

A study to explore work and childcare among informal women workers in Durban, South Africa

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Table of Contents

Acronyms	5
ntroduction	6
The aim of the study	9
Methodology	9
Study design	9
Study setting and participants	9
Data collection	9
Inclusion criteria	9
Exclusion criteria	10
Recruitment	10
Focus group discussions	11
Support Systems activity	11
Timeline activity	12
Photovoice activity	13
In-depth interviews	14
Data analysis	15
Ethical considerations	15
Results	16
Photovoice Titles	17
Caring for a child while working in the market	17
Child care in the work environment	18
The work environment is hazardous	22
Co-workers provide support	26
Hygiene and sanitation/ access to water and toilets	29
Acceptability of having the child in the work environment	34
Challenge of working while caring for a child	36
Role of market organisations and management structures	37
Mothers' recommendations	38
Stakeholders' and customers' perspective of mothers caring for children in the market	42
Acceptability of bringing the child to the work environment	43
Safety in the Work environment	44
Access to health services	45
Balancing work and childcare	46

Stakeholder and customer recommendations	47
Summary of key findings	50
Mothers' challenges	50
Coping strategies	50
Summary of recommendations	51
Conclusion	53
Bibliography	54
Stakeholder and customer recommendations 2 Summary of key findings 5 Mothers' challenges 5 Coping strategies 5 Summary of recommendations 5 Conclusion 5 Sibliography 5 Appendices 5 Appendix 1: Instructions for Support Systems activity 5 Appendix 2: Instructions for Timeline Activity 5 Appendix 3: Instructions for Photovoice activity 6	57
Appendix 1: Instructions for Support Systems activity	57
Appendix 2: Instructions for Timeline Activity	59
Appendix 3: Instructions for Photovoice activity	60

Table of Figures

Figure 1: An example of a schematic representation of support system drawn by mother
Figure 2: Example of a photo voice poster made by a mother14
Figure 3: 'This is where the baby sleeps' (Mother, under 1) Error! Bookmark not defined.
Figure 4: 'I put the baby in this walker when I am working' (mother, under1) Error! Bookmark not
defined.
Figure 5: 'This is where I have to walk to go to the toilet with my baby' (mother, under 1)30
Figure 6: 'This is where I get water to wash hands and to drink' (Mother, under1)31
Figure 7: 'This is where I get water' (Mother, over1)
Figure 8: 'This is where I change my child and where she sleeps' (Mother, under 1)34

Acronyms

AeT Asiye eTafuleni

FGD Focus group discussion

StatsSA Statistics South Africa

WIEGO Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing

Introduction

Informal workers make up over 60% of the global workforce, representing about two billion people. While definitions of informal work may vary, in general informal work is associated with vulnerability due to poor job security, income security and social security. Informal workers generally lack the social protection enjoyed by formal workers, including access to sick leave, maternity leave and unemployment benefits. The informal economy is comprised of many different types of work, employment statuses, and places of work, including: contributing family workers; self-employed own account workers such as street vendors, waste pickers, construction workers, home-based workers and employed domestic workers. Informal workers frequently struggle with poor housing, lack of basic services such as electricity and water, and overcrowding. However, informal work is an important survival mechanism for the unemployed; as many as 70% of people who start an informal business do so because they are not formally employed have no alternative source of income (Stats SA, 2013). Thus, informal work provides a livelihood for vulnerable people in the community. The informal economy continues to grow in both high and low income settings and is also emerging in new and unexpected places. Further, the informal economy is closely linked to the formal economy and contributes significantly to economic growth. Therefore, it is important to understand the nature of informal work, and the linkages between informal work and poverty, inequality and lack of social protection.

Women are disproportionally represented in the informal economy, and responsibilities for childcare also fall disproportionally on women, making it challenging for informal working women to manage these dual responsibilities. Women's greater responsibility for unpaid household and care work limits their ability to seek and undertake paid work (Alfers, 2015). Further, women are overrepresented in those informal occupations with a lower chance of high returns and are more likely to be among the lowest earners in this economy (WIEGO, 2019). The need to work impacts on how these mothers care for their children. Therefore, supporting women working in the informal economy is key to reducing women's poverty and gender inequality.

The environment in which children are raised impacts their health and development. Research findings highlight the negative effects on child behaviour and cognitive development when they spend long periods of time with non-parental carers, particularly at a young age (Bradley, 2007). In contrast however, good quality, responsive, age-appropriate childcare can enhance child development and have a sustained positive effect on school performance. In addition, good quality

childcare can mitigate against many of the ill effects of poverty and maternal depression (Charrois, 2017; Burchinal, 2000).

The working age population in South Africa is estimated to be 38 million people. Estimates of the number of informal workers vary between different data sources, but according to Rogan (2019), the number may be as high as five million people. Approximately 1.1 million of these informal workers are women (Stats SA, 2019). In KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province, there are approximately 309 000 informal workers, of whom around 184 000 are centred around the eThekwini Municipality (Stats SA, 2019). Informal employment represents approximately 24 percent of total employment in the eight major South African metropolitan areas, and 26 percent of the total informal work force in eThekwini (Rogan, 2019).

The eThekwini Municipality (City of Durban) is the largest city in KZN and the third largest city in South Africa, with a population of 3.7 million people (Wazimap: Community survey, 2016). Although eThekwini has a vibrant formal economy, it is also home to a large and increasing informal economy. At the centre of the eThekwini Municipality is Warwick Junction. Warwick Junction is a confluence of rail, taxi and bus transport systems, around which an informal trading node – made up of 9 different markets – has developed. Almost 500 000 commuters travel through Warwick Junction daily and at least 6000 informal traders work in the area (Markets of Warwick, 2019), many of whom are women of reproductive age. There are also many other markets and informal trading areas within the eThekwini Municipality.

Women who work informally become pregnant, have babies, nurture and care for their children, educate their children, and grow old in the context of informal work, and make choices and decisions for themselves and their children within this work environment. Like formally working women, mothers who work informally have to strike a balance between childcare and work responsibilities. Infant feeding is an important element of childcare and breastfeeding is the best choice for infant feeding. Breastfeeding has been shown to provide lifelong benefits for both mother and child, and to reduce mortality and morbidity from infectious diseases and malnutrition.

However, returning to work and inadequate breastfeeding support in the workplace are major barriers to breastfeeding. As has been widely documented with regard to formal workplaces (Mandal, Roe & Fein, 2010; Mirkovic et al., 2014), returning to work leads to shorter durations of breastfeeding. For informal workers the importance of breastfeeding and child nurturing should be

seen in relation to the need for informally working mothers to return to work and earn an income to support families and run their households. Mothers who work informally do not benefit from the legislated maternity protection and other important workplace interventions known to improve infant feeding practices, such as provision of breastfeeding spaces and childcare facilities, resulting in vulnerability during pregnancy and after the baby is born.

This report presents the findings of a qualitative research study which explored the interface between informal work, the informal work environment and childcare practices employed by informally working mothers, within the markets of Warwick Junction in eThekwini.

The aim of the study

To explore the interface between working conditions, infant feeding and childcare, and the work environment among women working informally in the markets of Warwick Junction in eThekwini,

with a view to identifying supportive interventions that could assist mothers to provide optimal

childcare and nutrition for their infants.

Methodology

Study design

We used a qualitative study design to explore the lived experiences of informally working women in

relation to their work responsibilities, the environment where they work, and childcare and infant

feeding, in the Warwick Junction markets. A series of focus group discussions were conducted with

mothers and in-depth interviews were undertaken with customers and market stakeholders.

Study setting and participants

The study was conducted in the Warwick Junction markets and data collection was supported by

Asiye eTafuleni (AeT). AeT is a non-governmental organization that provides support to informal

traders and others who use public spaces for work purposes. Data was collected in the Warwick

Junction markets and to a lesser extent, at the Durban beachfront where there is also some informal

trading taking place.

There were three groups of participants, namely; mothers, market stakeholders and market

customers.

Mothers: Mothers with a child aged <3 years who were currently bringing their children with them

to work or who had brought their children to work recently

Stakeholders: Stakeholders were members of the market who had either a community leadership role

and/or were co-workers of the mothers. The principal of a local crèche was included as a stakeholder.

Customers: Customers were members of the public walking around the market.

Data collection

Inclusion criteria

For purposes of eligibility, we defined informal workers as workers with no formal work contract and

where no tax/unemployment insurance was being paid by the participant.

Eligible mothers were those who were:

18 years or older,

- informal workers,

with a child under the age of three years, and

had brought their child to their place of work at some point

Exclusion criteria

Participants were excluded if they were unable to communicate in the local language, IsiZulu.

Recruitment

All participants were identified with the assistance of staff members from AeT who provided a list of mothers working in the markets who had children under the age of 3 years. All participating mothers were either currently bringing or had or previously brought their children to work with them in the markets.

In order to address the different challenges experienced by mothers of children of different ages, the mothers were divided into groups; mothers with children aged <one year (two groups), and mothers of children aged 1 to <3 years (2 groups).

Each group of mothers (4 groups in total) participated in two focus group discussions (FGDs) comprising two different activities (known as Support Systems and Timelines) described below. On completion of the two FGDs, mothers were purposively selected to participate in a photovoice discussion based on their willingness to participate and their active participation in the previous FGDs.

In total, 10 focus group discussions were undertaken, consisting of:

Four Support System focus group discussions (two with mothers of children <1 year and two
with mothers of children >1 year);

 Four Timelines discussions (two with mothers of children <1 year and two with mothers of children >1 year) and

 Two Photovoice activities (one with mothers of children <1 year and one with mothers of children >1 year)

Eight in-depth interviews were undertaken with stakeholders and co-workers and four with customers. Stakeholders, co-workers and customers were purposively selected with assistance from the AeT staff based on the relevant insights they could provide about mothers bringing their children to work.

Two experienced qualitative researchers conducted all the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews in the local language, isiZulu

Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions (FGDs) are a common qualitative data collection method as they elicit a range of data on norms and opinions in a short period of time, whilst the group dynamics stimulate discussion, conversation and reactions.

In order to encourage interactions between participants we included the use of activity-oriented techniques which make the focus groups more enjoyable, interactive and focussed, in order to provide rich in-depth data (Colucci 2007). We used a variety of participatory activity-oriented FGDs which are described below.

Support Systems activity

Mothers were asked to schematically draw a picture of the people who provide support for them to care for their children in the workplace. Instructions were given to the mothers to place a representation of themselves and their child at the centre of the picture. They were then asked to identify all the people who support them with childcare and write names or draw pictures of these people on cards. The mothers were then asked to place all their supporters on the picture at a distance from themselves, with those people providing the most support positioned closest to the mothers and baby, and those providing less support placed further away. After completing the drawing, mothers were asked to describe their support system to the group. Conversations flowed freely between participants and researchers were able to probe about issues relating to social support in a non-threatening way, thus eliciting rich data.

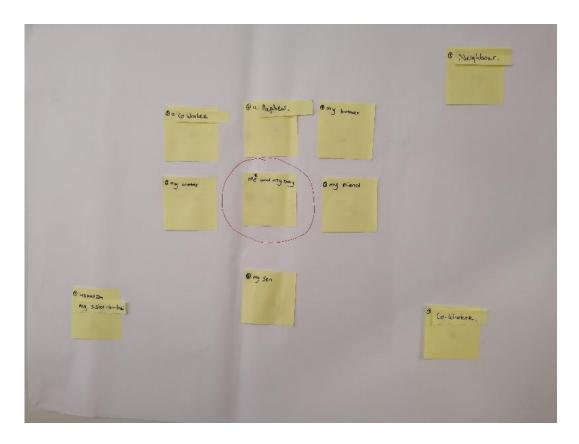


Figure 1: An example of a schematic representation of support system drawn by mother

Timeline activity

We used a modified rating exercise (Colucci, 2007) to explore how mothers balance work, childcare and other responsibilities in the context of informal work. Mothers were asked to identify all the tasks and activities they perform on any given work day, from getting up in the morning until returning from work in the evening. Activities were written on cards and placed on a timeline. Mothers were then asked to arrange the cards in order of priority and to present their work to the group. Mothers were asked about which activities were most important to them and how they dealt with any situation where activities were in conflict, for example if they had to serve a customer as well as feed their child. In addition, mothers were asked to describe how they had experienced completing all activities when there were challenges, for example if the child was unwell and had to go to the clinic. The whole group was encouraged to discuss each person's priorities, and researchers encouraged participants to think about which daily activities are important to them, and how they navigate clashes when these occur.

Photovoice activity

Photovoice is a methodology whereby participants identify and represent their community using photographs. The advantage of using photovoice as a research methodology is that photographs act as a memory prompt for participants, resulting in longer and more detailed responses. It also allows the focus to shift away from the participant to the photograph, making it easier for participants to discuss sensitive subjects (Hinton & Earnest, 2010). We used the photovoice activity for the extra dimension it added to the data collection process (Mohammed & Sajun, 2014).

We provided mothers with a camera and instructions to capture images of all the places that are important to them as mothers providing childcare within their work environment. Researchers walked around the market with the mothers who identified places that were important for childcare and took photographs. Examples included where they access water and go to the toilet, and places where children play and sleep during the day.

At the beginning of the photovoice activity, mothers were requested to paste their photos on an A3 poster, identify an appropriate heading for the poster, and then write a short explanation of the images on the poster. A discussion was then facilitated and mothers had the opportunity to present their poster to the group, highlighting positive aspects as well as challenges they experience with regard to caring for their children in the workplace. Discussions about the images provided in-depth insights about mothers' lived experiences of caring for children within the work environment.



Figure 2: Example of a photo voice poster made by a mother

In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews are a research method commonly used to explore a person's thoughts and behaviours, providing context and a more complete picture about the topic at hand. They may be used when groups are heterogeneous and where there are different power levels within the group or when sensitive topics are going to be discussed (Boyce & Neale, 2006).

We undertook in-depth interviews with various important stakeholders in the markets. In-depth interviews were conducted with community leaders, co-workers and customers. All stakeholders were purposively selected because of the relevant information they could provide.

Data analysis

FGDs and in-depth interviews were transcribed verbatim, then translated from isiZulu into English by experienced translators. Transcripts were quality controlled by researchers who listened to a selection of the transcripts and validated these against the audio recordings. Transcripts were uploaded into NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software that assists with the organising of data into a meaningful and coherent form.

After reading the first few transcripts, a codebook of themes was developed based on the interview topics as well as any new themes emerging from the data. This was repeated until all the transcripts had been reviewed, and no new themes emerged. The analysis team worked together to ensure consistency and resolve any discrepancies in the analysis process.

Ethical considerations

Ethical approval for this research project was obtained by the University of KwaZulu-Natal Human and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSS/319/018) as an amendment to the LiNCs study (dated 17May 2019). All participants provided written informed consent. Participants who did not provide written informed consent and those that could not communicate in the local language of isiZulu were excluded from the study. During the informed consent process, participants were informed that participation in the research study was voluntary and that no negative consequences would follow as a result of refusal to participate or withdrawal from the study. Anonymity and confidentiality were assured.

Results

Ten focus group discussions were held with mothers of children under the age of 3 years who work informally in participating markets. A total of 20 mothers participated in the discussions: 10 mothers of children aged <one year; 10 mothers of children aged 1-3 years; 9 mothers participated in the Photovoice activity. Demographic characteristics of mothers who participated in focus group discussions are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of mothers

Mother' information	n=20
Age group	
15-20	1
21-25	3
26-30	3
31-35	7
0ver 35	6
Race	·
Black	20
Occupation	·
Street trader (cooking)	3
Street trader (non-cooking)	17
Years of working in Warwick Junction	·
1-5 years	6
6-10years	7
11-15 years	3
16-20 years	4
No. of working days per week	
6 days	2
7 days	18
Baby's information	
Baby's age group	
<1 year	10
>1 year	10
Still breastfeeding	
<1 year	7
>1 year	1
<1 year	7
>1 year	1

Photovoice Titles

Mothers were asked to give a title to their poster for the photovoice activity, to describe the overall content of the poster. The titles chose are shown below.

Table 2: Titles given by mothers to the Photovoice posters

Over 1 Mother 1	I love my business because I support my children through it
Over 1 Mother 2	I love my business, it makes a difference to my life and my baby's life
Over 1 Mother 3 Good business potential leads to success	
Over 1 Mother 4	A life of a street trader in Durban
Under 1 Mother 1	Working with excellence with my baby
Under 1 Mother 2	Hard work and taking care of the baby
Under 1 Mother 3	Working hard
Under 1 Mother 4	The way I provide for myself and my baby
Under 1 Mother 5	Working hard can lead to success

Caring for a child while working in the market

Mothers working in the markets who brought their children to work with them generally expressed that they only did this because they had no other feasible options for childcare; their low income and lack of resources meant that any other form of childcare was too expensive.

'You have to pay for it [childcare] and we do not earn a lot of money here. Sometimes we wake up in the morning and come here only to earn R20 or R30. So at the end of the month you have to pay the day care. How much, R300, R400?' (Mother, Timeline activity, group 1, over 1).

'It is good to be with your child but sitting with a child in the street [is not good] because it rains, it gets windy, it gets hot, it gets cold and you are with your child. It is not right because you see when you are outside like this, what can I say, chemicals and maybe people's coughs and so on, and this child always has flu all the time. It is not right. However, it is important for you to be with your child. You deem it [taking the child to work] as alright because you do not have any other option. So you think that it is alright.' (Mother, Photovoice, over 1)

Mothers described working very long hours in the market, often arriving before 6am, after travelling from home with their children on public transport. They then had to set up their stall and arrange the goods for sale while also caring for the child. Mothers frequently returned home late in the evening. Mothers often had to work with their baby on their back and if they had to leave the stall for any reason, for example to walk to town to get new stock, the baby had to go with them.

'I wake up around 04h00 and bath and then bath my child. I then cook her porridge and feed her. I then prepare her things, pack for her and then we leave to catch a taxi to town. We arrive at the Market by 06h00. I prepare my table. I first fetch my trolley from the store room. The trolley contains boxes that are full of the stock that I sell. I sell clothes, needles and shoe polish, plastic bags and cello tape. I then organise my place with a baby on my back.'

(Mother, Timeline activity, group 1, over 1)

However, when mothers were asked specifically about the advantages of having their children with them at work, several mothers mentioned that it was good to have their children close to them because it meant that they could care for the children themselves, and if a child was unwell they could identify this immediately and take him or her to the clinic. A few mothers suggested that they chose to bring their children to work because they preferred to be close to them and they were uncertain about the care the baby would receive in a crèche.

'If I am with her I think it is good because I get everything that I think she needs easily. If she is sick, there is a clinic nearby. I am able to take her to the clinic. I think it is good to work with her.' (Mother, Photovoice, over1)

However, one mother said that she was unwilling to even acknowledge that there were any benefits of having the child in the markets because she wanted to make sure that it was clear that she did not want her child with her at work;

'You are confusing us by asking these questions [about benefits of bringing the child to work]. There are no benefits... it is not right because I am close to the road and water is far. I have to cross the road to fetch water, and you have to pay attention to the child and be able to see her at all times.' (Mother, Photovoice, over 1)

Child care in the work environment

The environment where the children were kept during working hours was described as unsuitable. Most mothers of younger children put them to sleep under the table where they were working, often in a cardboard box or a crate lined with blankets. Others described using plastic bags or sacks as padding for the child to lie on.

'My child sleeps. She sleeps in the crate. The crate has two blankets in it. I then cover her with a blanket so she can sleep. I then slip the crate under the table so that she is not exposed to a lot of wind. It is windy this side. Others are surprised that you put the child in a

box. However, it helps the child because she is not exposed to a lot of wind. You just slip the crate under the table and cover it with a blanket so she can sleep.' (Mother, Support system activity, group2, over1)

'My child sleeps in a sack. I borrow one of the trolleys that they use to move our stock and build a house out of them so they can play on the other side but I make sure that it is this side and that it is tied up because sometimes it can get windy while I am busy with a customer. So we use the trolley and the sack to make the bed.' (Mother, Support system activity, group1, over1)



Figure 3: 'This is where the baby sleeps' (Mother, under 1)

Some mothers of older children had baby walkers in which they placed their babies and then tied the walker to their trading table so that the child could not move far away from them.

'We put her in a baby walker and tie it so that she will not wander off to the road. There are steel bars that we tie the baby walker to. We use a rope so that she will not be able to reach the road.' (Mother, Support Systems activity, group2, under1)



Figure 4: 'I put the baby in this walker when I am working' (mother, under1)

Many of the mothers were concerned about the cleanliness of the areas where their children played and slept and were concerned that children would pick up and eat food and other items from bins or the floor.

Mothers who were breastfeeding had specific challenges related to breastfeeding in a public space, and most mothers said that they breastfed out of sight of customers and passers-by. Mothers whose work entailed cooking food, were unable to breastfeed in the workplace at all because their customers would refuse to buy from them. However, informally working mothers who were not trading in cooked food said that their customers were understanding and therefore they were able to breastfeed at their workplace as long as they covered their breast.

'The problem with breastfeeding and serving customers is that you either have to cover the breast and serve the customer or you have understanding customers, as Mother3 has said, they do not mind that you are breastfeeding. Some even play with the child while you are serving them. However, there are some customers that are rude.' (Mother, Timeline activity, group1, over1)

'I am not allowed to work with a child because I work as a cook. I do not touch it [the child] at all. I also do not breastfeed because if my customers were to see my breasts wet they would never buy that food.'(Mother, Timeline activity, group1, under1)

A number of mothers mentioned that there was no shelter from rain or heat for themselves or for their children. One mother mentioned that she does not go to work in rainy weather, as she cannot sit with her child in the rain.

'when it is raining I cannot go to work. I stay at home with the child because where we work from, the rain reaches us.' (Mother, Support System activity, group1, over 1)

'We do face challenges. The places that we sell from do not have shelter. We carry children on our back. They get burnt by the sun. They get hit by the rain. The children get sunburnt a lot. Those are the challenges that we face, that we do not know how we are going to solve.' (Mother, Timeline activity, group1, under 1)

The work environment is hazardous

To emphasise their reluctance to bring their children to the markets, mothers raised extensive and serious concerns about the challenges and dangers of keeping a child in the market environment. Some of the key issues that were mentioned included safety in the workplace, with mothers citing a variety of different risks including the possibility of children getting lost or abducted, busy adjacent roads where the children could be injured, exposure to diseases from ill customers and exposure to serious violence on the street.

'Some people pass by and maybe offer children a piece of cake. A child will take that cake and put it in his mouth. Other people give children anything, even something that the child does not eat. You will see the child having a runny tummy, you do not know what the child ate. You will see the child chewing, only to find that it has eaten something. A vagrant will come by and offer a child something, maybe a rotten apple. The vagrant will see a rotten apple, pick it up, wipe it and give it to a child. (Mother, Support System activity, Group2, over1)

In addition, some of the mothers suggested that children learn bad habits and are exposed to bad language and drinking of alcohol. They relayed stories of children stealing from other stall holders at a very young age (case study 1) and eating out of rubbish bins or off the floor

It was clear that older children as well as very young children were able to wander around the market and interact with customers and passers-by unsupervised, putting them at risk in a variety of different ways (Case Study 2). Several examples of such situations were described.

'When you get here there are people that are passing by. Some are knocking your child down, others are pulling her and your child might get lost. There is one lady that I used to work with. Her child was found at the [name] police station. When she got there, the police swore at her and people beat her up. But she could not have tied her child to a table.' (Mother, Support system activity, group2, over1)

'There is another lady whose child was stolen. I do not know how it happened, or whether the child got lost or it went with people, but they found her near [place] and when they took her to the doctor it was established that she had been raped. So, she took her and sent her home. It is risky to wake up and come to work with children. (Mother, Support system activity, group2, over 1)

'It is worse now. It was better when he was younger because you just put him to sleep and when you hear that he has woken up, you go and feed him and then he goes back to sleep and you just keep turning him over from side to side. Now that he is older he just wakes up, and find that he is no longer sleeping where you had prepared a bed for him, and now you have to look for him, wondering where he went to.' (Mother, Photovoice, group1)

'My child got lost once. I put her in the sack when I arrived in the morning and when I turned my back to check on her the child was no longer in the sack. Only her blanket was left. I went crazy. I was told that she crawled down the stairs and there is a woman that picked her up and went around asking who she belonged to. We found her there by Chicken Licken (fast food outlet).' (Mother, Timeline activity, group1, over1)

CASE STUDY 1: Poor supervision and learning bad habits (support system activity, group2, over1)

- I: Ok, Mother number 2 and 3 you spoke about your children going to the shops with a bag and taking chips from the shops. How does that make you feel, to have young children taking things from the shop?
- M3: It upsets us. It is just that children now steal at a very young age. Mine is 1 year and 5 months. It is this one [M2's child] that is teaching my innocent child [laughter]. It is her child that wanders off the most while carrying a bag.
- M2: The [shop owners] put the chips by the door. So the child just puts his hand through and pull. It is easy for the child to take something and put it in a bag because this thing is put on the floor by the entrance.
- M2: However, if they [shop owners] saw them they stop them and warn them. If they did not see them we just see the children coming back with chips, eating chips.
- I: What do you do when they come back eating chips when you know you did not buy them, because you know what they get up to?
- M2: You do not worry about where they got the chips from because there are many people that buy chips for these children. Maybe you just think someone bought the chips for them. There is a driver that usually picks up my child and goes with him to Boxer [shop]. My child comes back with chips and juice. So you will never know for sure. Other people buy him a sucker. Maybe at the shop where he was stealing you find that he will take 20 cents from the container and come back with chips that cost R3. That is why you end up not knowing for sure.
- M2: [if] he steals.
- I: How old is your child Mother number 2?
- M2: He is 2 years and 2 months.

Case study 2: children wander off (Timeline activity, group2, over1)

M5: you see child that is used to being around a lot of people gets used to people easily. They are not afraid, let me say that. He is not scared. So you do worry that because he is in the street everyone will greet him and he will feel like he knows that person and may end up following him.

M5: You stay put for a little while and when you do not see him you go to check on him, both the girl and the boy are not around, and then we start wandering around the market looking for them. Maybe we will find them inside the market. Maybe they left with other people and are now at the market with other people, or maybe they turned by the taxis that go to [place] this side and sit there. There is another boy that repairs shoes here, there are drivers here as well. Maybe they are sitting with the drivers. So you do realise that your child is not safe here because one moment you think he is here only to find that he is not.

M6: There has been an incident with one of the mothers here whose child was younger than ours. At least if you ask our children where their mother is they will be able to lead you to us. I do not know how old that child was but he was younger that our children. The child came to my table. "Hello boy." Everything was fine. The boy was playing nearby and we thought he would not go anywhere since there was another little girl around. We ended up having to look for that child from morning and he only showed up in the afternoon.

We work at the bottom part of the market, but the child showed after these two ladies had gone out [to look for him]. We heard that he had been found on the other side at [place]. What was a little child doing there? So we did not think that he went by himself that side. Maybe he followed a girl or maybe he was playing with other children and ended up getting lost. We just assumed that maybe someone was trying to steal him and maybe they got scared and decided to dump him there. We had been looking for him for a long time and his mother had even called the police.

M4: The whole day.

M6: We were looking for him the whole day. His mother was called when she was at the police station and the people that had the child said they were taking him to the police. They had been enquiring about the child but they could not find his mother. She had already gone to the police station.

I: So, if the children wander off, do they cross the road?

M4: Sometimes they do. Sometimes they do cross the road.

M5: We work near the road. Sometimes they do cross it because sometimes when a child crosses the road you would not think that they are by themselves. You would assume that they are with someone, only to find that the child is walking by himself and does not know where she is going.

M6: The child ends up getting lost. You will then search all over for her. You will start being called an irresponsible mother that loses her child, whereas you did not intentionally lose the child. Maybe the child followed other children to play.

Co-workers provide support

Most of the mothers described that their co-workers were very helpful. Examples of how co-workers assist the mothers included workers at neighbouring stalls holding their babies if the mothers needed to get additional stock, attend to a customer or go to the toilet. Other co-workers watched over the children and played a strong role in ensuring that the children did not wander off or get hurt. Co-workers helped out at times of crisis and mothers described a strong supportive environment in the workplace.

'If the child is crying and we do not know why she is crying, [co-worker from a neighbouring stall] buys her chips and a banana. He also sells next to us. [Co-worker] prevents the child from crossing the road because the child can now walk on her own. Sometimes she wanders off on her own and goes to the veranda. [Co-worker] always stops her from crossing the road.' (Mother, Support system activity, group2, over1)

'[Co-worker] helps by taking the child and soothing her if he sees that I am busy with customers and the child is agitated and crying. If he does not take the child and soothe her he says I must step aside and care for the child while he serves the customers for me.' (Mother, Support system activity, group2, over 1)

'If, let me say, the child suddenly comes down with flu while I am here at work, and I have not yet sold anything from my stall. The first person that helps me out is her [co-worker]. She will say "I have made a lot of money already, go and buy medicine for the child there", so that she can feed the child and then give her medicine. That is why I am saying [co-worker] is the first person that can help me.' (Mother, Support systems activity, group1, over1)

Mothers described strong ties between traders. In some cases the mothers and co-workers were neighbours in their home environments. Here a mother describes how her co-worker takes the child home if it is raining.

'She [co-worker] helps me by taking the child with her if it is raining because she usually goes home early. She is my neighbour where we live. She takes the child, puts her on her back and leaves. They wait in her house until the child's father arrives. She then gives the child to her father.' (Mother, Support system activity, group 1, over 1)

A number of mothers described coming to the markets themselves as children and now repeating that cycle by bringing their own children to the markets. Family businesses in the markets are sometimes passed from generation to generation, and many mothers mentioned that other family

members were also working in the markets. This provides a strong support system for the mothers who bring their children to work, as family members were able to care for the child when required, or if they worked in a quieter or more sheltered area. In a number of cases older children were able to look after the younger children, as was the father of the child if he also worked in the markets.

'This is my mother. She is the person that I work with. She sits right next to me. She helps me out with everything and also looks after my stall if there is something. [My sister] takes my child and sits with her. My sister keeps my child with her and she sleeps with her because they are selling inside the market. There is no shelter where I sell from. [name] is the child's father. He also takes my child and plays with her.' (Mother, Support system activity, group2, over 1)

'My granny helps the most, like, if I have a lot of customers she comes to take the child and watches her, or [another co-worker name] comes over to help me if I am selling...

Our stalls are facing each other directly. She has her own stall as well. We are separated by the passage that people walk through' (Mother, Support system activity, group1, over 1).

'Ok. I will start with [older child's name]....She helps me a lot with the baby, like on weekends she does not even go to the library. She sits here at the stall and watches her sister.'

(Mother, Support system activity, group1, over1)

Mothers also frequently mentioned that male colleagues in the markets were very helpful in assisting them with heavy lifting and carrying of stock, and helping to set up their stalls in the morning. Most mothers pay a weekly fee to store their stock in a storage area over night. Trolley operators assist traders by bringing the trolleys containing their stock to their trading site in the morning for a small fee. Some of the trolley operators go out of their way to assist the mothers; several mothers described instances of arriving at their stall to find that their goods had already been taken out and arranged on their table.

'The person that helps me a lot is the trolley boy [trolley operator]. Sometimes when I arrive at 06h00 a.m. in the morning I find him waiting for me and he pushes my trolley. Maybe I will wake up in the morning and go to where I sell at around 04h00 a.m. at [place]. When I get there I find the boy already waiting for me. I then pull out my blanket and cover the child. I then go to sell at [place]. When I come back again, he will pull the trolley for me and take it to where I sell from during the day. That boy helps me a lot because even when it is raining,

he rushes from wherever he is from to come and help me to close my stall and take my stock to where it is kept.' (Mother, Support system activity, group1, under1)

'[name] is the one that takes the trolleys out of the storeroom. He takes them out every morning and also takes out the boards, tables and the boards that we lay on the ground, lay them down for me and then I come and display my stock. When it is time to go home in the evening he comes back and pack the boards for me. He also helps by taking out other trolleys that are kept in my family's storeroom. That is my job actually, setting up the trolleys. However, he feels sorry for me and he does sets up the trolleys for me because they are heavy. He is a male person. I am a female.'(Mother, Support system activity, group1, over1)

Although most mothers described their co-workers as helpful, some mothers acknowledged that co-workers had to put their own work first, and a few mentioned that co-workers tried to steal their customers while they were busy with their children.

'They [co-workers] help me out occasionally when they feel like it because they also have their work that they do. If they are selling to their customer, and they see that I also have a customer, they will not attend to my customer. So they help out occasionally. (Mother, Support system activity, group2, under1)

Some mothers mentioned that some co-workers were not supportive of them bringing their children to the markets. Co-workers and market stakeholders frequently warned mothers that they should not bring their children to such a dangerous area and that children running around in the markets caused disruption. Sometimes children would interfere with other stalls and even steal goods which made other stall holders angry with the mothers for not supervising their children adequately.

'So what they [co-workers] said to me was "My sister, do you realize that the children are not safe here because they may get sick or get sun burnt, the rain, etc?" The children are also at risk because I work very close to the road...If there were to be a car accident and I was not paying attention, my children could be in danger. They warned me about those dangers.'

(Mother, Support system activity, group1, under 1)

Hygiene and sanitation/ access to water and toilets

Another major concern that was voiced by almost every mother was related to poor hygiene and sanitation in their working environment.

Most mothers complained about the unhygienic condition of the toilets which they and their children had to use. Toilets were often situated far away from mothers' trading places, or the ones close to them were too dirty to use, so they had to leave their tables and take their children to other parts of the market or across a busy road in order to access the facilities. In addition, the toilets often closed early, before mothers finished work in the afternoon. In some cases several toilets in the block were locked and reserved for the use of particular people at the market, reducing the number of toilets available, which meant that that mothers were forced to queue.

'The toilets are always dirty plus there are some that are always locked. I do not know why they are locked. They have their owners. We do not know what kind of people are allowed access to them. Even when you ask for the key you will not get it. But you find that they go in. They have a key and their own toilet. So the rest of us will go to that dirty thing and their toilets are always clean.' (Mother, Support system activity, group1, over1)

'I use the toilets that are there at the top. If those are also closed or if they are open but too dirty and maybe there is a burst pipe, I do not use them. I use the toilets at the bus rank instead.' (Mother, Support system activity, group2, under1)

'Sometimes a woman would volunteer to clean the toilet, and then she will stand by the door way and demand R2 from each person that comes in. If I am pregnant, I go to urinate about 10 times in a day. It means I will give her R20, and no one will tell her to stop charging because why, she went and cleaned the toilets herself when they were dirty.' (Mother 2, Support system activity, group1, over1)

A number of mothers explained that they were able to use toilets in local restaurants or bars, but this required negotiations with staff at these establishments, and was often only possible at busy times when staff did not notice who was coming and going. In some cases mothers mentioned that fast food outlets only allowed them to use the toilets if they were a customer, so they were forced to buy something in order to use the toilet.

'It helps if you talk to someone [at fast food outlet] and tell them that you have a problem.

Some people do not understand. We are different as people. Another person will tell you to
go use a public toilet. The public toilets are far from where we are. If you want to use a toilet,

you have to keep buying KFC. Do you understand? Maybe you will buy ice cream. So that means that you will have to keep eating ice cream. That is what is upsetting us.' (Mother, Support system activity, group1, under1)



Figure 5: 'This is where I have to walk to go to the toilet with my baby' (mother, under 1)



Figure 6: 'This is where I get water to wash hands and to drink' (Mother, under1)

Drinking water was usually only available from the toilets as there were no public taps, and the toilets were often closed in the afternoon. Several mothers stated that they had to get drinking water from the toilet.

I: Mm, ok. Is there running water in the toilets?

M4: There are toilets at [taxi] Rank. Water is also available inside the toilets. There are no taps but there is water inside the toilets.

I: Ok, do all of you get drinking water from the toilet?

Group: Yes

(Mother, Support systems activity, group2, under1)



Figure 7: 'This is where I get water' (Mother, over1)

Another option for getting drinking water was for mothers to approach local businesses to ask for their water containers to be filled but this was not always possible and was dependent on the goodwill of the person. Some mothers described sending their children to shops or restaurants to get water. When they were unable to get water for free from local businesses mothers were forced to buy water.

'I buy water. I buy it for R5 so she can drink because there is no clean water where we fetch it from. We get our water from the toilets. I do not want to make my child drink water from the toilet. So I buy her the (drinking) water for R5, and thereafter she goes to Ma [name] to ask for water. I fetch water to wash my hands or wipe her or do anything. I use the water from the toilet.' (Mother 5, Support system activity, group2, over 1)

'I do not buy water at the cemetery. We just walk in [to the cemetary] and go to fetch the water. There is a tap inside, between the graves. We walk in and get water from there and come back with it for free.' (Mother 4, Support system, group2, over 1)

The mother of a two year old child described how her child fetched water for them;

'My child arrives with a 2 litre container and gives it to the lady that works there [the shop] and she goes and fetches the water for her. They know that if she is carrying a 2 litre container she needs water. So they fetch the water for her and she takes it. She carries the water back to me.' (Mother 2, Support system activity, group 2, over1)

In particular, changing nappies (diapers) was a major concern for the mothers because this was not acceptable to do in front of customers and had to be hidden from view, and also because it required water to wash the baby. Mothers described different ways of keeping nappy changing out of sight, some going to another area or changing the baby under the table.

'I am uncomfortable with changing the child in the open. I usually change her in a cardboard [box]. I have to go KFC [fast food outlet] with a container and ask for water. They do not have a problem if you choose to change your child on their premises. However, it is up to you where you like to change your child.' (Mother 2, Support system, group2, under1)

'There is space under the table. I first place cardboard pieces so that it will be a bit soft and then lay a blanket over them. It is a covered space. No one from the outside can see that I am doing something. I then change her.' (Mother, Timeline activity, group1 under1)

'We do not have place where we can change children. We do have tiny sponges that we sit on that we use to change on. We use these blankets, our stock and their things for cover. When you change her, you have to try and make it discreet so that the people that are passing by will not see. We do have a toilet but it does not have facilities to change children.' (Mother 1, Support system activity, group2, under1)

Disposal of nappies was a problem for some mothers. Nappies were usually placed in bags and then in the refuse bins but in some areas of the markets mothers commented that there were often nappies lying around. One mother even mentioned that there was nowhere to put the soiled nappies so she took them home with her.

'I change my child right here at the market. I take a cardboard box, put a blanket over it and change the child. I then take the used nappy and put it in my bag and take it home with me.'

(Mother, Support system activity, group1, under1)



Figure 8: 'This is where I change my child and where she sleeps' (Mother, under 1)

Acceptability of having the child in the work environment

Mothers said that they were often made to feel, by both customers and co-workers, that it was not acceptable to have their children at work with them. Several mothers described how they arrange their table to make sure that the child cannot be seen by passers-by. Mothers of older children were unable to supervise their children properly, and at times other traders or customers became annoyed if the children were running around unsupervised.

'But so is our work environment [a problem] especially in the morning because if your child touches this person's stuff, they will shout the whole of Berea about people that are giving birth to children and not doing family planning' (Mother, Photo voice 1, over 1).

'If my child stood up and stepped on the area of my colleagues just a little bit, or maybe touch their stock, they get upset and shout at me and the child, and ask why I am not holding the child or leave the child at home.' (Mother 2, Support system activity, group 2 under 1)

Other mothers reported that it was culturally unacceptable for children to be in the markets and that they had to hide the children for this reason. Several mothers mentioned that they had been told that bringing children to the markets was not allowed by the municipality.

'The municipality does not want children here at the market. I used to bring my 3 year old child here when she was still at crèche. I used to fetch her from crèche at 15h30 p.m. so she had to stay here with me for a bit before we went home. She knew very well that she was not wanted here. She would say "I do not want to come there at the market because the uncles do not want children at the market." Children are not needed at the market.' (Mother, Support system activity, group1, under 1)

'At the market generally. It is the municipality's by-law. All markets including the early morning market. Children should not be at work. There are reasons for that. The person that explained to us where we work from is a manager at the municipality. He told us that it is not safe here. Sometimes you see people chasing each other, maybe a vagrant is being chased by the police and they are shooting, but there are children here. The child is at risk of getting injured when she is at the market. So it is not allowed to have children at the market. Besides it being dusty, children are just not allowed here.' (Mother 3, Support system activity, group2, under1)

Transport to and from Warwick Junction was also a problem for some mothers; young children had to sit on their mother's lap in a minibus taxi or they have to pay the fare. This made transport very uncomfortable and if the babies were restless, other passengers became annoyed. Mothers expressed that travelling to work was very stressful.

'It is difficult because other people give you the attitude but you just persevere and hold your baby. When I hold her I make sure that she is facing where there are no people. I prefer to be the first passenger in a taxi so that she will not irritate other people in the taxi.' (Mother Timeline activity, group2, under1)

Challenge of working while caring for a child

Many mothers said that working with their children was distracting and they often had to stop what they were doing with their children in order to attend to customers. This sometimes led to customers going elsewhere and buying from another stall. Mothers expressed that when there was a conflict between work and the care of their children they had to put work first because without money they could not care for themselves or for their children. Mothers expressed that the environment in the markets has become increasingly competitive in recent years with many traders vying for business, and if they were to earn money to eat, pay for transport and support their children then they often had to work very long hours. In the following quote, a mother describes why she prioritises serving customers over caring for her child:

'Another thing is that I do not want to care for her more than I care for money, because I love money a lot, because I use it to raise her and to buy bread for me to eat later. As much as I love her and as much as I care for her but she will never be more important than money. Money is more important so that we can be able to go to bed with full stomachs. I rather not pay attention to my child because I know that after the customer has left I will pay attention to her again. Serving the customer will only take a few minutes. I make sure that I get that money because I will feel sad when I see the money going to someone else....That is what I do. I prioritise the customer. (Mother, Timeline activity, group 1, over 1)

Mothers were asked how they would cope if the child became sick and there was a conflict between caring for a sick child and continuing to work. Some mothers said that they would go to work and then leave to take the child to the clinic, or that they would get someone else to look after the stall.

'No matter how sick she gets I am forced to come to work. What I do is come in the morning and prepare the stall and wait for my neighbour and ask her to look after the stall for me while I go to the clinic if I do not have money to go to the doctor.' (Mother, Timeline activity, group1, over 1)

Other mothers mentioned that they put the child first; 'The baby comes first in everything. You ensure that everything is well with the baby.' Asked about situations when the child had to go to the clinic or was unwell most mothers said that they would not go to work and would prioritise the child's welfare.

'If you have to go to the clinic, maybe to vaccinate the baby, and I also have to go to work, I prioritise going to the clinic and not go to work because I do not have anyone that can go and work in my place and look after my stall.' (Mother, Timeline activity, group2, under1).

Role of market organisations and management structures

Many of the mothers mentioned that there were issues with the committees and organisations in the markets, where they perceived themselves as being disadvantaged because they were not considered important; 'it depends on who you are before the Committee can give you support'

One mother described being removed from her stall without notice or explanation, and many of the mothers accused those in leadership positions in the markets of favouritism and, in some cases, of corruption. Many of the women stated that they felt unable to make their voices heard; if they made complaints, the committee members often saw them as trouble makers and would refuse to help. Also, since most of the committee members were older than the mothers in this cohort, they felt that concerns of young people like themselves were not considered important and were not addressed.

'The problem with committee [members] is that they are devious and two-faced liars. They use preferential treatment. If a member feels that they do not like you, they do not mind lying about you and call other committee members and they decide that you must be suspended [from the market].' (Mother 5, Support system activity, group 2, over 1)

'Another thing is that even the committee is corrupt, a lot. They sell these places and they are the ones that tell municipal officials that. The municipal officials are just sitting there, they do not know anything. [Committee members] are the ones that tell them that so and so's stall is at a particular area and it is not being used. Therefore it must be reallocated. You must stand up for yourself and pursue this thing....They take bribes for people so they can allocate them the stalls.'(Mother, Photovoice, over 1)

Let us say you go and leave the Committees here and go and report to the municipality yourself. When you come back from there, they [municipality officials] will come back and tell the committees that you went to report an issue and so on, you reported that you are not comfortable at the market. When you are sitting here, you will be sitting with them, you end up back here, and then since you went to the municipality to report an issue you are now seen as a traitor. (Mother, Support system activity, group1, over1)

Some mothers mentioned that not being married counted against them because the older women in the market criticised them for having children out of wedlock. This also affected the influence that mothers had among the senior stakeholders and committee members as mothers felt that they were looked down upon for having a child without being married.

'It is considered shameful to fall pregnant and give birth at a young age. Most of the people that are in the committee are older people. I cannot go to them and complain about a child that I got out of wedlock. I do not even have a ring on my finger. I cannot go to them and expect them to sympathise for my child and I. They will say I am the one that went and... I do not want to use the language that they use, but that is what they say.' (Mother 3, Support system activity, group1, over 1)

Mothers' recommendations

Mothers in all groups suggested that there should be a childcare facility within the Warwick Junction markets, described by participants as a crèche, where their children could be cared for. This request was very specific and consistent across all groups. Requests included that the childcare facility should be very inexpensive or free, as they would be unable to pay, except for a small token amount. Further, they requested that the proposed childcare facility should be open for long hours to allow them to leave their children there for the duration of their working day, that it should be close to their workplace and that they should be allowed access to their children at any time. Mothers also requested that food be provided for the children during the day. Another request was that they would prefer to have older women looking after the children and that equipment be provided so that the children can learn while at the childcare facility.

'I wish the municipality could build us a crèche where we can go anytime to see our children, where there will be no restrictions to say because I saw my child at 11h00 I will not be able to see her at 13h00.' (Mother, Support system activity, group1, over1)

'There is equipment that we will need, such as jungle gyms, teachers that will teach our children, maybe have an open place where children can move freely and we can go and see them during certain times, and have equipment that will keep the children busy so that we can continue with our work.' (Mother 3, Support system activity, group1, over1)

'There should be permission to visit at all times. It could be built for traders that have children and it must be free. It must belong to the traders (Mother, support system activity, group1, over1).

'The boards could be placed in such a way that they create temporary shelter and maybe a carpet could be laid on the floor. Do you understand what I am explaining? The rest of the other stuff can then follow because it will be a process to have jungle gyms and so forth as that will require a bigger space.' (Mother, Support system activity, group1, over1)

'Maybe you could provide teachers that can look after our children during the day while we are working so that we can know that during a certain time our children are at a certain place. However, we must be able to see the place where they are being looked after. (Mother, Timeline activity, group1, over 1)

'Mm, so we could work nicely without worrying, knowing that the child is in a clean environment and I will pick her up when I go home. We also wake up very early because we know that we lose precious time changing the children and thus neglect our work.' (Mother, Timeline activity, group1, over1)

Further, mothers mentioned that since transport was difficult and costly it would help them to have accommodation, for example a hostel, close to their workplace.

'since we are traders here at the market, if government could build a place for us to stay so that we do not have to wake up and commute early in the morning, during the day and in evening. It would be just a hostel for traders. It would be great if we could have our own Market and street traders hostel. (Mother, Support system activity, group1, under1)

Some groups of mothers complained a lot about vagrants who stole from their stalls, made the area dirty and were considered a danger to the children. It was requested that these vagrants be removed to make the environment cleaner and safer. Shelter was another key area of concern where mothers felt that improvements could be made.

'If they could build proper shelter for us it would be better. We would also be grateful if they could build stalls for us because currently we put our stock on the ground. Some people come and point with their feet and jump over to the other side because our passages are small. They must build stalls with shelter for us' (Mother 2, Support system activity, group 2, under1).

Nothing beats shelter. If there could be shelter or even if it is a small space for the child. I do not know how it would pan out if one has more than one child. However, a place that can protect children from the sun, yeah. Out of all those things, a safe place where they can also

sleep and be warm in winter, be cool if is summer, a cool place. Shelter is fine.' (Mother, Support system activity, group1, under1)

Many mothers also mentioned that water taps and toilets should be built, along with baby changing stations, and that this would make it easier to care for the children safely in the markets. Access to electricity at the work site was also noted as something that would be helpful.

'what is difficult is that where we work there is no electricity, so you feed your child cold food or porridge for those that are fed porridge because there is nowhere to warm up the food. Even if you cook the porridge at home it will not stay warm the whole day. Sometimes when it is cold you wish your child could eat something warm. However, there is no electricity where we work. They had said that they would install it so that we can be able to make tea. They said that in 2010 but it was never done.' (Mother, Photovoice, under1)

'What we need the most, which could help us greatly, is water. If we could have water nearby, toilets nearby, that would change our lives for the better.' (Mother 3, Photo voice under 1)

'They must also build baby changing stations in toilets. I used to see when my mother was still having children, they had baby changing stations in the toilets. However, when they were building in 2010 they removed baby changing stations. If they could construct them, so that you can be able to put your child on it and change her, instead of changing your child out in the open in full view of other people' (Mother, Photo voice, under 1)

A day in the life: Case study 3 (Timeline activity, group1, under1)

I wake up at 04h30. I heat up my bathing water. I bath first. When I finish bathing I bath the child. It is either the child is awake or still sleeping. I wake her up and bath her or she wakes up when she is in the water. When I finish bathing her I breastfeed her and also make cerelac [commercial baby food] for her. She eats and then I wash her clothes and leave them hanging on the line. She is 2 months old. When I finish I then eat and then we then go to catch transport to come to the market.

When I get to the market I make a place for the child to sleep under the stall table. I then lay the wallpapers down and wait for customers. Once the customers have bought I go and order more wall paper. We order from Victoria Street. If I do not get them at Victoria Street I go to Dalton to get them from the factory. I then come back and display them and sit and wait, then people buy them. I then go and buy food. When I finish eating I breastfeed the child. We then sit until late.

At about 17h00, 17h30, I pick up the wallpapers that I was displaying and roll them up so that they can be taken to storage house and then we go to get transport to go home. When I get home I heat up water and bath the child. I then bath myself and cook. When I finish cooking, I eat. By this time I have already fed the child. I eat and then go to sleep.

Stakeholders' and customers' perspective of mothers caring for children in the market

We interviewed eight stakeholders - community leaders and co-workers from the markets - and four customers, to gain their perspective of mothers caring for children in the markets. Table 2 describes the role of the stakeholders who were interviewed. Overall, stakeholders and customers mirrored many of the concerns of the mothers with regard to appropriateness and safety of children in the workplace.

Table 3: Description of participating stakeholders and customers

Number	Gender	description	Role in the market	Location in market
Stakeholder	Female	Community leader	Trader leader and representative of	Early morning market
			second-hand clothing	
			traders	
Stakeholder	Female	Community leader	Trader leader	Bovine head market
Stakeholder	Male	Community	Trader committee	Brooke street station
		leader	chairperson	
Stakeholder	Male	Co-worker	Trader committee member	Brooke street station
Stakeholder	Male	Co-worker	Deputy chairperson	Brooke street station
Stakeholder	Female	Co-worker	Trader	Early morning market
Stakeholder	Female	Co-worker	Trader	Early morning market
Stakeholder	Female	Pre-school principal	-	Pre-school within the market
Customer	Male	Rank manager	Customer	
Customer	Female	Municipal street sweeper	Customer	
Customer	Male	Trader	Customer	
Customer	Male	Unemployed	Customer	

Acceptability of bringing the child to the work environment

All stakeholders and customers expressed disapproval of mothers bringing children to the workplace. They raised a number of different concerns including issues of safety, health, hygiene and access to toilets and water, which were mentioned as essential for feeding and childcare. Despite these concerns, most interviewees were very sympathetic towards mothers who bring children to the workplace, noting that mothers often have no options of childcare other than to work with their children.

"I do not feel good about it but I understand that money is scarce. If there was money children would not be coming here where their mothers work. Maybe they would be cared for at a day care, but the economy is bad. However, personally I do not like it" (Stakeholder 7, co-worker).

However, some of the customers were very adamant that mothers should not bring their children to the workplace. They suggested that the mothers should stay at home and hire someone to look after their businesses and then return to work when their children are older.

"I do not support that view of mothers coming to work with children. Let us say we are not street traders, maybe we work for a company, are you saying that I will be carrying a child on my back and go work with it at the company? A person must choose one thing between working and raising a child. When the child is older they must choose one thing, at least hire someone to look after her stall if she still wants to care for her child. When the child is older, they must then return to work. There is no need for her to bring the child here at work. That is not needed. I do not support it" (Customer 3).

Cultural norms played a role in determining when mothers should return to work after giving birth, especially in cases where most of the customers were men. Culturally, it is believed that women should observe physical distance from men and refrain from using anything that men use for a certain period after a child's birth. One of the customers said that he asked the informal worker who he buys food from, to stay at home for 6 months after giving birth.

'...she brought her child to work and we told her that no, she cannot do that especially since she had just returned from giving birth. That is where we started. As someone that had just given birth, we asked her to stay at home with her child and find a crèche for the child or someone that will look after the child, and then come back to work...A woman that has recently given birth does not come close to anything that is used by men, especially because anyone can use the stall table' (Customer 1).

Safety in the work environment

The work environment was described by community leaders, co-workers and customers as being a dangerous, unsafe and unhygienic place for infant feeding and childcare.

'There are many dangerous things that we work with here at the Market. So as you can see the mother just left here is carrying her child in her back. If she puts her child down to play, here is the first thing that is dangerous, this piece of cable. This cable helps me to light up here but at the same time what does it do to the mother of the child? It hurts her. Leaving her child at home while she comes to work is also problematic because she is always worried about the child and cannot work properly' (Stakeholder 5, co-worker).

Customers expressed concerns about children's wellbeing, stating that the work environment is exposed to sun and cold weather, and it is dirty which could have an effect on the children's health.

'It is difficult because the weather here is hot and cold. They come with children to this unhygienic environment. The children catch all the germs that are here and they get sick easily. You see some of them having measles and so on. It is not a good thing to see a mother leave her house with her child to come and stand here at the street and sell with the child' (Customer 2).

Some community leaders also mentioned that there is limited access to water and toilets in the workplace. Traders and mothers often struggle to access water and toilets while they are at work.

'We use the toilets at the market. If the market toilets are closed and we are pressed, we use the toilets at the ranks. The rank toilets are for public use. We do not have toilets that are designated specifically for us as trader' (Stakeholder 2, community leader).

Some co-workers and customers were concerned about the language used in the workplace. Street traders and people within the markets speak freely and children quickly pick up bad habits. This was another reason that stakeholders considered the environment to be not conducive for childcare.

"The problem here is that the environment is not good. Other people use swear words and the child grasps that, you understand. When people are swearing at each other, you hear the child repeating what they were saying. That is where the problem is, the language" (Stakeholder 6, co-worker).

Several co-workers and stakeholders mentioned that drunkenness is a problem in the informal work environment. One stakeholder mentioned that mothers were sometimes drunk while at work and therefore neglected the children.

'The worst part of this is that these young women drink alcohol. When she is drunk the child gets dropped! You know what a drunk person looks like. She goes back home with the child in the evening, maybe the child is exposed to cold air because the mother is drunk and has not put sufficiently warm clothes on the child because she doesn't care about anything else. She is drunk.' (Stakeholder 2)

The absence of police services within the markets was also another area of concern for stakeholders, perpetuating the issue of a lack of safety and security within the workplace. One of the community leaders mentioned that the police station is situated far from the traders' stalls, making it difficult to access police services in cases of emergencies.

"Let us talk about a police station. Should there not be a satellite police station here? Our police station is there at the top! Let us say my child has been stolen. Maybe I come to work with my child and while I was busy working, someone came and stole her. I have to go from here, go right round and go there, can you see there? You are still going to walk around here anyway. The police station door is over there!" (Stakeholder 2, community leader).

Access to health services

Some community leaders and co-workers mentioned that access to healthcare services within the work environment was another area of concern. One of the community leaders mentioned that mothers working as street traders had no access to healthcare facilities within the workplace. This affected their work because mothers were sent back to their local clinics to receive childcare services, forcing them to miss a day of work in order to take care of their children.

"There is no clinic that caters for informal traders. The clinic that is here requires that you have an address when you want to use it. So I come from [place]. Others come from [place] and others from different areas" (Stakeholder 2, Community leader).

"It is painful because they cannot even go to the clinic. It is difficult to close your stall so you can take you child to the clinic. You just persevere because you need money. This is where you get money from. There is no other place that you can get money from. That is the problem that I have seen them facing" (Stakeholder 4, co-worker).

One stakeholder suggested that mobile clinic services could be provided in the markets;

'We must also have a mobile clinic so that these children can be cared for and ensure that they are vaccinated.' (Stakeholder 2)

Balancing work and childcare

Community leaders and co-workers felt that mothers often struggled with balancing work and childcare and suggested that mothers prioritised money in situations where work and childcare clashed. Money was highlighted as something that was very important for taking care of the children.

'When the child is still feeding because it is not easy to let a customer go just because she is still feeding her child. It is better to interrupt the feeding and attend to a customer' (Stakeholder 3, Community leader).

Community leaders and co-workers believed that during periods of conflict between work and childcare, co-workers played a pivotal role in helping mothers to balance the two.

"We just help where we can, maybe if I see that she is pressed, I take the child and hold her while I am also selling this side. If I see that I am also busy I call someone else to hold the child" (Stakeholder 7, co-worker).

Customers felt that mothers could not maintain hygienic working conditions if they were working with their children. In some cases, customers would stop buying from mothers working with their children, particularly when the mothers were cooking and selling food.

'To be honest it is not safe to work with children especially if you are working with food. The first thing is hygiene. It is difficult to ensure hygiene when you have a child because most of the time is doing something that is not right. In the end I resolve to not buy food from that person because it is unhygienic' (Customer 1).

Some customers felt that it was impossible for the mothers to balance work and childcare responsibilities. They raised concerns around the children getting injured while the mother was busy attending to customers.

"I think there is no time to care for a child here because sometimes I shout from here and ask for food and the mother gets up and leaves her child. The child could fall over and fall into a pot or on the stove. Is there no danger there? It is such things." (Customer 1)

Stakeholder and customer recommendations

The majority of community leaders and co-workers mentioned that children need to be cared for in a safe environment that can be easily accessed the mothers. All community leaders and co-workers, and some customers recommended that a childcare facility or pre-school catering to informal workers' childcare needs should be made available to mothers working within the markets of Warwick Junction.

"We would like to have a place where they can keep their children. Their children are still young so there must be a place like a crèche where the mothers can send their children. They must be charged a small fee because here there is not as much money as there used to be.

We hardly earn decent money" (Stakeholder 1, Community leader).

One of the stakeholders mentioned that there is a pre-school situated within the Warwick Junction area but it only caters for children between 3 and 5 years old and only has space to accommodate a small proportion of informal worker's children.

"So to answer your question a little bit more specifically I would say, maybe, 70% of my children are children of informal street traders" (Stakeholder 8, Pre-School principal).

One of the stakeholders mentioned that the pre-school was not affordable for many informal workers.

"There is another crèche over there called [name]. We went there to look for space for one of the children. The crèche wants you to have a payslip and a bank account. I do not bank my money... You see the way I work is not the same as a person who works for the municipality; it is not the same as a teacher. The teacher receives a lump sum of money and she takes it to different departments. Sometimes, I even struggle to pay the premiums for my policy" (Stakeholder 2, Community leader).

Customers presented different views and recommendations regarding mothers bringing children into the workplace. Some customers supported the idea of having a childcare facility within the

Warwick Junction markets, highlighting that children should spend time with other children of same age group.

"A child is supposed to stay at crèche and learn together with other children and get used to being with other children. That is what I have observed. What does a child learn in the street? All the child does is move from this stall to the next and wander directionless on the street. The child does not learn anything here. It is better if it gets used to being with other children at crèche" (Customer 2).

Other customers believed that some mothers have made a choice to work with their children, highlighting that they believed that some mothers do in fact make enough money to afford childcare services. They suggested that there should be a law to prohibit mothers from bringing children to the workplace.

"What can be done is to enforce the law straight. A person that comes with their child must not be permitted" (Customer 3).

The community leaders were asked about role they could play in establishing a childcare facility within the Warwick Junction area. The majority of community leaders spoke about contributing blankets and mattresses, preparing food for the children and even mobilising other women within the market to assist in the running of the childcare facility.

"The role that I could play if we were given this building to look after children in is that I would cook healthy porridge and give it to the mothers of children. That would be my donation. I would buy 5kg maize meal, and if there are 10 children I would buy 10kg so they can feed the children. I will also play a role in recruiting the young people who are going to go get trained in childcare" (Stakeholder 2, community leader).

Case study 4: A community leader story (stakeholder 1)

- I1: Is there a mother who works near your table who comes to work with a child?
- SH1: Yes, there is. However, she is not here today. Here is her table.
- I1: What was it like as she was working with her child?
- SH1: The child runs all over the place and sometimes gets lost. She would then stop selling to go look for her child.
- I1: How does it make you feel to see mothers working with their children here?
- SH1: It troubles me because they are also in need of money to feed their children.
- I1: Since you say you used to work with her, you saw everything that she did, how did she balance working and caring for her child?
- SH1: She would put the child down under the stall table and put her inside a cardboard box, and then she would set up her stall and trade.
- 11: Was she not getting interrupted when she had to attend to customers and her child?
- SH1: She used to get interrupted. She [the baby] has grown now. She is about 3 years old.
- I1: How old was the child when she started coming here?
- SH1: She was newly born.
- I1: Newly born?
- I1: Is there anything here at work that was assisting the mother to be able to care for her child?
- SH1: No, there is nothing, except the stall table.
- I1: Ok, and then what did she feed her child breast milk or formula?
- SH1: She was breastfeeding her.
- I1: What would she do when she had to breastfeed her child?
- SH1: She would sit down and breastfeed her.
- I1: Right where she was trading from, at her stall?
- SH1: Yes, and if a customer came, she would stop breastfeeding and attend to the customer.
- I1: Seeing that, how did you feel?
- SH1: It did not sit well with me, but there is nothing that I could do about it because I could see that she was struggling financially. We need money. We would not come here if we did not struggle financially.
- 11: Do you, as women that trade next to mothers who come with their children, offer these women any kind of support so that they can be able to work and take care for their children?
- SH1: The girls who sat next to her used help her and hold the child for her. The child has grown and is now 3 years old.
- I1: In your opinion, is there anything positive about mothers coming to work with their children?
- SH1: I did not think it was good but there was nothing she could have done [differently] because she was struggling financially.... I would even ask her if there is not anybody that can look after the child for her since it was very cold. She would ask me "With what would I pay that person because there is no more money?"
- SH1: Trading is not as profitable as it was before. There are too many traders now. In the past we did not have any problem. I used to trade here with my first born child that was born in 1976. I used to trade with her here. I traded with all 5 of my children. Money was good back then.

Summary of key findings



Work environment factors

Unsafe workplace, security issues, children getting lost, violence, traffic.

Limited access to water and/or toilet facilities

Unhygienic conditions – rubbish which children pick up and eat

Congested and overcrowded, children get knocked over

Children often unsupervised

Lack of infrastructure –including stalls and shade

Hazardous and dangerous environment, heat (sunburn), rain, wind and dust

Antisocial behaviour influences including drugs, vagrants, bad language, children stealing



Mothers' challenges

Limited choice for child care due to low income which forces mothers to take the child to work

Difficulty balancing childcare and work during the working day

Spaces where children are cared for inadequate and unsafe

Competition with other traders means mothers have to work long hours

Hostility towards mothers by other traders and customers

Cultural barriers to having children in the workplace and in contact with male customers and co-workers

Socio-cultural norm affecting childcare (changing children out of sight) and infant feeding (breastfeeding)



Coping strategies

Colleagues/co-workers assist mothers with childcare when mother is busy

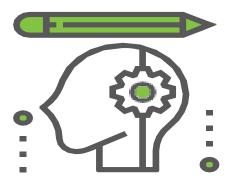
Trolley boys are very helpful and supportive

Family networks/friends play a significant role in supporting mothers

Male co-workers help with heavy jobs

Some businesses assist by providing water or use of toilets

Summary of recommendations



Mothers, stakeholders and co-workers all provided similar recommendations. The most common and universal request from almost all participants was for the provision of a childcare facility in the workplace. There were a number of requirements for the childcare facility that were requested as follows:

- Free or very inexpensive
- Open for extended hours
- Mothers allowed access at any time
- Food provided for the children
- Jungle gyms
- Play areas
- Teachers
- Older women in market to assist with caring for the children
- Pre-school for older children aged 3 to 5 years

Other recommendations and suggestions mentioned included the following:

- 1. Taps with running water should be made freely available
- 2. Toilets should be available, clean and accessible at all times
- 3. Nappy changing areas should be provided
- 4. Mothers should have access to electricity so that children can have warm food during the day
- 5. Mothers should be provided with accommodation that is close to the markets
- 6. Vagrants are a hazard and should be removed from the market areas

- 7. Market traders should be provided with shelter to protect mothers and children from the rain and the sun
- 8. Stalls should be provided for those who display stock on the ground
- 9. Mobile clinics should be provided in the markets

Conclusion

The findings of this study paint a picture of informally working mothers in the markets of Warwick Junction in Durban who care for their children in their work environment because they feel that they have no other feasible options for childcare. The mothers believed that the other childcare options were too expensive, provided poor quality care and had operating hours that were unsuitable for informal workers who usually work longer hours than formal workers. Currently children in the markets of Warwick Junction are being cared for in an environment that is not conducive to the health and wellbeing of these children and their mothers and exposes children to risk of severe illness or injury or even death. Mothers describe that the need to earn money to cover their living costs and support their families often overrides the immediate responsibility of caring for and supervising their children during working hours.

Access to basic services was a key challenge expressed by mothers caring for children in the markets. Poor toilet facilities, lack of access to drinking water and lack of nappy changing facilities were some of the mothers' major concerns. In many cases mothers had to either walk long distances to find facilities or beg to be allowed to use facilities at local shops and fast food outlets. Another major challenge for mothers who bring their children to work was that breastfeeding was often deemed unacceptable and had to be hidden from passers-by. Breastfeeding is crucial for the health and development of all children, but particularly for children of low-income mothers where appropriate, nutritious alternatives are likely to be unaffordable.

However, we also found that the markets provide a community setting that frequently supports mothers in caring for their children, with co-workers providing many different types of assistance to mothers to care for their children. Mothers describe how their co-workers help them care for the children; they assist customers if the mothers are busy with their children, and some even give money to help support the children. Stakeholders suggested that they would be willing to support childcare facilities if they were set up in the markets. Mothers had concerns about the care that the children would receive if they were left with other carers so they strongly expressed their desire to be able to check up on their children whenever they wished. Some mothers who brought their children to the market saw some benefits to this, as they noted that they were able to breastfeed and oversee the care of their children. However, all participants agreed that the current situation was unacceptable and that action should be taken to improve care of children in the markets.

Most stakeholders and customers disapproved of mothers bringing children to the market, citing many of the same hazards that were raised as concerns by the mothers, including proximity to roads, risk of abduction, and exposure to bad language and violence on the streets.

There was universal support for setting up childcare facilities for children of informal workers .The requirements were that the facilities should be open for long hours, be free of charge and provide food and skilled teachers for the children. Other key suggestions included improved access to toilets, water and nappy changing facilities, as well as electricity. It was also recommended that health services be made more accessible to mothers in the markets. These recommendations provide direction for possible interventions to support childcare in the informal workplace.

Study limitations

The study was commissioned by Asiye eTafuleni (AeT), a local NGO which has been working with the Warwick Junction informal workers for over 10 years in order to support the informal traders and improve working conditions in the markets. A limitation of the study was that participant recruitment was facilitated by AeT, and focus groups were conducted on AeT premises close to the markets. It is probable that study participants associated the researchers with AeT and this may have influenced their responses.

There was a challenge in presenting the results without compromising confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Some of the participants and senior AeT staff have known each other for many years, and AeT staff were often aware of who had participated in the study. Some data was therefore not presented as it would have clearly identified the participant and therefore would have been a breach of the participant's confidentiality and anonymity.

A strength of the study was that data was collected by experienced trained researchers. However, researcher bias is present in all qualitative research, and the presence of the researcher may have influenced the responses. In particular, mothers may have been reluctant to discuss aspects of the work environment that made them feel uncomfortable or where they felt the researchers may be disapproving.

The study aimed to provide in-depth insights into the experiences of informal traders caring for children in the workplace and did not seek to be representative of all traders in the area or to be generalizable to other traders or the broader population of informal workers. Although many insights may be relevant to other settings, we acknowledge that the findings are very context specific.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Instructions for Support Systems activity

Social support systems (FGD activity)

In this activity, the mothers will be asked to map out different support systems according to their degree of influence in decision making on feeding and childcare while they are at home.

Required

- Coloured pens
- Small pieces of card
- Prestik
- Flip chart paper (pin flip charts on the wall- one for each mother)

Managing time

This is just a general guide and will be determined by the number of participants but you need to ensure that you do not run out of time.

Explanation and questions 5minutesGroup activity 15 minutes

• Each participant contribution 5 minutes (= approx 30 minutes)

General discussion and consensus 15 minutesSummary and close 5 minutes

Instructions to mothers

During this activity we will be talking about all the people who support you get in taking care of your child while you are at work.

- First take a piece of card and draw a picture of yourself and pin this into the middle of the flipchart page.
- Then take more pieces of card and draw or write the names of all the other people who support you in caring for your child every day while you are at work.
- Once you have all these pictures look at the poster where you are in the middle and pin all the people onto the poster.
- Pin all the people who support you the most close to you and the people who support you only a little can be pinned further away.

• At the end of the activity you will be asked to explain who the people are, how they support you in the work place.

Questions guiding discussion:

On completion of the activity, ask each mother in turns to explain the picture, who helps them to care for their children every day and what they do to help. Particular emphasis should be on those who support in caring for the child while the mother is working.

- Out of all the people who support you, who are the most important in supporting you to care for your child *while you are at work*.
- What are some of the things that are in your work environment that assist you in caring for your child?
- If you have a problem with your child while you at work, who is the first person you contact to get assistance within the workplace?
- Is there anything particular that worries you about your support systems and childcare?
- What are some of the things that could have helped you to balance work and childcare in the workplace?

Appendix 2: Instructions for Timeline Activity

Timeline activity

In this activity, women will be asked to draw a timeline of their daily activities that they do from the morning until the evening. In the timeline, women will highlight t how they manage and balance their work and childcare activities, the challenges they face in their daily lives and how they overcome those challenges.

Required

- Coloured pens
- Prestik
- Small pieces of card (15 per mother)
- Flip chart paper (one for each mother) prepare the papers with a line along the middle.

Instructions for mothers

In this exercise, I want each of you to think of all the activities you do every day from morning until the evening.

There is a line drawn across the paper, this represents the time you wake up in the morning until you go to bed in the evening.

Think of the most important things that you ensure you do in each day

Either write or do a drawing of each activity on a small piece of card

Stick the pieces of card along the line to show when during the course of the day these activities happen

On completion of the timeline you will be asked to explain to the group the things that have happened to you and why you chose these activities drawn on your timeline

Discussion question:

On completion of the activity pin each of the flipcharts to the wall or ask people to gather around so everyone can see and ask each mother in turns to explain her own timeline, why each activity was important, and how it made them feel.

- Why did you choose these activities as being important?
- What do you do when different activities are clashing, which activity do you prioritise to do first?

(Facilitator: give relevant examples)- e.g. if the child is sick and you have to go to work, or if the child is hungry but the market stall is busy.

- What are the challenges you face in managing these daily activities?
- Do you have people supporting you in doing all these activities? Who are they and what do they do?

Appendix 3: Instructions for Photovoice activity

PHOTOVOICE ACTIVITY

Tools needed:

- Camera
- A3 pieces of paper
- Sticky notes
- Pens/markers
- Pritt/press stick
- Scissors
- Board

Stage 1: Recruitment and explaining the study

Two groups of six mothers each will be invited to participate in a photo-voice activity to explore the social environment where work, health issues, and childcare intersect within the Warwick market.

Each mother will walk through the market accompanied by researchers. Mothers will be asked to point out spaces / areas where mothers work, have access to water, toilet facilities for mothers and young children, breastfeeding spaces, spaces where children's nappies are changed, spaces where children play, sleep, and cared for while they are at work. Throughout the walk, mothers will be encouraged to take photos of the identified spaces / areas.

A group of 5-6 mothers will be convened to participate in a focus group discussion. Before the focus group discussion, the photos will be printed so mothers can arrange them on a board or a sheet of paper. Mothers will be asked to draw a simple map highlighting where they work and pasting the photographs in the spaces on the map. Mothers will be asked to present her photos and discuss the pictures she has taken.

Instruction to mothers:

You are invited to participate in a photo-voice group activity. The main aim of the activity is to explore and understand the environment in which you work and the spaces where you take care of your child when you are at work.

If you decide to take part in the activity, you will

- Be asked to walk through the market pointing out special places of interest to health and care for you and your baby.
- You will be given a camera and asked to take photos during the walk.
- You will be able to decide what pictures to take that will tell us about the places where you care for your baby at work. They could highlight the things you like about the environment and concerns you may have about the environment.
- You will need permission from any person you wish to take a picture of, for example, people
 who help you take care of your child at work. We will give you some forms which you can
 use for obtaining this permission.
- At the end of the walk when you have taken the pictures, we will collect the cameras and have your pictures printed.
- We will ask you to draw a simple map and paste the pictures you have taken at the places on the map.
- We will then meet in a group of 5 other mothers who will also be taking pictures to talk about the pictures that they have taken and what they signify.

As this is part of the research, you will need to sign a form which gives permission for the researchers to use the pictures you have taken.

Do you think you would like to participate in this activity?

If no, thank the mother for listening to you.

• If yes, make arrangements for a meeting where you can obtain informed consent for the photo-voice activity, and an appointment to meet to walk through the market.

Stage 2: Consents and walk appointment

- Informed consent
- Photography consent form
- Acknowledgement of release of pictures
- Hand-over of camera and instructions how to use camera
- Appointment to walk through the market

Instruction to mothers:

When taking pictures always remember -

- Ask for permission from anyone before taking a picture of him or her and also explain why
 you are taking that picture.
- Give a copy of the consent form to everyone you photograph.
- Ask for permission to take photographs in people's property/stall/work space.
- Do not take pictures of people in compromising situations.
- Do not take pictures that can put you in danger, always ensure that you are safe.

Show mother how to use the camera and give handout on camera basics and go through tips of taking good pictures with mothers.

We would like you to take between 10-12 pictures of the environment where your child is cared for, or the care that your child is receiving, while you are at work. The pictures can represent

anything about the environment that you think is important and can include both good things, or not so good things.

Tips (researcher using a camera to demonstrate):

- Try taking picture from various angles look to see how the picture would be like at different angles and pick out the best angle that captures what you want to show.
- Avoid aiming the camera towards the direction of the sun; this will result in dark pictures.
- Keep your fingers away from lens and flash light.

When taking pictures of people, avoid taking pictures of people posing. Try taking pictures of people involved in their activities. This will be the best demonstration of their daily lives and activities.

Step 3: Arrangements for the walk and taking the photo's

Arrange to meet the mother at her place of work in the market at a time convenient for the mother. Ask the mother to walk around the market with you showing you the places in the market where health, child care and the environment intersect. Ask particularly for the mother to point out the environment where:

- Mother is able to get drinking water
- Mother is able to go to the toilet
- Mother is able to wash her hands after the toilet
- Mother is able to safely leave her baby when she goes to the toilet
- Mother is able to breastfeed her baby
- Mother is able to provide complimentary food
- Mother is able to wash feeding utensils (bowl, spoon, etc)
- Mother is able to change the baby's nappy
- Mother is able to let the child sleep while she is busy at work
- Mother is able to let the child play while she is at work
- Any safety issues for children in the work environment

While the mother is pointing out these places, ask mother to photograph them.

Step 4: Collection of cameras and printing of photographs Instruction to mothers:

Here are the pictures you took during the walk through your work environment. Please can you take this sheet of paper and draw a map showing where these places are in relation to where you work. Please stick the pictures on the map.

We are going to have a focus group discussion with 5 other mothers who have done the same walk telling us about their own places where they care for their child in the market. The focus group discussion will be held (date) in (place).

At the focus group discussion we would like you to tell us about your picture and how you feel about the work place and child care environment.

Instruction for mothers:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the intersect walk and photo voice activity. As discussed in our informed consent process, we will be recording all our discussions. We are now switching on the audio-recorders.

The reason for this activity is to explore the environment you work in and how it influences the way you care for your children. The pictures are a starting point. Each person is going to get an opportunity to tell us about their pictures, what they show and why it is important. You are all invited to comment and ask questions about other people's pictures.

Give mothers 10 minutes to prepare presentation and 10 minutes for presentation

Questions guiding presentation and discussion:

- Please tell us about your picture. (What do we see here? What is happening in the picture?)
- Why did you choose to bring your child to work with you rather than other child care options? (Explore)
- What are the benefits of caring for your child in your work environment?)
- What are the challenges you experience in this environment in caring for your child?)
- If you look at all the photo's you have in your map, what could we do to make it easier for you to care for your child in this work environment? (Link suggestions to pictures on the map.)