

# INTERNAL MIGRANTS MYTHS & FACTS

## MYTH

"Internal migrants are a drain on society and a burden for the economies of the destination"

## FACT

Internal migrants contribute cheap labour for manufacturing and services and in doing so contribute to national GDP, but this is not recognised. Far from being a drain and burden, migrants are in fact providing a subsidy.

## MYTH

"Internal migrants steal jobs from the local population"

## FACT

Poor migrants typically do the 3-D jobs (Dirty, Dangerous and Degrading) which locals do not want to do; this is different to 'stealing jobs'.

## FACT

Migration and urbanisation are an integral part of economic development and societal transformation, and historical experience has shown that it cannot be stopped.

## MYTH

"Internal migration can be stopped"

## FACT

By not accepting migrants or providing facilities for them, governments are merely increasing the risks and costs of migration and reducing its development potential.

## MYTH

"Inhospitable and harsh cities are the best deterrent to migration flow"

## MYTH

"Internal migration is a non-issue in India since all citizens "have the right (...) to move freely throughout the territory of India; to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India"\*

\* The Constitution of India, Article 19

## FACT

In practice, internal migrants do not have the freedom and dignity that the Constitution promises. Policy makers and urban planners mostly view migration as a negative process and have therefore created an inconducive and unsupportive environment through neglect and inaction.

## MYTH

"Women's migration is mostly for marriage and associational reasons (as members of a migrating family)"

## FACT

The design of the Census and NSSO data surveys enable respondents to give only a single reason for migration. Though marriage is reported by women as the most prominent reason for migration, women's labour migration and economic contribution remain inadequately captured owing to this mono causal approach.

This has contributed towards undercounting of women's migration for employment.



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization