



Internal Migration in India Initiative For a Better Inclusion of Internal Migrants in India

Policy Briefs



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Overview of Internal Migration in India

Key Message

Migration of persons within national borders is far greater in magnitude than migration across international borders and has enormous potential to contribute to economic prosperity, social cohesion and urban diversity. Internal migration is an essential and inevitable component of the economic and social life of the country, given regional imbalances and labour shortages, and safe migration should be promoted to maximize its benefits. However, in the absence of a coherent policy framework and strategy, migration imposes heavy costs on human development through poor labour arrangements and working conditions of migrants, and obstacles in their access to shelter, education, healthcare and food.

Challenges

Migrants constitute a 'floating' and invisible population, alternating between source and destination areas and remaining on the periphery of society. In India, internal migration has been accorded very low priority by the government, and policies of the Indian state have largely failed in providing any form of legal or social protection to this vulnerable group.

- There exists a serious data gap on the extent, nature and magnitude of internal migration. Macro databases such as the Census fail to adequately capture flows of short-term migrants and do not record secondary reasons for migration. Owing to lack of analytical refinement in the way migration is defined, design and delivery of services for migrants are hampered.
- Regulations and administrative procedures exclude migrants from access to legal rights, public services and social protection programmes accorded to residents, because of which they are often treated as second-class citizens. Internal migrants face numerous constraints, including lack of political representation; inadequate housing and lack of formal residency rights; low-paid, insecure or hazardous work; limited access to state-provided services such as health and education; and discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, class or gender.
- Since migrants are heterogeneous and migration has cross-cutting sectoral impacts, multiple and complementary interventions by different ministries and departments are

needed, to facilitate migration and ensure integration of migrants into the economic, social, political and cultural life of the country.

Facts and Figures

- The Constitution of India (Article 19) gives the right to all citizens to “to move freely throughout the territory of India; to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India”.
- India’s total population, as recorded in Census 2011, stands at 1.21 billion.
- Internal migrants in India constitute a large population: 309 million internal migrants or 30 per cent of the population (Census of India 2001), and by more recent estimates 326 million or 28.5 per cent of the population (NSSO 2007–2008).
- This far exceeds the estimates of Indian emigrants (11.4 million) (The World Bank 2011).
- Migration in India is primarily of two types:
 - i. Long-term migration, resulting in the relocation of an individual or household;
 - ii. Short-term¹ or seasonal/ circular migration, involving back and forth movement between a source and destination. Estimates of short-term migrants vary from 15 million (NSSO 2007–2008) to 100 million (Deshingkar and Akter 2009). Most short-term migrants belong to socioeconomically deprived groups, such as Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes, having negligible educational attainment, limited assets and resource deficits;
- Out of the total internal migrants, 70.7 per cent are women (Census of India 2001). Marriage is given as the prominent reason for female migration in both the rural and urban areas – 91 per cent of rural female migrants and 61 per cent of the urban female migrants (NSSO 2007–2008).
- Migration for employment-related reasons is given as the prominent reason for male migration in both rural and urban areas – 29 per cent rural male migrants and 56 per cent of urban male migrants (NSSO 2007–2008).
- Although no clear data are available, there are about 15 million child migrants in India (Daniel 2011; Smita 2011).
- Lead source states: Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Uttarakhand and Tamil Nadu.
- Key destination states: Delhi, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab and Karnataka.
- Migrants are mostly employed in the following subsectors: construction, domestic work, textile, brick-kilns, transportation, mines, quarries and agriculture (Deshingkar and Akter 2009).
- Migrants face denial of basic entitlements including access to subsidized food, housing, drinking water, sanitation and public health facilities, education and banking services and often work in poor conditions devoid of social security and legal protection.
- Positive impacts of migration remain unrecognized:

Table 1: Seasonal Out-Migrants and Long-Term Out-Migrants: A Comparative Profile, 2007–2008 (in per cent)

Social Group	Short-Term Out-Migrants			Long-Term Out-Migrants		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
ST	20.1	3.5	18.6	6.8	2.2	6.0
SC	23.7	17.5	23.1	19.2	11.8	17.9
OBC	39.5	43.6	39.9	44.5	37.9	43.3
Others	16.7	35.4	18.4	29.5	48.0	32.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

(NSSO 2007–2008)

¹ Short-term migrants are defined as those migrants who stayed away from their Usual Place of Residence for work / seeking work for a period between 1 and 6 months during the last one year preceding the survey.

- Migration may provide an opportunity to escape caste divisions and restrictive social norms and to work with dignity and freedom at the destination (Deshingkar and Akter 2009).
 - Left-behind women enjoy empowerment effects, with increased interaction in society, including their participation as workers and decision makers of households.
 - Migrants bring back to the source areas a variety of skills, innovations and knowledge, known as ‘social remittances’, including change in tastes, perceptions and attitudes (for example, non-acceptance of poor employment conditions, low wages and semi-feudal labour relationships and improved knowledge and awareness about workers’ rights) (UNESCO -UNICEF 2012b).
 - Estimates of the domestic remittance market were roughly \$10 billion in 2007–2008 (Tumbe 2011). Evidence reveals that with rising incomes, migrant remittances can encourage investment in human capital formation, particularly increased expenditure on health, and also to some extent education (UNESCO-UNICEF 2012b).
- resources, social and physical infrastructure and governance institutions in sending areas and strengthening programmes such as MGNREGA, food security programmes and creating opportunities for access to credit.
 - Revise the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act (1979) including the following gaps:
 - The Act applies to only migrants crossing state boundaries and, therefore, a large section of migrants are excluded from its ambit.
 - It does not monitor unregistered contractors and establishments.
 - It remains silent on provision for crèches, education centres for children or mobile medical units for the labourers.
 - It articulates no guidelines for inter-state cooperation.
 - It covers only regulation of employment and conditions of service of migrants and does not address access to social protection of migrants, their right to the city and the special vulnerabilities of children and women migrants.
 - Important provisions of the Act such as minimum wages, displacement allowance, medical facilities and protective clothing remain unenforced.

Policy Recommendations

Develop a coherent legal and policy framework on migration

- Mainstream migration in a comprehensive and focused manner in policy documents and national development plans (Five Year Plans, Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission and City Development Plans).
- Develop a universal national minimum social security package covering minimum wages and labour standards and incorporating portability of benefits in all government social protection schemes and public services.
- Design targeted components and special outreach strategies for migrants within public services and government programmes.
- Minimize the distress nature of migration by adopting pro-poor development strategies in backward areas, including providing sustainable livelihood opportunities, increased access to land, common property

Fill knowledge and research gaps to enable evidence-based policy making

- Revise design of Census and surveys on migration to adequately capture sex-disaggregated and age-disaggregated data on short-term migration and multiple reasons for migration.
- Conduct detailed countrywide mapping of internal migration (at panchayat level with the support of civil society organizations and labour departments).
- Encourage state-level research institutions to develop state migration profiles, including state-wise mapping of nature, timing, duration and magnitude of migration cycles.
- Increase research on sector-wise contribution of migrants in different industries of the economy, including their contribution to GDP and domestic remittances.

Improve institutional preparedness and build capacity for facilitating and promoting migration

- Create inter-district and inter-state coordination committees to jointly plan institutional arrangements between administrative jurisdictions of sending and receiving areas to ensure service delivery.
- Build capacity of panchayats to maintain a database of migrant workers (with details of numbers of migrants and recruitment by contractors) and establish vigilant committees

to identify entry of new migrants at the local level.

- Establish migrant labour cells in each state labour department with the support of the Labour Ministry.
- Increase financial and human resources in migration-prone areas.
- Promote public-private partnerships (PPP) for the promotion of safe internal migration.
- Ensure access to formal banking facilities for migrants to enable safe and secure transfer of remittances.



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Internal Migration and Human Development

Key Message

Internal migration can expand people's freedoms and capabilities and make substantial contributions to human development in terms of improved incomes, education and health. Although migration can potentially benefit migrants and their families, there are also heavy costs and risks that compromise the potentially positive outcomes of migration.

Challenges

- Internal migrants play a major role in sustaining and building India's economy, but their contribution remains unrecognized because of lack of data. Short-term migrants, including seasonal/ circular migrants, are inadequately captured in macro datasets such as the Census and National Sample Survey Organisation.
- Both government and employers have failed to facilitate migration through appropriate labour and social policies or investment in infrastructure and basic needs for migrants.
- Migration imposes heavy costs on human development through poor labour arrangements and working conditions of migrants in the informal economy and through obstacles in their access to shelter, education, health care and food.
- Informal social networks (for example, friends, neighbours, members of the same caste group and co-villagers) help migrants in providing access to the urban job market in the initial

stages, but do not have any positive effect on upward mobility (Mitra 2011).

- There is lack of institutional and governance support to facilitate safe transfer of remittances of migrants to their left-behind families.
- Other positive impacts of migration remain unrecognized. Migration may provide an opportunity to escape caste divisions and restrictive social norms and to work with dignity and freedom at the destination (Deshingkar and Akter 2009). Women left behind as a consequence of migration of male members enjoy empowerment effects, with increased interaction in society, including their participation as workers and decision makers of households. Migrants bring back to the origin a variety of skills, innovations and knowledge, known as 'social remittances', including change in tastes, perceptions and attitudes (for example, non-acceptance of poor employment conditions, low wages and semi-feudal labour relationships, and improved knowledge and awareness about workers rights) (UNESCO-UNICEF 2012b).

Facts and Figures

- Migrants do not constitute a homogeneous category, and migrants are segmented along gender, class, ethnicity, language and religion. Women and children remain among the most invisible and vulnerable groups among migrants.

- Seasonal migration in search of livelihood is undertaken by socially deprived groups such as the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs), who are asset-poor and face resource and livelihood deficits (Deshingkar and Akter 2009).
- Evidence reveals that migration rates are high among both the highly educated and the least educated, with a high proportion of illiterates among seasonal migrants (UNESCO-UNICEF 2012b).
- Estimates of the domestic remittance market were roughly \$10 billion in 2007–2008 (Tumbe 2011).
- Evidence reveals that with rising incomes, migrant remittances can encourage investment in human capital formation, particularly increased expenditure on health, and also to some extent education (UNESCO-UNICEF 2012b).
- The intensity of migration could increase in the future as a response to economic crises, political instability and climate change impacts (UNESCO-UNICEF 2012b).
- Evaluate and assess sector-wise contribution of migrants in different industries of the economy, including their contribution to GDP.
- Design differentiated social strategies for mainstreaming migrants in development policies and programmes that are based on age, gender, social category and distance.
- Sensitize and train policymakers, local government officials, NGOs, employers and financial institutions regarding obstacles in accessing public services for migrants.

Adopt innovations in institutions and service delivery for migrants

- Scale up outreach of customized services for migrants.¹
- Establish a tracking database to monitor outcomes of migrants in centrally sponsored health, education and labour market programmes.
- Set up walk-in resource centres for migrants, which provide legal counselling and information on grievance handling and dispute resolution mechanisms (for example, Aajeevika Bureau and PEPUS).
- Conduct targeted interventions for health protection that address health issues of high-risk migrant populations (for example, NACO strategy on HIV Intervention for Migrants and Red Ribbon Express trains).
- Facilitate secure transfer of remittances of migrants, through mobile banking and banking correspondents, while incorporating flexibility in bank procedures (such as modification of KYC norms, no-frills accounts and special banking hours).

Policy Recommendations

Develop a protective and promotive migrant-sensitive policy framework

- Prioritize implementation of existing labour laws including the Minimum Wages Act (1948), Payment of Wages Act (1936), Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act (1970), Equal Remuneration Act (1976), Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act (1976), Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act (1979), Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (1986), Workmen's Compensation Act (1923), Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act (1996), and Unorganized Workers Social Security Act (2008).

¹ For a detailed discussion, refer to *Internal Migration and Social Protection: The Missing Link* policy brief in this series.



Internal Migration and Social Protection: The Missing Link

Key Message

As social protection policies and programmes are focused on only settled populations, internal migrants lose access to social security benefits linked to permanent residence. There remains no concerted strategy to ensure portability of entitlements for migrants. Planning for migrant families who are not settled, but are on the move, warrants a fundamental rethinking of development approaches and models in order to protect and promote migrants' access to social services and enable migrants to become socially and politically active citizens.

Challenges

Most social protection programmes require registration of eligible beneficiaries and issuance of beneficiary cards to them. Lacking documentary proofs of identity and local residence, migrants are often unable to register themselves for social protection programmes and lay claim to basic entitlements. As a result,

- Migrants are denied access to subsidized food available through the Public Distribution System and face difficulties in accessing housing and other basic amenities such as water and sanitation. They are unable to access banking facilities and are forced to rely on informal networks (for example, friends and relatives visiting home, informal couriers or bus drivers) to remit money to families left behind.
- Working mostly in the informal sector, migrants

lack employment-related social security and legal protection and are seldom unionized.

- Migrants' health is affected by occupational health hazards, poor living conditions, poor access to affordable health services, as also sexual risks.
- Education of migrant children suffers when children accompany their parents during seasonal migration and are forced to drop out of schools.

Facts and Figures

- Currently, government policies and programmes fail to recognize migrant populations as a priority group for ensuring rights and entitlements.
- Fragmented references to migrants exist in some legislation and policies such as the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act (1979), the Right to Education Act (2009) and the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, but they inadequately address the nature and complexities of internal migration in India.
- Shelter solutions in urban areas are in fact discriminatory towards migrants (for example, criteria for slum dwellers to be eligible for slum rehabilitation schemes include demonstrating evidence of residency prior to certain year-wise cut-off dates, which are biased against entry of new migrants into the city).
- Biometric smart cards issued under the

Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) and the Unique Identification Number (Aadhaar) have the potential for providing migrants proof of identity and are a basis to claim other socio-economic entitlements. However, it remains to be seen whether these mechanisms will be able to overcome complications stemming from multi-locational residence.

Policy Recommendations

Devise a universal national minimum social security package with portable entitlements

- Adopt recommendations on a National Minimum Social Security Scheme for informal workers suggested by the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS), with the following features:
 - i. Universal registration of workers and issuance of unique photo identity and/or smart cards by grass roots organizations (for example, Aajeevika Bureau in association with the Rajasthan Labour Department).
 - ii. Complete portability in terms of registration, payment of premium (where applicable), and receipt of benefits of all centrally sponsored social protection programmes, irrespective of where migrants reside.
 - iii. National Minimum Social Security Package for all workers consisting of a retirement benefit, a life cover, and a family health cover.

Develop customized social protection products and services for migrants

- Set up migrant resource centres offering pre-departure counselling, access to labour market information and institutionalized access to jobs, including training, placement and skill upgradation (for example, Labournet in Bangalore and Gramin Vikas Trust).
- Create labour helplines and legal clinics providing legal counselling to migrants at both the source and the destination (for example, Aajeevika Bureau in Rajasthan).
- Arrange night shelters and short-stay homes for migrants to provide seasonal and temporary

accommodation for migrant workers in high in-migration states (for example, Ram Roti Yojana by the Bhopal Municipal Corporation in Madhya Pradesh and Indo-Global Social Service Society).

- Issue temporary ration cards to migrants at the destination to enable access to subsidized food through the Public Distribution System (for example, Disha Foundation in Maharashtra).
- Develop seasonal hostels to promote retention of children in schools in source areas, set up worksite schools at the destination with systems to transfer enrolment, attendance and credits to formal schools, undertake bridge courses and remedial education for return migrant children (for example, Aide et Action American India Foundation (AIF), Lokadrusti in Orissa, Janarth in Maharashtra, and SETU in Gujarat).
- Establish mobile crèches, early childcare and/or daycare centres at or close to worksites for children in the age group 0–14 years (for example, Mobile Creches, Delhi).
- Conduct targeted health interventions for migrants, including HIV/AIDS interventions for high-risk migrants (for example, NACO strategy on HIV Intervention for Migrants and Red Ribbon Express trains).
- Link migrant workers to financial services through branchless or mobile banking and banking correspondents (for example, FINO Money Transfer and Eko India Financial Services Pvt. Ltd., banking correspondent of State Bank of India, ICICI Bank and Yes Bank).



Internal Migration and the Right to the City

Key Message

Internal migration is an integral part of development, contributing to the dynamics of urban growth and economic and cultural vibrancy of cities. The right to the city, which encompasses rights and access to food, housing, education, health, work, and local democracy, should also apply to migrants.

Challenges

- Migrants are looked upon as 'outsiders' by the local administration, and as a burden on systems and resources at the destination.
- In India, migrants' right to the city is denied because of political support for the 'sons of the soil' ideology, with the aim to create vote banks along ethnic, linguistic and religious lines.
- Exclusion and discrimination against migrants take place through political and administrative processes, market mechanisms and socioeconomic processes, besides their negative portrayal in the media, which create a gulf between migrants and locals.
- This leads to marginalization of migrants in the decision-making processes of the city, and exacerbates their vulnerabilities to vagaries of the labour market, risks of discrimination and violence. Migrants provide a low-cost flexible workforce for the urban informal economy, but they often work in poor conditions, devoid of social security and legal protection.
- Migrants are forced to live in unauthorized

slums, shanties, makeshift shelters, facing constant threats of displacement and eviction from government authorities.

- Most migrants suffer political exclusion and are unable to exercise voting rights, being away at the destination when elections are held at the place of origin.
- Migrants face several other difficulties in Indian cities: denial of basic entitlements including access to subsidized food, drinking water, sanitation and public health facilities, education and banking services.
- There is a need to ensure that all migrants and their families have access to services and entitlements as enshrined in policies and law, while ensuring urban settlements become inclusive spaces as they expand in size and diversity.

Facts and Figures

- India's urban population has increased from about 286 million in 2001 to 377 million in 2011, and is expected to increase to 600 million by 2030 (Census of India 2011 and Government of India 2011).
- For the first time since independence, urban population growth (91 million) has exceeded rural population growth (90.5 million) (Census of India 2011).
- Migrants constitute about one third of India's urban population and the share has been increasing. The share of migrants in the urban

population has increased from 31.6 per cent in 1983 to 33 per cent in 1999–2000 and to 35 per cent in 2007–2008 (NSSO 2007–2008).

- Yet, most of the million-plus cities have recorded significant declines in their population growth, suggesting that they may have become less welcoming to migrants and indicating an exclusionary urban growth (Kundu 2012).
- Internal migrants are indispensable for a city to be prosperous, boosting economic activity and contributing to economic growth.
- Inclusion of migrants in cities is necessary for a sustainable urban development based on cultural diversity, social cohesion and human rights.

Policy Recommendations

Sensitize Urban Local Bodies to include migrants in city development and municipal management

- Mainstream migrants' needs and concerns in policy documents such as the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and City Development Plans.
- Develop national, city and municipal charters articulating citizens' rights and promoting the right to the city (for example, Citizen's Charters declared by Municipal Corporations in New Delhi, Vishakhapatnam and Coimbatore).
- Democratize the processes of city governance by promoting representation of migrants in the city and by including migrants in decision-making processes and urban planning, such as development of master plans.
- Educate, train and sensitize municipal corporations, civic bodies, organs of government, political and community leaders, state bureaucracy, urban planners and other stakeholders, including the media, on the need for inclusion of migrants in urban management and planning.

Ensure migrants' right to access basic services and entitlements in the city

- Encourage municipal bodies and NGOs to verify and certify the residential status of migrants through introductions, referrals, and/or registration and issuance of photo identity cards for establishing proof of identity.
- Design targeted components and special outreach strategies for migrants within public services and government programmes, besides developing customized social security products for migrants.¹
- Undertake in situ development of slum areas and experiment with dormitory accommodation to be provided by employers for migrants, with an eventual policy shift towards provision of de facto residential rights to migrant workers, including affordable rental housing and ultimately affordable housing.
- Reform design of urban policies and programmes that are discriminatory for migrants (for example, delink eligibility for slum rehabilitation schemes from length of tenure in the city).

¹ For a detailed discussion, refer to Internal Migration and Social Protection: The Missing Link policy brief in this series.



Internal Migration and Gender

Key Message

The current discourse on migration has failed to adequately address gender-specific migration experiences, even though women constitute an overwhelming majority of migrants. A gender perspective on migration is imperative, since women have significantly different migration motivations, patterns, options and obstacles from men.

Challenges

- Since respondents in the Census and National Sample Surveys are required to give only one reason for migration, this has camouflaged some aspects of labour-based and related decisions which influence women's migration. Working women who move for marriage are not recorded as labour migrants, even though they work prior to and after migrating. Culturally determined inappropriateness about emphasizing women's economic role also contributes towards undercounting of women's migration for employment, among other reasons (Shanthi 2006).
- Women migrants remain invisible and discriminated against in the workforce: they are paid less than male migrants, their economic contribution is often subsumed in family labour units, and they enjoy no maternity entitlements or special care such as breastfeeding breaks at worksites.
- Health risks pose a serious concern for women migrants: maternal-health and child-health

indicators remain poor, lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities give rise to communicable diseases, and malnutrition and anaemia in children and adolescent girls remain widespread.

- Migrant women and adolescent girls are more vulnerable to sexual harassment and abuse and may get pushed into sex work, either by coercion or to supplement their earnings. On the other hand, the left-behind women face the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, brought back by migrating husbands.
- In the absence of crèches, women leave young children to the care of siblings, usually adolescent girls, who additionally have to bear household responsibilities.
- The benefits of migration for women remain under-investigated. Migration can lead to greater freedom, cash incomes, and change in attitudes among migrating women, which may impact traditional gender roles and responsibilities. For the left-behind women, increased interaction in society, their participation as workers and decision makers of households can lead to some degree of empowerment (UNESCO-UNICEF 2012b).

Facts and Figures

- Out of 309 million internal migrants, 70.7 per cent are women (218 million) (Census of India 2001).
- The most prominent reason given for women's migration is marriage – cited by 91.3 per cent of

women in rural areas and 60.8 per cent of women in urban areas (NSSO 2007–2008). There is need for further investigation of this in the backdrop of social customs such as village exogamy, decline in rural female work participation rates, among others (UNESCO-UNICEF 2012b).

- Female migrants mostly belong to the rural stream (75.6 per cent) and exhibit greater concentration in intra-district and inter-district migration (66.9 per cent and 23 per cent, respectively) as compared with inter-state migration (10.1 per cent) (UNESCO-UNICEF 2012b).
- Seasonal migration among women is higher than long-term outmigration, and female migration in the central, western and southern region is higher than the northern and eastern region (UNESCO-UNICEF 2012b).
- Female migrants are less well represented in regular jobs and more likely to be self-employed than non-migrant women. Domestic work has emerged as an important occupation for migrant women and girls (UNESCO-UNICEF 2012b).

Policy Recommendations

Fill knowledge and research gaps to incorporate gender-sensitive realities

- Revise concepts and categories used in the design of the Census and National Sample Surveys to enable data collection on multiple reasons for women’s migration.
- Collect sex-disaggregated and age-disaggregated data on migration and the contribution of women migrant workers towards remittances and national GDP.

Strengthen legislation to protect rights of migrant women

- Prioritize implementation of existing laws including the Minimum Wages Act (1948), Payment of Wages Act (1936), Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act (1970), Equal Remuneration Act (1976), Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act (1976), Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act (1979), Child

Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (1986), Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act (1996), and Unorganized Workers Social Security Act (2008).

Extend migrant support initiatives in favour of women migrants

- Establish pre-departure information and training programmes to raise awareness of rights and entitlements, skill upgradation possibilities and placement (for example, Bodhicrew Services Pvt. Ltd.), and information on general and reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS prevention.
- Run labour helplines/ legal clinics in major source and destination areas for providing legal assistance (for example, Aajeevika Bureau).
- Equip worksites with on-site or near-site ICDS anganwadis, mobile crèches and daycare centres for children (for example, Mobile Creches, Delhi), hostel and accommodation facility for unaccompanied women migrants and civic amenities for basic sanitation and hygiene.
- Create watchdog committees for tracking and monitoring women’s migration for preventing instances of harassment, exploitation and trafficking (for example, Sanlaap, Kolkata).

CEDAW General Recommendation No. 26 on Women Migrant Workers

India is a signatory of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In practice, however CEDAW General Recommendation No. 26 on Women Migrant Workers (2008) remains largely unimplemented. CEDAW General Recommendation No. 26 especially outlines recommendations that respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of women migrant workers, against sex- and gender-based discrimination. Though the recommendation pertains to international migration of women workers, there is an urgent need to create awareness and implementation of CEDAW General Recommendation 26, and adapt roles and responsibilities for relevant stakeholders to similarly promote and facilitate internal migration of women workers.



Internal Migration and Children

Key Message

Children are the most unrecognized and vulnerable groups among internal migrants. Children migrate independently or as dependants when their families migrate. Migrant children often lose access to basic entitlements, miss out on schooling and are subject to health and security risks. Child migrants forgo critical inputs necessary for their physical, psychological and intellectual development during their formative years. This has an irreversible impact on their emotional and cognitive development.

Challenges

Migration has differential impacts on children of different age groups.

Infants

Migrant families find it difficult to obtain birth certificates for their children, because they lack proof of residence, which is essential for issuing birth certificates. Owing to their mobile status, infants often miss out on immunization, growth monitoring and regular health checkups. Risks of malnutrition, morbidity and mortality among migrant children remain high.

Preschool children

Limited access of migrants to anganwadis, public distribution services and public health services has a negative impact on the health of their children. Malnutrition in early childhood can cause frequent

illness and physical deficiencies, such as stunting, and may affect children's cognitive abilities as reflected in poor school performance. Poor access to safe drinking water, sanitation facilities and poor work and living conditions give rise to diseases such as malaria, water-borne and respiratory diseases and diseases causing diarrhoea. Migrant children remain deprived of essential elements of 'care' and 'early stimulation' whilst their mothers work, which leads to their neglect or at best inadequate care by their siblings. In the absence of crèches and early childcare services, children's transition to formal schooling remains incomplete.

Older children

Migration rates for boys and girls up to the age of 10 years are nearly equal, but as age increases, more girls are brought along to the destination to assist with household responsibilities and childcare (Smita 2008). Migration delays school entry, denies or interrupts schooling, increases the number of children dropping out and leads to child labour. Child migrants are found to be working in sectors such as construction, brick manufacture, salt making, sugar-cane harvesting, stone quarrying, plantations and fishing. In these sectors, they are an integral part of the labour processes, which benefit from their small hands and light bodies. Payment of wages at worksites on a piece-rate basis allows children to work for long hours as unregistered and invisible labour in family labour units. Being constantly on the move, migrant

children face disruption of friendships and lack a peer support network, which hamper their sense of security and familiarity, besides exposing them to risks of drug abuse and sexual exploitation. Early marriages (13–18 years), early pregnancies (15–17 years), child births in the absence of trained birth attendants, frequent childbirths, poor health due to successive childbirths that are without proper intervals or spacing, lack of exclusive breastfeeding of the newborn for the first six months and lack of complementary feeding thereafter leave mothers and children anaemic and weak.

Facts and Figures

- Available estimates suggest that there are approximately 15 million child migrants in India (Daniel 2011; Smita 2011).
- Limited evidence suggests that children accompanying their parents in the 0–14 year age group may constitute about one third of the total seasonal migrants (Smita 2008).

Policy Recommendations

Develop a child-sensitive focus in data and approaches to migration

- Collect sex-disaggregated and age-disaggregated data on migrant children with data on reasons of migration in the Census, National Family Health Surveys (NFHS), and National Sample Surveys by NSSO to enable proper planning and monitoring.
- Adopt the ‘continuum of care’ framework in designing migration interventions that consider age- and gender-specific risks and vulnerabilities of children and that increase essential services for mothers, newborns and children at critical life stages.

Provide a protective and enabling environment for child migrants

- Provide breastfeeding breaks for mothers in between work schedules at worksites.

- Undertake special extension and outreach strategies for migrant women and children under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), National Maternity Benefit Scheme and Rajiv Gandhi Creche Scheme, besides increasing financial and human resources for these schemes in migration-prone areas.
- Establish mobile health units to service health needs of migrant families and children.
- Ensure child migrants’ right to education by linking them to seasonal hostels or worksite schools.¹
- Issue strict action against contractors employing child labour or bonded labour.
- Constitute child protection and vigilance committees at the panchayat level to track child migration and prevent trafficking.

Improve implementation of existing government programmes benefiting child migrants

- Ensure that Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) register all newborns in a village with the panchayat.
- Facilitate access of migrant women to Janani Suraksha Yojana to promote institutional delivery among pregnant poor women.
- Provide Mid Day Meals mandatorily for migrant children.
- Increase coverage of ICDS in migrant labour camps and worksites, and improve facilities for preschool education and growth monitoring.
- Enforce provisions for establishing crèches, as mandated under labour laws in the construction, mining and plantation sectors and at MGNREGA worksites.
- Establish mobile crèches, early childcare and daycare centres for children in the age group 0–14 years (for example, Mobile Creches, New Delhi).

¹ For a detailed discussion, refer to *Internal Migration and the Right to Education* policy brief in this series.



Internal Migration and the Right to Education

Key Message

Migrant children are among the most educationally marginalized in India. The right to education (under the Right to Education Act, [RTE] 2009) of migrant children remains compromised, since seasonal and temporary migration results in disruption of regular and continued schooling of children, adversely affecting their human capital formation and contributing to the inter-generational transmission of poverty.

Challenges

- There is an overlap between the academic session in schools (June–April) and the seasonal migration cycle (November–June), owing to which migrant children who are enrolled attend school only from June–November, following which they drop out or report irregular attendance. This temporary discontinuation of study subsequently results in their dropping out of school altogether.
- Migrant children suffer from learning deficits that are due to interruptions in education and that are exacerbated with inter-state migration because of differences in academic curriculum and language.
- Children who accompany migrating parents end up working at the destinations to supplement family income and are often inducted as labour at worksites as early as the age of 6–7 years.
- Re-enrolment in source schools at the end of a migration cycle is rare, and in case it

occurs, migrant children are often readmitted in the same class owing to inflexible school procedures and lack of remedial classes to cover learning deficits.

- High outmigration areas exhibit poor school infrastructure, poor school supplies and inadequate staffing, which serve as disincentives for retention of children in schools in sending areas.
- Each migration cycle is different in its timing, duration, frequency and numbers migrating, and these variations make planning for educational initiatives difficult.
- Out-of-school surveys for children do not take into account seasonal variations in enrolment and attendance rates caused by migration nor do they have definitional and methodological clarity on the status of migrant children among out-of-school children.

Facts and Figures

- Although no clear data are available, estimates suggest that child migrants constitute approximately 15 million children in India (Daniel 2011; Smita 2011).
- Explicit provisions in the RTE pertaining to migrant children include:
 - Local authorities shall ensure admission of children of migrant families.
 - A child has the right to seek transfer to any school, following which the in-charge of school must immediately issue the transfer certificate.

Policy Recommendations

Fill knowledge and research gaps to enable evidence-based policy making

- Adopt harmonized definition and methodology for recognizing migrant children in the data on out-of school children and school dropouts through revision in categories and sampling strategy to include the under-represented vulnerable groups such as migrants.

Assess seasonal and temporary migration and ensure joint planning between districts and states

- Undertake detailed mapping of type, pattern, scale and geographical and sector-wise spread of child migration across and within states (to be carried out by the Panchayati Raj Institutions with the support of schools).
- Conduct surveys in both sending and receiving migration districts and states – worksite surveys during migration months and village surveys during non-migration months need to be undertaken.
- Set up Special Joint Task Forces in sending and receiving districts to jointly plan and collaborate in facilitating migration (for example, consider special budgetary allocations and deployment of additional personnel in receiving districts).

Make schools and teachers responsible for tracking and mainstreaming migrant children

- Tracking of migrant children by School Management Committees using child identity cards and tracking registers.
- Include migrant parents in School Management Committees.
- Deploy outpost staff of local schools at worksites to teach migrant children.
- Ensure worksite schools develop systems of transferring credits to mainstream government schools in sending areas or at any other destination.

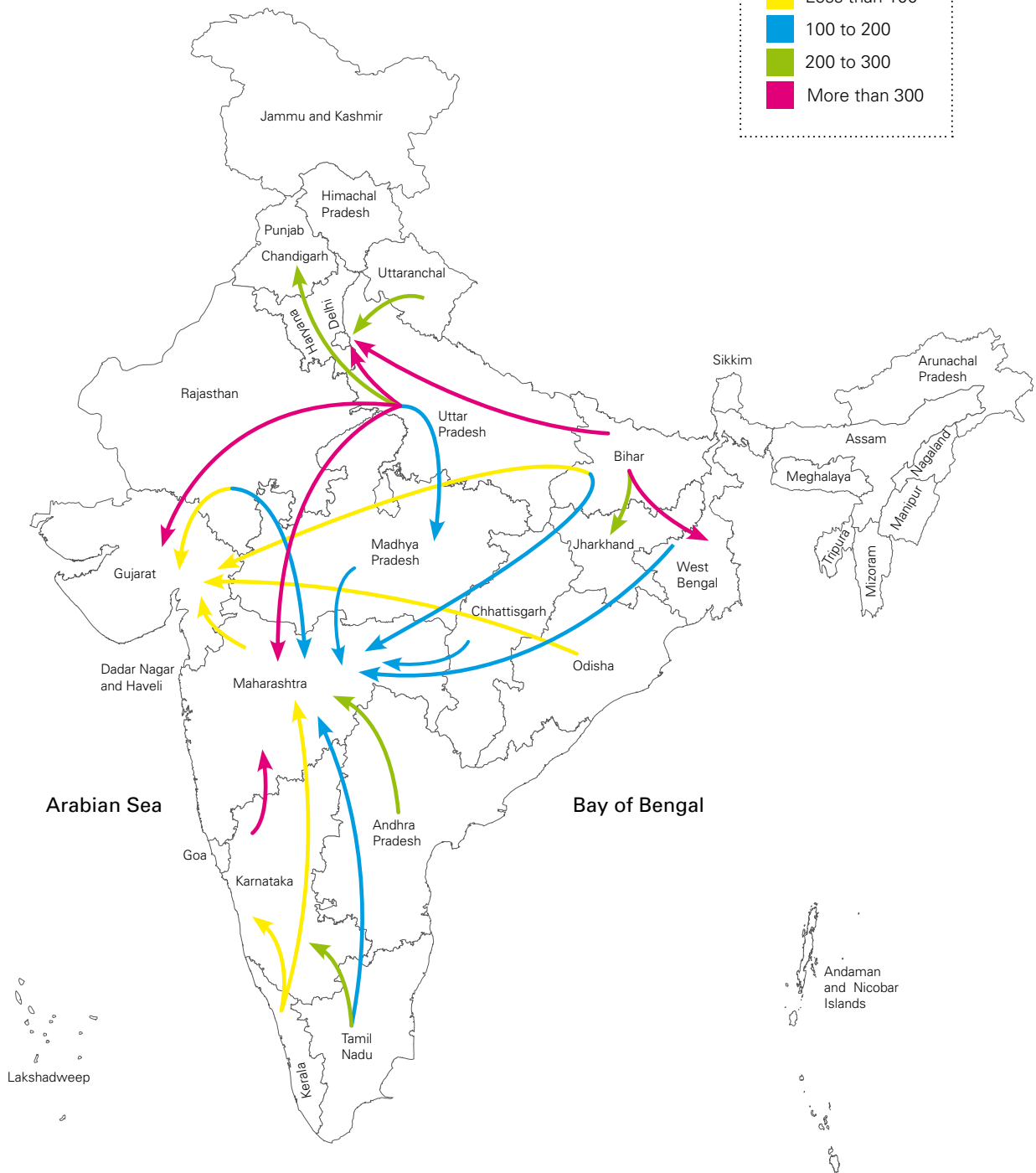
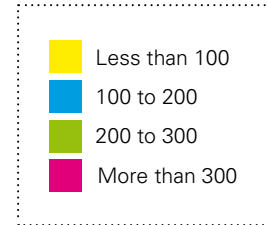
- Adjust school calendar by making procedures pertaining to readmission, attendance and examinations flexible to suit migrant children.
- Appoint para-teachers or mobile education volunteers conversant in the native languages of migrant children.
- Arrange transport facilities for migrant children for easy access to schools in distant and uninhabited areas at the destination.
- Tap the Special Training Programme component of RTE to ensure age-appropriate educational competency of out-of-school and dropout child migrants.

Adopt and upscale innovative practices by NGOs and local administration

- Make sending areas the base for all education interventions aimed at migrant children.
- Set up village or panchayat-based seasonal hostels in sending areas to provide residential facilities for children to stay back in the village and to promote retention of children in local schools.
- Establish worksite schools in receiving areas to prevent child labour and to ensure that children are in adult care in a safe and clean environment and have an opportunity to learn and play.
- Provide bridge courses and remedial education for children in sending areas on their return from migration.
- Lok Jumbish Parishad in Rajasthan, Aide et Action, American India Foundation (AIF), Lokadrusti in Orissa, Janarth in Maharashtra, and SETU in Gujarat provide good examples of such innovative practices.

Major net migration flow in India (duration 0–9 years), 2001

Legend (Population in thousand)





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In 2011, as a result of a two-day workshop on Internal Migration and Human Development in India (6–7 December 2011), UNESCO and UNICEF launched the Internal Migration in India Initiative (IMII), in order to better respond to the many challenges raised by the internal migration phenomenon in India. Through the IMII, UNESCO and UNICEF wish to support the social inclusion of migrants in the economic, social, political and cultural life of the country, using a three-legged approach combining research, policy and advocacy.

The IMII is now an informal network of 200 researchers, NGOs, policymakers, UN agencies and other partners, such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), UN-HABITAT and UN Women, determined to raise the profile of internal migration in India and to propose policy changes and creative practices.

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Internal Migration in India Initiative



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