In this report, the third round of field work findings from day labour workers from Nairobi streets, Kenya, is reported. In this round of field work, a slightly different approach where an independent research assistant was given the freedom to design her study was employed. To kick start the process, the research assistant was introduced to the point man only after being briefed on the broad objective of the field work after which she was then left to design and execute her fieldwork alone. An independent study was seen as a way of validating previous findings from the first two rounds.

Findings reported here are just preliminary as this is an ongoing field work in Kenya. It started on January 7th 2011 with a brief meeting between myself (the researcher), the research assistant and the point man, aka of human access point in this study. The report is divided into three main sections, the first sections outlines the activities undertaken during the interviews and observations sessions section two gives a summary of key findings while section three identifies major challenges that cuts across different groups.

1. ACTIVITES

a). Research assistant briefing
This was a meeting between the research assistant and the researcher, with the objective of briefing the research assistant about the research. The terms of reference, among other things was discussed and agreed.

b). A meeting with the chairman and the human access point

Present were the research assistant, the chairman (head of the association) of the day labour workers, the point man and myself. It was held in a restaurant near the day labourers waiting point and it took about 30 minutes as it was an introductory meeting.

We took the chairman through the objective of the study while keenly observing his reactions as we had tried to approach him before in vain. This time round, the association head appreciated the need for the study and gave us some insides of how the association works.

During the discussion, they talked about the association working with the paint companies, indicating that painters occasionally go for trainings sponsored by these companies where they are get paid their daily allowances for the days attended. The payments compensates for any money that might have been lost as a result of not being there at the collection point to wait for jobs. They also indicated that food is provided for the whole day during these trainings. The paint companies on the other hand advice/ encourages them to market their products to potential clients. Paint companies they have worked with include Sadolin, Rovialac, while non paint companies include Kenya Cement, coca cola and Nation media group.
During his response, the chairman of the association Mr. Peter Ochieng, advised us to come up with a detailed intervention plan. We saw this as a very big challenge as our objective was to understand their way of doing things before giving a detailed action plan. I.e. it was difficult to say “we don’t know what the intervention will be”. We however promised to give what the researcher had as a hypothetical architecture and a schedule of interview dates.

c). Observation and interview schedule

In the third meeting, the schedule of interview dates was to be tabled by the research assistant. However this did not happen as the chairman and the point man had not arrived by 7.00AM. The remedy was to leave the schedule with the newspaper vendor who works in hand with the workers.

She had organized the schedule in such a way that day labourers were grouped according to their area of specialization. Table one show the various groups and their initial dates of interview. Observations were to be done incognito.

Table 1: Various groups and their initial interview dates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession/activity</th>
<th>Meeting Date and time</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Painters</td>
<td>25 January @ 7:00 a.m.</td>
<td>5 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plumbers</td>
<td>1 February @ 7:00 a.m.</td>
<td>5 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers</td>
<td>8 February @ 7:00 a.m.</td>
<td>5 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mason</td>
<td>15 February @ 7:00 a.m.</td>
<td>5 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter and sign writers</td>
<td>22 February @ 7:00 a.m.</td>
<td>5 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paint Companies</td>
<td>1 March @ 7:00 a.m.</td>
<td>5 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention planning</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>2 people (researchers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Test</td>
<td>10 April @ 7:00 a.m.</td>
<td>5 people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above schedule was latter modified because the meeting time i.e. 7.00AM did not materialize. It turned out that majority of the workers report to their collection points at around 9.00AM. This corresponds to our earlier finding that they do come late to avoid rush hours and hence pay less money as fare.

d). First formal Interview

In this session, a total of six workers were interviewed. Table two details the membership

Table 2: Day one interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ephraim C. Jamin - Kikuyu</td>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>0725750415</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Obwenyi - Luhya</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>0722130893</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Ogoma - Luo</td>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>0728969003/0750537288</td>
<td>13 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maurice Otieno (Chairman)-</td>
<td>Spray Painter</td>
<td>0733802351/0728369847</td>
<td>15 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Mali -Kamba</td>
<td>Plumber and electrician</td>
<td>0722709056</td>
<td>25 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Cheruiyot - Kalenjin</td>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>0722595833</td>
<td>25 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of them had mobile phones with some of them having at least two telephone numbers.
Among the key things that came out that day include:

- Workers can do multiple jobs in a day (thanks to their mobile phones), they do not have to be in their collection points for them to access their clients.
- On average, they have about 20 regular customers/companies per day.
- The need for the association was mainly during problematic days such as when the city council askaris attack or when one loses a loved one.
- Associations are in hierarchy, one at the tribal level and another at the overall level.
- We saw a situation where one worker left the meeting prematurely as he was not trusting of what we were doing. Indeed we were informed that many people have come to talk to them and eventually leave the workers feeling as though they have been used.
- Except for some few cases e.g. Mali who was a plumber and an electrician at the same time, specialization is encouraged in the collection point.
- During this meeting, they introduced the “open air labour exchange”
- Even though their waiting point is in Nairobi, their work stations vary from one region of the country to even outside the country, e.g. Cheruiyot indicated that he had just returned from Uganda where he had gone for a paint job.
- Challenges included
  - Bridge of contract by employers e.g. sometimes they get paid less than what had been agreed.
  - Con-man ship and petty thieves
  - Less qualified workers (who are mostly cheap) who end up spoiling the name of other qualified workers.
- The meeting told us of an SMS system being run by a radio station that link workers and employers. We are still investigating how it works.

**d) Second formal interview**

This was the second interview meeting that was mainly organized for painters. In attendance were five workers, the research assistant and the researcher.

Table 3: Day two interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Telephone Number</th>
<th>Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Obiero</td>
<td>Plumber</td>
<td>0720682827</td>
<td>20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Miruka</td>
<td>Plumber</td>
<td>0722287324</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulwa Kithelenga</td>
<td>Plumber</td>
<td>0724853848</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josepha Iruung</td>
<td>General Repair</td>
<td>0721713936</td>
<td>40 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the interview and thereafter the chit chat, the following were captured:

- That their phone charging was always done in town as opposed to being done at home.
- Majority of the interviewees had worked in a formal employment at some point.
- Mobile phone ownership emphasis was seen. In fact one interviewee lamented that being there without a phone is doing useless work.
- Four out of the five interviewees had gone to either national or local polytechnics.
- Once again challenges included...
Brokers and pay disputes
Poor quality materials, something they complained of ruining their career

e). Third formal interviews
This was a meeting with the electricians. They were

Patrick Ogeno telephone number 0721 277 933 and 20 years experience, Frederick Oharo telephone number 0770 493 154 and 10 years experience, Kamau Uiru telephone number 0722 953 505, and 18 years experience and Moses Onunda telephone number 0723 953 503 with 28 years of experience. Following are points picked up during the interview

- All had mobile phones; a means of knowing about new jobs
- We noted that as they got to know about the study, the more curious they became. This was seen in situations where many people have been demanding to know the exact motive of the study.
- They all had some formal training, mostly from polytechnics
- Though the main reason for coming to collection point was to get new clients, it was not fully convincing as most of their jobs were gotten through previous connections via their mobile phones.
- This particular group, each one of them had a registered company for quotations (this may be associated with their formal training)
- Their challenges
  o Under –pricing of their labour and cost of materials- Sometimes they run on losses as a result of this.
  o Unpaid wages- Sometimes employers fail to pay on time or do not pay at all.
  o A feeling that they being taken advantage of by the painting companies when marketing their products. (One of them called Chepken to confirm if we were also taking advantage of them in pushing their interests)

2. SUMMARY
In this section, general findings and observations are briefly outlined.

- The main language is Swahili
- The arrival time for majority of the job seekers is 9AM (off peak hours) in the morning
- The lucrative time of the year for painters is between November and January every year
- The role of the association is to bring all the day labour workers together, act as access point, through the chairman to the day labourers. It is also used as mechanisms to resolve issues among the workers. The association also gives reputation to the group.
- The labourers get to do big jobs, e.g. Government’s jobs that may need quotations, through other peoples companies and individual contractors.
- The worker collection point is as a result of the place having been a famous paint shop (by the name Alibhai Sharrif) which has since relocated to an inaccessible point along Mombasa Nairobi highway, about 10 KMs away from current location.
- The daily earnings per day for a painter is about Kshs 1,000 (approx 12 USD). Payment maybe done on a daily basis or per job completed. The latter is preferred as it earns workers more than the former.
- Majority of the job seekers own and use mobile phones
- Although many were aware of other technologies like internet and email, they don’t use them. None of the interviewees had an email address.

3. **CHALLENGES**

   In this section, a number of challenges faced by workers and employers are identified. Our main aim is to address these challenges technologically.
   - Exploitation of workers by bidding companies, sometimes brokers
   - Worker waiting space/street congestion and the fights with city council “askari”
   - Relocation of the famous paint shop to an inaccessible place
   - Under pricing of quotations and materials

4. **WHAT TO FIND OUT NEXT:**

   The following is a list of items we are interested in finding out in our subsequent field work:

   Zitizen SMS- an SMS based job search system run by a national radio station. We are interested in
   - How it works
   - Cost of operation
   - The service level and penetration
   - Challenges

   Expenditure for day labourers
   - How much they pay per month
   - Transportation cost incurred by day labour workers to collection points