. The low level of remuneration can affect the economic well-being of workers and their families and may make it difficult for households to meet their basic needs and improve their standard of living.

Informal Employment

A significant proportion of bidi workers operate outside conventional factory-based employment relationships. The informal nature of employment can result in limited access to stable employment conditions, employment-related protections, and other benefits generally associated with formal-sector work. This informality may also make it difficult to regulate working conditions and ensure adequate protection for workers.

Contractor Dependence

Bidi workers may depend heavily on contractors and intermediaries for access to raw materials, distribution of work, and collection of finished products. Such dependence can influence the terms and conditions of employment and may reduce workers' bargaining power. The involvement of contractors can therefore contribute to uncertainty regarding work availability, payment, and employment security.

Gender Inequality

Women constitute a substantial proportion of the bidi workforce and play an important role in bidi production. However, women workers have historically received lower average earnings than men in the sector. Gender inequality may also be reflected in differences in access to better employment opportunities, decision-making power, and economic security. Thus, the high participation of women in bidi work does not necessarily translate into equal economic outcomes.

Bidi Industry and Rural Livelihoods

The importance of the bidi industry is particularly visible in rural and semi-urban economies.

Rural households may have limited access to formal manufacturing jobs. Home-based bidi production allows work to be brought directly into the household.

This can be particularly important where:

- Agricultural employment is seasonal.
- Women's mobility is restricted.
- Industrial employment is geographically distant.
- Educational attainment is low.
- Household income is unstable.

Consequently, bidi production may function as a form of livelihood diversification.

However, dependence on low-paying work can also create a cycle of economic vulnerability.

A household may remain dependent on bidi production because it lacks the financial resources necessary to invest in education, training or alternative employment.

Employment versus Decent Employment

One of the central findings of this study is the need to distinguish between **employment generation** and **decent employment**.

Employment generation refers to the number of jobs or work opportunities created.

Decent employment additionally requires:

- Adequate wages
- Safe working conditions
- Social security
- Equality
- Employment stability
- Reasonable working hours
- Worker rights

The bidi industry performs relatively strongly in terms of labour absorption but faces challenges in terms of income adequacy and employment quality.

This distinction is particularly important for policy.

The objective should not simply be to preserve employment numbers. It should also be to improve the economic return and security associated with that employment.

Findings

The major findings of the study indicate that the bidi industry remains a significant source of employment in India, with government data reporting 49.82 lakh registered bidi workers. Women constitute the majority of registered workers, with 36.25 lakh women reported among the total 49.82 lakh registered workers, highlighting the important role of women in the sector. The industry is particularly relevant for economically vulnerable households, as the low capital requirements and home-based nature of bidi production enable individuals with limited formal qualifications to participate in employment and generate income. However, employment in the bidi industry does not necessarily provide adequate income, as published research has identified substantial wage disadvantages among bidi workers compared with workers engaged in other manufacturing activities. Gender wage inequality also remains an important issue, as women constitute the majority of workers while historical evidence indicates that their average wages have been lower than those of men. Furthermore, contractor-based production significantly influences the nature of employment, as the involvement of contractors and intermediaries can reduce direct employment relationships between workers and manufacturers and may affect workers' employment conditions. Government welfare measures provide important support to bidi workers and their families, particularly through health, education, and housing components under the Labour Welfare Scheme. Education assistance is also important for long-term household mobility, as government scholarship support has reached tens of thousands of children belonging to eligible bidi worker households, thereby contributing to educational opportunities for the next generation. Finally, alternative employment opportunities are essential for ensuring long-term livelihood security, and skill development programmes can provide a pathway for bidi workers and their dependants to acquire new skills and enter alternative occupations, thereby reducing dependence on bidi employment and improving their prospects for sustainable income and employment.

Suggestions

Improve Wage Implementation

Minimum-wage provisions should be effectively implemented for bidi workers, including those who are paid on a piece-rate basis. Workers should be

clearly informed about the applicable wage rates, piece-rate calculations, and payment procedures. Effective monitoring of wage implementation is necessary to ensure that workers receive fair and legally applicable remuneration for their labour.

Strengthen Worker Registration

Universal and accurate registration of bidi workers should be strengthened to ensure that eligible workers can access government welfare and social-security benefits. Registration procedures should be simple, transparent, and accessible, particularly for workers in home-based and informal employment. Digital registration systems should also be made accessible to workers with limited digital literacy through assistance centres and other support mechanisms.

Improve Payment Transparency

Greater transparency in the payment system is essential for protecting bidi workers from disputes and unfair deductions. Workers should receive clear records showing the quantity of raw materials supplied, quantity of finished products accepted, applicable piece rate, total wages earned, deductions made, and date of payment. Maintaining transparent payment records would help reduce disputes between workers, contractors, and manufacturers while improving accountability in the employment relationship.

Strengthen Women's Economic Empowerment

Since women constitute the majority of bidi workers, special emphasis should be placed on strengthening their economic empowerment. Measures should include ensuring equal remuneration, improving financial literacy, promoting direct bank payments, expanding access to skill-development programmes, and encouraging entrepreneurship. Women workers should also be provided greater access to institutional credit and encouraged to participate in self-help groups, which can strengthen their financial independence and create opportunities for alternative sources of income.

Expand Alternative Livelihood Programmes

Skill-development programmes should be closely connected with actual employment and income-generating opportunities so that workers can successfully move into alternative occupations. Training programmes should therefore be supported by placement assistance, credit facilities, market linkages, entrepreneurship support, and mentoring. Such an integrated approach can improve the effectiveness of skill development and reduce long-term dependence on bidi employment**.**

Strengthen Social Security

Bidi workers should be provided greater assistance in accessing government social-security and welfare schemes related to health insurance, life insurance, pensions, housing, food security, and education. Awareness programmes and simplified application procedures should be strengthened to ensure that eligible workers and their families can access available benefits. Effective implementation and monitoring of welfare programmes are essential for improving the overall social and economic security of bidi households**.**

Improve Occupational Health

Occupational health measures should be strengthened for workers involved in handling and processing tobacco. Regular health examinations, health-awareness programmes, and information regarding safe working practices should be provided to workers. Special attention should be given to home-based workers, where occupational health and safety conditions may be difficult to monitor. Preventive healthcare and early identification of occupational health problems can contribute to improving the well-being of bidi workers.

Strengthen Grievance Redressal

Accessible and effective grievance-redressal mechanisms should be established to enable bidi workers to report employment-related problems without fear of retaliation. Such mechanisms should address issues including wage disputes, non-payment of wages, unfair deductions, rejection of finished products, harassment, and denial of welfare benefits. Grievance procedures should be simple, affordable, transparent, and easily accessible to workers, particularly those working through contractors and intermediaries.

Support Worker Cooperatives

Worker cooperatives and women's self-help groups can play an important role in strengthening the bargaining power and economic position of bidi workers. Such organisations can facilitate collective action, improve access to financial resources, promote alternative income-generating activities, and provide greater opportunities for skill development and entrepreneurship. Encouraging cooperatives and self-help groups can therefore contribute to greater economic independence and improved livelihood security among bidi workers and their families.

Conclusion

The bidi industry has historically played an important role in India's employment structure. Its labour-intensive and decentralised nature has enabled millions of workers, particularly women and members of economically vulnerable households, to participate in income-generating activities.Government data indicate that 49.82 lakh bidi workers were registered, while earlier official data recorded 36.25 lakh women among these workers. These figures demonstrate the importance of the sector as a source of livelihood.

The contribution of the industry, however, cannot be measured solely by the number of jobs it creates. The quality of employment and adequacy of income are equally important. Evidence from published research shows that bidi workers have historically received substantially lower wages than workers in other manufacturing activities and that women have faced significant wage disadvantages.

The industry therefore represents both an employment opportunity and a source of economic vulnerability.Government welfare programmes have attempted to address some of these challenges through health services, educational assistance and housing support. Recent policy developments have further emphasised minimum wages, social security, occupational safety and gender equality.

For the future, policy should focus on improving the quality of employment, rather than merely maintaining the quantity of employment. Better wage implementation, stronger worker registration, transparent payment systems, improved social-security coverage, women's economic empowerment and alternative livelihood opportunities are essential.

In particular, skill development and diversification of household income can help reduce long-term dependence on low-paying bidi work. Such measures would allow workers to move towards more secure and productive employment while ensuring that those who continue in the sector receive adequate protection and fair remuneration.

The overall conclusion of the study is that the bidi industry has made a substantial contribution to employment and household income in India, particularly among women and low-income households. However, its contribution to sustainable economic development depends on whether employment can be transformed into decent, adequately paid and socially protected work.

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