



Poverty

Work and Employment Community



Solution Exchange for the Work and Employment Community Consolidated Reply

Query: Social Security and Policy Framework for Internal Migrants in India – Examples; Advice

Compiled by [Warisha Yunus](#), Resource Person and Moderator

Issue Date: 24 October 2014

From [Debraj Bhattacharya](#), Institute of Social Sciences (ISS), Eastern Regional Centre, Kolkata

Posted 6 June 2014

Dear Members,

I work with Institute of Social Sciences (ISS) in Kolkata. Since 2010, ISS has carried out **two empirical studies on internal migration in India**. The first studied the reasons behind migration from three districts of rural Bihar ([Why I Left My Village: A Study on Migration from Rural Bihar](#), Unpublished report submitted to the Delegation of European Union in India, 2012). The study established the increasing unprofitability of agriculture, high debt burden and the ineffectiveness of programmes such as MGNREGS in providing alternative employment opportunities. Lack of local industries also pushes poor people from rural to urban areas to seek employment. The study also brought out the fact that these migrants usually end up living in sub-human conditions and working in low paying jobs that provide no social security support net.

The second study focused on the children of the migrant poor in Kolkata ([Children of Migrant Poor in Kolkata: A Study in Human Development Perspectives](#), Unpublished Report submitted to UNICEF, West Bengal, 2014). It found that the migrant poor are forced to live in unauthorized squatters on the edges of the city where they hardly receive any municipal facilities and social benefits. While they avail certain government facilities (health, education, etc.) the quality of such facilities is poor. They are mostly employed in the informal sector with no job security or social security benefits. There is hardly any scope for such poor people to get vocational training and become skilled workers which can improve their income prospects. Please see Chapter Nine for a quick overview and policy recommendations.

In the context of the above, we would like to initiate a discussion on what could be the content of a possible **internal migration policy in India**. Specifically, we would like to know:

- Examples/good practices of Government/NGO interventions to improve the condition of the migrant workers at the source and destination points? What policies are being adopted in other developing countries like China and Brazil to improve migrants' conditions?
- What could be some social security measures that can be adopted for single migrants and migrant families? What measures can be taken to change the existing social security system to ensure that migrants and non-migrants get the same benefits in a city?
- What can be done to improve the data-base on migrants coming to the cities of India?

Your responses will help in **developing a draft migration policy for India** which will be submitted to Government of India (GoI) in due course. It is also hoped that the discussion itself will help GoI to speed up the process of arriving at a policy for internal migration in the country.

Responses were received, with thanks, from

1. [S. P. Tiwari](#), Trade Union Coordination Committee (TUCC), New Delhi
2. [Ian MacAuslan](#), Oxford Policy Management Limited (OPML), Oxford, United Kingdom
3. [Prameela](#), Sampark, Bangalore
4. [Ravi Nitesh](#), Mission Bhartiya, New Delhi
5. [Nabeela Ahmed](#), University of Sussex, Brighton, United Kingdom
6. [Vikas Dagur](#), Independent Consultant, New Delhi
7. [Shambhu Ghatak](#), Inclusive Media for Change Project, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), New Delhi
8. [Amrita Sharma](#), Center for Migration and Labour Solutions (CMLS), Aajeevika Bureau, Udaipur, Rajasthan
9. [R. K. Bhardwaj](#), IMS Group of Institutions, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh *

**Offline Contribution*

Further contributions are welcome!

[Summary of Responses](#)
[Comparative Experiences](#)
[Related Resources](#)
[Responses in Full](#)

Summary of Responses

Internal migration is a growing policy concern in India. This discussion to develop content of a possible internal migration policy threw up many issues related to internal migrants and also suggested some policy solutions to deal with the problems arising out of internal migration in the country with a focus on children of migrant labour.

Internal migrants face innumerable challenges - absence of proof of identity and residence leading to their inability to claim social protection schemes of the government, disruption in schooling of children, inadequate housing, low-paid hazardous work and discrimination based on class/gender etc. Improving the condition of internal migrants is an important issue in the contemporary development discourse in India and hence the need to discuss the contents of a possible internal migration policy.

The key issues related to internal migration in the country are as follows:

- **Lack of Comprehensive Database on Migrants:** The National Population Register (NPR) and National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) fall short on data captured on short-term and seasonal migrants. There is, therefore, a need to have a comprehensive data on short-term, seasonal and circular migration through well designed tools - to collect data on migration related to employment, or secondary reasons for employment.
- **Lack of Recognition between Migrant's Place of Home and Destination:** Existing government instruments on migration data collection categorizes labour migrants mainly along temporal and spatial dimensions only. Even long-term migrants feel their identities fixed to their native place so are unwilling to give up their ration card access in their native place for a temporary ration card at the destination. This lack of recognition of the link with the native place acts as a hindrance in the interest of migrants.
- **Problematic Service Delivery and Design of Access Structures:** Related to the previous point is the issue of the need for a ration card holder to delete his name on ration card list in one's native place in order to receive benefits through a temporary ration card at the destination. This acts as a big barrier for migrants in accessing social protection entitlements in urban destinations. The lengthy process involved in obtaining a ration card to access Public Distribution System (PDS) also acts as a deterrent.

Suggested Policy Solutions:

- **Definition of Migrants:** The definition of migrants themselves should be broadened to include the linkages – both monetary (remittances) and non-monetary – to the native place. The linkage between migrant and native place, regardless of time/distance/boundary of movement has several implications and should be taken into consideration. The concept and definition of migrants should be broadened to include the nature and degree of linkage with the native place.
- **Systematic Data Management:** Having a database on migrant workers should be compulsory for private employers. Existing state policies have failed to provide legal or social protection to the migrating population, in part due to serious gaps in data on the extent, nature and magnitude of internal migration. Due to the absence of proof of identity and residence, internal migrants (both men and women) are unable to claim social protection entitlements and remain excluded from a large number of government-sponsored schemes and programmes. The need for creating a district, state and national level reliable data on internal migration is the need of the hour.
- **A Central Registry System:** A multi-level (central, state, district, taluka) Central Registry System for labor migrants could also serve as a database on migrants, addressing the gap left by the census.
- **Quality and Accessibility of Schooling:** The Right to Education Act requires the Government of India to ensure that all children aged between 6-14 attend school. To achieve this, access to schools must be improved through free transport schemes and free tuition and materials. Schools should attract migrant children by easing administrative constraints and improving outreach. It is imperative to improve the quality and accessibility of schooling because children who work while attending school (which most migrant children do) are vulnerable to dropout and failure, and must be nurtured and supported rather than marginalized.

- **Use of Social Protection Schemes:** To use social protection and other policies to increase household incomes is another big recommendation. Since it is poverty that transforms child work into child labour, policies aiming to improve household incomes above subsistence – through social protection, livelihoods, and credit and labour market interventions – will reduce the number of children whose work extends into labour. It would be a big service to migrants if the government/NGOs together can help them improve their access to social protection schemes and other such entitlements that would provide monetary/in-kind support to the migrants which would eventually lead to having 'child labour free' migrant families.
- **Portability of Rights through Technology:** Portability of rights should be the main emphasis of any policy for internal migrants. Access to social security entitlements should be guaranteed at both the place of destination and origin. This can be enabled by linking databases via robust technologized and automated end-to-end systems to enable inter-state portability. The information gathered could be used to track migrants and could thus be used as a data collection tool. The ration cards can be barcoded as being tried in some states in India to delink ration card with one particular ration shop thus making access to grains portable within the state. Better use of Aadhaar and Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) biometric smart cards may be envisaged to enable access to schemes on a nationwide basis for migrants.
- **Intra-state Innovative Pilots:** At intra state level, innovative pilots can be undertaken to develop a holistic approach to rural-urban migration whereby a set of connected source and destination areas can be selected. These pilots could provide potential migrants education and livelihoods skills training at source to try and stem whole-household migration (as migration overall cannot be prevented), integrated with health, education and food security schemes for those who do migrate, in destination areas.
- **Inter-state Coordination:** Any internal migrant policy set at central level needs to call for greater consistency across different states in terms of social security programmes. More institutionalized and formal coordination between sending and receiving states regarding things such as shared databases to enable portable access to social security , registration of employers and migrants, and dispute resolution regarding labour laws – would be a good focus for internal migration policy.

Mainstreaming of migration into the development strategies of the country is extremely critical since they play an important albeit invisible role in our economy. Studies show that circular migrants contribute 10 per cent to India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Therefore, it is time that India has an inclusive policy in place for migrants. The hassles they face in day to day life need to be addressed and not neglected any more.

Comparative Experiences

Karnataka

Workers Resource Centres and On-site Day Care Centres, Bangalore (from [Prameela Sampark, Bangalore](#))

To help the migrant workers overcome some of the challenges faced by them, an organization started a Workers Resource Centre (WRC) to create awareness amongst them about social welfare schemes, financial inclusion, public health centers, labour laws and legal counselling. It also started on-site day care centres for children of migrant workers to provide them education and health and nutrition care. It has so far reached about 2500 workers and 500 children in a year.

Related Resources

Recommended Documentation

From [Debraj Bhattacharya](#), Institute of Social Sciences (ISS), Eastern Regional Centre, Kolkata

Why I Left My Village - A Study on Migration from Rural Bihar

Report by Sachindra Narain and Debraj Bhattacharya; Institute of Social Sciences (ISS) and Delegation of the European Union in India; Permission Required: No.

Available at <ftp://ftp.solutionexchange-un.net.in/public/emp/cr/res-060614-03.pdf> (PDF 3584 KB)

Documents the increasing unprofitability of agriculture, ineffectiveness of MGNREGS and the pathetic condition of migrants in urban areas with no social security net.

Children of Migrant Poor in Kolkata - A Study on Human Development Perspectives

Report; by Institute of Social Sciences (ISS), UNICEF, Government of West Bengal, CINI Asha, Don Bosco Ashalayam and ERMS Planning Services

Available at <ftp://ftp.solutionexchange-un.net.in/public/emp/cr/res-060614-04.pdf> (PDF 1414 KB)

With a focus on the children of migrant poor in Kolkata, this report documents the plight of the migrants with little scope to get vocational training and become skilled workers.

Grassroots Perspectives of Child Labour

Briefing Note; by Ian MacAuslan, Valentina Barca, Yashodhan Ghorpade and Gitanjali Pande; Oxford Policy Management (OPM); November 2012; Permission Required: No.

Available at <http://www.opml.co.uk/sites/default/files/Grassroots%20perspectives%20of%20child%20labour%20-%20OPM%20Briefing%20Note%20November%202013.pdf> at

<http://www.opml.co.uk/sites/default/files/Grassroots%20perspectives%20of%20child%20labour%20-%20OPM%20Briefing%20Note%20November%202013.pdf>

Finds that providing high-quality schooling and social protection is a better solution to fight child labour than running campaigns and enforcing legislation to ban child labour.

Migration and Social Protection - Claiming Social Rights Beyond Borders

Book; by Edited by Rachel Sabates-Wheeler and Rayah Feldman; Palgrave Macmillan; April 2011; Permission Required: Yes

Available at <http://www.palgraveconnect.com/pc/doi/10.1057/9780230306554>

Argues that access to major social protection programmes like the PDS needs to be portable, attached to individual & not their residence & not limited by an immovable quota.

From [Nabeela Ahmed](#), University of Sussex, Brighton, United Kingdom

Ending Apartheid

Article; by The Economist; April 2014; Publication date; Permission Required: No.

Available at <http://www.economist.com/news/special-report/21600798-chinas-reforms-work-its-citizens-have-be-made-more-equal-ending-apartheid>

Study of a sample of 7000 internal migrants, which showed that only 1/4 of them were willing to take on urban resident states for fear of losing entitlement in rural native place.

National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013

Act; by Ministry of Justice and Law; Government of India; New Delhi; September 10, 2013; Permission Required: No

Available at <http://indiacode.nic.in/acts-in-pdf/202013.pdf> (PDF 137 KB)

An Act to provide for food and nutritional security by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices to people to live a life with dignity.

Could Aadhaar be the Game Changer for Footloose Labour

Article; by Govind Dhaske; Inclusive Media for Change; India Together; Online; 26 June 2014; Permission Required: No

Available at <http://indiatogether.org/aadhaar-uid-address-proof-for-internal-migrants-economy>

The article throws light on the problems faced by migrants and explores if the UID can indeed live up to its promise of making mobility a smoother process.

Bringing Migrants Back Home

Article; by Pramathesh Ambasta; The Hindu; Online; 16 September 2014; Permission Required: No

Available at <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/bringing-migrants-back-home/article6413424.ece?homepage=true>

The article shares about Orissa Government's announcement of the activation of a toll-free number for migrant labourers in distress to get immediate assistance from government.

From [Amrita Sharma](#), Centre for Migration and Labour Solutions (CMLS), Aajeevika Bureau, Udaipur, Rajasthan

Towards a Better Response to Seasonal Internal Migration in India: Key Policy Recommendations for the XIIth Plan

Report by Anjali Borhade and Rajeev Khandelwal; National Coalition for Security of Migrant Workers (NAC-SOM); 28 December 2010; Permission Required: No.

Available at <ftp://ftp.solutionexchange.net.in/public/emp/cr/res-060614-02.pdf> (PDF; 2159 KB)

Documents a set of recommendations for creation of a migrant friendly policy during the formulation of the XIIth Five Year Plan.

Creative Practices and Policies for Better Inclusion of Migrant Workers: The Experience of Aajeevika Bureau

Paper by Rajiv Khandelwal, Amrita Sharma and Divya Varma; Aajeevika Bureau; Permission Required: No.

Available at http://www.aajeevika.org/assets/pdfs/Creative%20Practices%20and%20Policies%20Paper_Final.pdf

Reviews the experiences and impact of the work done by Aajeevika Bureau, which has initiated an informed discourse on migration by way of demonstrating scalable models.

Aajeevika Working Papers and Research Reports

Working Papers and Research Reports; by Aajeevika Bureau; Permission Required: No.

Available at <http://www.aajeevika.org/research-and-publication.php>

Offers a pool of studies and research products developed with the efforts of Aajeevika's field teams with a focus on migration across diverse field locations.

From [Warisha Yunus](#)

Social Inclusion of Internal Migrants in India - Internal Migration in India Initiative

Report by Marina Faetanini and Rukmini Tankha; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); Permission Required: No.

Available at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002237/223702e.pdf> (PDF; 6738 KB)

Documents existing innovative practices that increase the inclusion of internal migrants in society to assist professionals in their attempts to facilitate the social inclusion of migrants.

Migration, Gender and Social Justice - Connecting Research and Practice Networks

Policy Brief by Indu Agnohitri, Indrani Mazumdar and Neetha N. Pillai; International Development Research Centre (IDRC); Permission Required: No.

Available at http://www.iss.nl/fileadmin/ASSETS/iss/Documents/Research_and_projects/IDRC-MGSJ/PB-08_INDIA-with_credits.pdf (PDF; 1060 KB)

Highlights how the lack of attention to women's migration results in incomplete understanding and lack of acknowledgement of their specific needs and vulnerabilities.

Circular Migration in India

Policy Brief by Kate Bird and Priya Deshingkar; Overseas Development Institute (ODI); Permission Required: No.

Available at <http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/3381.pdf> (PDF; 44 KB)

Explores the circular migration in India and the policy response, and impact of this policy response, on the welfare of migrants and more broadly, on regional inequality.

Recommended Contacts and Experts

From [Warisha Yunus](#)

Rajeev Khandelval, Aajeevika Bureau, Rajasthan

2, Paneri Upwan, Street No.3, Bedla Road, Udaipur; Tel: 91-294-2454092; rajiv@aaajeevika.org; <http://www.aaajeevika.org/index.php>

For over 25 years, he has worked as a development practitioner specialising in poverty, social security and livelihood programmes for rural communities/migrants in Rajasthan.

S. P. Tiwari, Trade Union Coordination Committee (TUCC), West Bengal

28 East Ghoshpara Road, P.O. Shyamnagar, District North 24 Parganas, West Bengal 743127; Tel: tuccindia@gmail.com

The General Secretary of TUCC which is the only central trade union in India working for intra and inter country migration.

Recommended Organizations and Programmes

From [Prameela](#), Sampark, Bangalore

Akshay Patra Foundation (APF), Karnataka

#72, 3rd Floor, 3rd Main Road, 1st & 2nd Stage, Yeshwantpur Industrial Suburb, Rajajinagar Ward No. 10, Bangalore 560022; Tel: 91-80-30143400; Fax: 91-80-23578626; infodesk@akshayapatra.org; <http://www.akshayapatra.org/about-us>

Provides mid-day meal to government school children and to the children of the migrant workers at the on-site day care centres set up by Sampark in and around Bangalore.

Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), Delhi (from [Ravi Nitesh](#), Mission Bhartiya, New Delhi)

Panchdeep Bhawan, Comrade Inderjeet Gupta (CIG) Marg, New Delhi 110002; Tel: 91-11-23234092; Fax: 91-11-23235481; esic-hqrs@esic.in; <http://www.esic.nic.in/index.php>

Responsible for implementing a social security system tailored to provide socio-economic protection to workers including migrants and their dependants covered under the scheme.

From [Nabeela Ahmed](#), University of Sussex, United Kingdom

National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), Delhi

Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Computer Centre, East Block 10, R. K. Puram, New Delhi 110066; http://mospi.nic.in/Mospi_New/site/Home.aspx; Contact Shri. A. K. Mehra; Tel: 91-11-23364522; dq-nssso@nic.in

Largest organisation in India conducting regular socio-economic surveys; need to improvise on research design to collect data on migration related to employment.

Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)

Planning Commission, Government of India (GoI), 3rd Floor, Tower II, Jeevan Bharati Building, Connaught Circus, New Delhi - 110001. Tel.: 91-11-23466899; Fax: 91-22-2652-8141; 080-2353 1947; webadmin-uidai@nic.in; <http://uidai.gov.in>

An Authority to develop and implement the necessary institutional, technical and legal infrastructure to issue UID numbers to Indian residents.

Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY), Delhi

Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE), Delhi Swasth Kutumb Society, Labour Department, 5 Sham Nath Marg, New Delhi 110054; support-rsby@nic.in; <http://www.rsby.gov.in/index.aspx>; Contact Shri. Piyush Sharma; Additional Labour Commissioner; Tel: 91-11-23967495; labjlc3.delhi@nic.in

Health insurance scheme for BPL families that empowers beneficiaries through progressive features - cashless, paperless, portable, IT intensive with rigorous monitoring & evaluation.

Aajeevika Bureau, Rajasthan

2, Paneri Upwan, Street No.3, Bedla Road, Udaipur; Tel: 91-294-2454092; <http://www.aajeevika.org/index.php>; Contact Amrita Sharma; Coordinator; cmls@aajeevika.org

Works to provide lasting solutions to economic & socio-legal problems of migrant workers by creating replicable models offering services and security both at source and destination.

From [Amrita Sharma](#), Centre for Migration and Labour Solutions (CMLS), Aajeevika Bureau, Udaipur, Rajasthan

Disha Foundation, Maharashtra

2, Wild Orchids, Tidke Colony, Nasik 422002; Tel: +91-253-2583969; foundation.disha@gmail.com; <http://dishafoundation.wordpress.com/>; Contact Anjali Borhade; Director; foundation.disha@gmail.com

Works on inter-intra state seasonal labour migration to help them address the challenges of irregular migration and facilitates development-focused solutions for them.

Arthik Anusandhan Kendra, Uttar Pradesh

Devri Nadi Teer, Hallia Block, Mirzapur District; mail@aakendra.org

Works on issues of urban homelessness and migrant families including those of cycle rickshaws drivers and on issues of land rights, education, health, livelihoods, SHGs etc.

Darbar Sahitya Sansad, Odisha

Sodhua, Post Office Dalakasoti, Khurda 752102; Contact Bibhuti Bhusan Mohanty; Founder

Works in Khurda, Puri and Balasore focussing on Livelihood promotion and disaster management, microfinance, SHGs, entrepreneurship development, trainings etc.

Governance Resource Centre - Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra, Uttar Pradesh

Sahbhagi Road, Chhatha Meel (Behind Police Fire Station), Sitapur Road, Lucknow 227208; Tel: 91-522-6980124; info@sahbhagi.org; <http://www.sahbhagi.org/grc.htm>

Promotes local initiative and community ownership in local self-governance system and to coordinate activities related to strengthening of Panchayats, inter alia.

Ghoghardiha Prakhanda Swarajya Vikas Sangh (GPSVS), Bihar

At & PO Jagatpur, Via Ghoghardiha, District Madhubani 847402; Tel: 91-9431025373; Fax: 91-612-25234450; info@gpsvs.org; <http://www.gpsvs.org.in/>

Organizes women and youth into groups and strengthens the capacity of marginalised community for sustainable development and people centred development.

Kalahandi Organization for Agriculture and Rural Marketing Initiative (KARMI, Odisha)
District Kalahandi 766036; Tel: 91-9777779248;
http://www.shram.org/partners_page.php?partnerid=18

Works around issues related to distress migration, disaster management and relief, provision of education & literacy, environment protection and health and family welfare.

Prayas Centre for Labour Research and Action (PCLRA), Gujarat
285, Shanker Colony, On the E-mitra, Fatehapura, Udaipur; Tel: 91-9414296542;
http://www.shram.org/partners_page.php?partnerid=26

Provides support to seasonal migrant workers, and the centre focuses on issue of emerging importance and has attempted to organize seasonal migrant workers.

People's Action for National Integration (PANI), Uttar Pradesh
1/13/190, Civil lines, Faizabad 224001; Tel: 91-5278-225178; Fax: 91-5278-225175;
panisansthan@rediffmail.com; http://www.shram.org/partners_page.php?partnerid=24

Aims to promote communal and social harmony, and is committed to promotion of access to healthcare, education for children and empowerment of the community.

Samarthan - Center for Development Support, Madhya Pradesh
36, Green Avenue, Chuna Bhatti, Kolar Road, Bhopal 462016; Tel: 91-755-2467625; Fax: 91-755-2468663; info@samarthan.org; <http://samarthan.info/>

Promotes participatory governance for inclusion in development processes through capacity building and evidence-based advocacy in the interest of the most marginalized.

Udyama, Odisha
HIG-283/K-5/Kalinga Vihar, Patrapada Post Bhubaneswar 751019; Tel: 91-674-2475666; Fax: 91-674-2475666; udyama.pradeep@gmail.com; <http://www.udyama.org/index.php>; Contact Pradeep Mohapatra; Team Leader; Tel: 91-674-2475666; pradeep@udyama.org

Works on a rights based approach for collective actions towards reducing disaster risk, enhancing livelihood, promoting social justice and gender rights, of migrants too.

Youth Council for Development Alternatives (YCDA), Odisha
At/Po - Baunsuni, Tikrapada Road, District Boudh 76215; Tel: 91-6841-228377;
ycdaboudh@yahoo.co.in; <http://www.ycdaindia.org/>

Initiates field-based intervention focusing on primary education, community health care and livelihood support system, networks with like-minded groups and organizes trainings.

Recommended Communities and Networks

National Coalition for Security of Migrant Workers (NAC-SOM) (from [Nabeela Ahmed](#), University of Sussex, United Kingdom)

<http://www.mazdooradda.com/pages.php?page=22>; info@mazdooradda.com. Contact Dr. Anjali Bhaskar Borhade; Tel: +91-253-262 9939; foundation.disha@gmail.com

A network of civil society organizations, workers associations, researchers & activists, it is committed to work for the rights and a dignified life for the millions of migrant workers.

Related Consolidated Replies

Return Migrants' Access to NREGS, from Seeta Prabhu and Prema Gera, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), New Delhi (Experiences; Examples). Community Name, Location,

Issued 30/09/2009. Available at <ftp://ftp.solutionexchange.net.in/public/emp/cr/cr-se-emp-20070901.pdf> (PDF, 9 KB)

Seeks experiences on return migrants accessing NREGS & examples of NREGS utilizing the skills of the return migrants for selection of activities and their livelihood promotion.

Role of Gram Panchayats in Supporting Migrant Workers, from Debraj Bhattacharya, Institute of Social Sciences (ISS), Kolkata (Experiences; Advice). Decentralization Community and Work and Employment Community, Solution Exchange India,

Issued 30/08/2012. Available at <ftp://ftp.solutionexchange.net.in/public/decn/cr/cr-se-decn-emp-30082012.pdf> (PDF, 678 KB)

Seeks successful experiences of Gram Panchayats helping the migrant workers before they leave and efforts made by state governments to ensure safety of migrants.

Responses in Full

S. P. Tiwari, Trade Union Coordination Committee (TUCC), New Delhi

Perhaps you will be knowing that we are the only central trade union in India working for intra and inter country migration. We will be happy to share our experience with you at anytime.

Ian MacAuslan, Oxford Policy Management Limited (OPML), Oxford, United Kingdom

I'd discuss two examples of my experience:

- Analysis of children migrating between states to work in the cotton sector, and the importance in these cases of a) improving household livelihoods to ensure that children are not *forced* into migration, b) providing schools that can cater for migrant children where entire households migrate or children are forced to migrate, and c) considering whether schools and other social activities can be made more attractive to children at source so that they *choose* not to leave, through for instance incentives for teachers to improve retention, streaming so that teachers don't focus on the best teachers, etc. See for instance <http://www.opml.co.uk/paper/grassroots-views-child-labour>
- Analysis of the access of adults of families that migrate to major national social protection programmes, like the PDS. Currently you lose access to this when you cross an administrative boundary, and getting this access back is extremely difficult (time, money, language, etc.). This is particularly problematic where there are BPL or AAY (as then) quotas which are full up by State and so migrants can't be added to this list. Access needs to be portable, attached to the individual and not their residence and not limited by an immovable quota. See for instance <http://www.palgraveconnect.com/pc/doi/10.1057/9780230306554>

Very important discussion.

Prameela, Sampark, Bangalore

I would like to share about Sampark's experience in working with migrant construction workers and their children. Sampark has set up Workers Resource Centre (WRC) for migrant construction workers. Through WRC it has reaches around 2500 workers and 500 children in a year. Sampark creates **awareness about social welfare schemes** of the Building and Other Construction

Workers Welfare Board and registered about 1300 workers who can access 12 welfare schemes from the Board. These schemes provide education benefit, maternity benefit, accident and death compensation benefit, marriage benefit and loan to buy tools and houses etc.

Sampark creates awareness about **financial inclusion** and opened bank accounts for about 40 workers. Now this can be expedited and bank accounts can be opened for more workers as Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued a circular that there is no need to provide local address proof which is major issue for the migrant workers.

We have created **awareness about public health centers** and linked workers with local Primary Health Centre (PHCs), now most of the pregnant women go for general monthly check ups and accessing public health services through aganwadi centers.

Sampark has set up six **on-site day care centres** where children are taken care of and provided with non-formal education, health care through conducting health camps and nutrition care through providing mid meal. For this, Sampark made linkages with Akshay Patra Foundation which provides mid day meal to millions of children in government schools. After one year some children whose parents are willing to stay in the same construction site for at least one year have enrolled themselves in government schools.

Sampark creates **awareness about labor laws and legal counseling** to deal with issues of delayed or non-payment of wages of workers. Some of the workers are registered with Central Construction Workers Welfare Board. Sampark is working towards **formation of workers collectives and registering them as union** so that it can work as sustainable unit in future.

[Ravi Nitesh](#), Mission Bhartiya, New Delhi

Though I am not directly associated with the issue in terms of my professional work, as a human being working for society, I have some opinions on the issue given here:

I see that particularly in Indian context, internal migration is high, especially in north Indian states. Labor from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh move towards more economically progressive areas like Delhi-NCR, Kolkata, Mumbai and other such areas. This migration happens in search of employment and main areas where these migrants work includes real estate projects and industries.

One can also see this kind of migration from villages to cities for the same reason. However, when these migrants travel long distance, their social security becomes a prime concern. It is evident that many laborers who work on major projects and come alone or along with family face many issues from exploitation to even death due to negligence etc.

Exploitation from the employer is a concern. Living conditions is a concern as they do not get shelter easily and many times they also live on roadside. Education of children who accompany their family is a concern as they do not get time to study due to unavailability of school admission. Also if the family works on projects, then it moves from place to place and in that case school admission is not possible for their children.

Health issues are of concern. Many times they are not get enrolled with Employees State Insurance (ESI) by employer and so they did not get benefit of health checkups etc. Even those who have ESI, do not know how to take its benefit. Enrolment in ESI should be compulsory and should be given to migrants with point wise instructions in local language.

Some measures such as a systematic data management for migrant workers should be compulsory for private employers. Even in present case, inspite of the statutory requirement for enrolment in ESI, Pension Fund (PF) etc, most of the private employers avoid to have it for all employees. In case of any death due to negligence then also most of the time either family did not know about it (in case of individual) or is made to compromise with low compensation by employer.

Surprise checking must be done at employer's place. Awareness about benefits is required for which few hours in a month must be allotted compulsorily to all migrants and this should be delivered by a government official (may be in collaboration with local social organization).

Nabeela Ahmed, University of Sussex, Brighton, United Kingdom

The following are just a few thoughts based mainly on my recently completed doctoral fieldwork. My research aims to improve our understanding of migrants' access to social protection. I aimed to explore whether labour migrants fare worse or better than other urban poor of a similar socio-economic standing and what factors improve or worsen their access to the Public Distribution System (PDS) including the length of stay at destination and the impact of local governance structures. I used the PDS as a case study of access and I conducted the fieldwork in two diverse migrant-states: Maharashtra and Gujarat, to compare the local governance context in each case. I have also held key informant interviews with key stakeholders at both central and state level of government. So my thoughts are more geared to the urban /destination context of migration rather than at the rural/source context.

The following are some of the key issues I have observed in my fieldwork (and also in my preliminary lit review):

Data on Migrants

- There is a need for improved and more comprehensive measures for capturing data specifically on the most vulnerable migrants – seasonal, short-term and circular, as discussed in the ISS papers. Existing national data collection instruments: the population census and National Sample Survey (NSS) fall short on data captured on short-term and seasonal migrants (Srivastava et al., 2003). They are not well-designed to collect data on migration related to employment, or secondary reasons for employment (which could be relevant for marriage migrants). Even the NSSO which takes into account those who are away from home for 2-6 months, still fails to fully capture the scale of short-term mobility as seasonal migration cycles can vary from a few weeks to a few months (7-9 months) and can occur more than once per year (Srivastava, 2011).

Lack of Recognition of Linkages between Migrant's Place of Home and Destination

- Following on from the issue of improving data-collection measures, the concept and definition of migrants themselves should be broadened to include the *nature and degree of linkage* with the native place, for those who are longer-term labour migrants. The typology in the literature and existing government instruments on migration data collection (national census and NSSO) categorises labour migrants mainly along temporal (short-term, long-term, seasonal and chain migration) and spatial (inter-state and intra-state, rural-to-urban, urban-urban) dimensions.
- The definition of migrants themselves should be broadened to include the **linkages** – both monetary (remittances) and non-monetary - to the native place. In my fieldwork, I came across a large proportion of long-term (10 years plus), inter-state migrants (usually from Bihar and UP) who have *immediate family and/or key assets* back home. Their documentation, including the ration card, in many cases were also 'left behind'. Thus the linkage between migrant and native place, regardless of time/distance/boundary of movement has several implications and should be taken into consideration.

- These linkages can also be psychological. For example, despite temporary ration card schemes being set up at state-level in Maharashtra and formerly in Gujarat, many of the migrants I spoke with were unwilling to give up their ration-card access in their native place, even if they had migrated as a household, for temporary access in their place of destination. The ration card holds value as a general identity card and is considered important not only for accessing grains but as a secure and reliable form of identification. Those who are inter-state, longer-term migrants also do not necessarily see themselves as permanent or indefinitely settled in their destination thus feel the need to keep their identities fixed to their 'native place'.
- Similar findings have also been shown among China's rural-to-urban migrants. [A recent study](#) in China by the ministry of agriculture, on a sample of 7000 internal migrants, showed that only a quarter were willing to take on urban resident status for fear of losing their entitlements in their rural native places.

Local Governance and Implementation

- Two issues arise: one of *service delivery* and one of *design of access* structures. In terms of access design: the need for a ration card holder to delete his name on ration card lists in one place in order to receive benefits in another presents a barrier. The lengthy process involved is also a barrier to obtaining or getting a correct ration card for both migrants and non-migrants, according to my findings. In terms of service delivery, corruption afflicts processes both in rural and urban locations and this is a general problem for the urban poor overall - both migrants and non-migrants.
- Access to social security problems are thus general problems for the urban poor and implementation and many of the barriers such as corruption and extortionate agents are linked with poor service delivery at the local government level.

Examples for Policy Solutions Include:

1. Portability of Rights through Technology:

- In order to deal with the circular/seasonal nature of the most vulnerable migrants, and also the fact that many migrants are still 'linked' in some way to their native places and do not wish to eliminate identity/ration cards linked to one place for another: portability of rights should be the main emphasis of any policy for internal migrants;
- Access to social security entitlements should be guaranteed at both place of destination and origin and this can be enabled by linking databases via robust technologised and automated end-to-end systems to enable inter-state portability. While the Adhaar system was initially considered as a potential platform for enabling migrant inclusion in social security schemes – there have been major design, implementation and political issues with this.
- The Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) system might be one example of how biometric data could be linked to identity and enable access to schemes on a nationwide basis. Also the information gathered from this could (and has) be used to track migrants and could thus be used as a data collection tool. However, this data can only be collected if and when migrants use the cards when they go to hospital.
- In Chhattisgarh and Gujarat, the ration card has now been barcoded. In Gujarat, they are experiencing technical implementation problems, but the long term objective is to delink a ration-card with one particular ration shop thus making access to grains portable within the state. The [CORE-PDS](#) scheme in Chhattisgarh seems to have been more successful. The technological infrastructure was already in place when the scheme was introduced in 2012 and biometric information is not needed.
- Relatedly, a central registry system for labour migrants, which is multi-level (central, state, district, talukar etc) could also serve as a vital database on migrants, addressing the gap left by the census.

2. Inter-state Coordination/Local Governance

- Any internal migrant policy set at central level needs to call for greater consistency across different states in terms of social security programmes. For example, the new National Food Security Act (NFSA) requires each state to set their own criteria for PDS entitlements and this has strong implications for migrants when they move from state to state in terms of their eligibility for social entitlements.
- Some MOUs have already been signed by states in migration corridors such as Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. The government of Rajasthan has been involved in setting up [identity cards for migrants to Gujarat](#) (an Aajeevika Bureau NGO programme). More institutionalised and formal coordination between sending and receiving states - regarding things such as shared databases to enable portable access to social security, registration of employers and migrants, and dispute resolution regarding labour laws – would be a good focus area for internal migrant policy.
- At intra-state level, in the Nashik district of Maharashtra, the tribal department is piloting a holistic approach to rural-urban migration whereby a set of connected source and destination areas have been selected. Education and livelihoods skills training is given at source to try and stem whole-household migration (as migration overall cannot be prevented), integrated with health, education and food security (PDS access) schemes for those who do migrate, in destination areas.

[Vikas Dagur](#), Independent Consultant, New Delhi

I am an independent consultant working on health and social development issues. The issue raised here, "migration policy" attracted my attention as it relates to one of my recent assignments. We have just conducted a study in Chandigarh to identify situation of general public of Chandigarh, growth of slums and pressure on beautiful city due to increased population. As evident from various reports and studies, population growth in major cities is directly affected by migration of people in search of employment or better life.

The situation is quite visible in Chandigarh city, where in last 3 decades population has grown nine folds. The original design of the city has completely changed with mushrooming slums in and around the city. Now administration has also consciously marked 19 such clusters for slum development efforts. The report of the study highlights status of health, education, nutrition and other basic amenities but here I am drawing attention towards migration issue only.

The migration is common among all metros and developed towns in the states. After discussions with various experts and city developers we came up with following questions/recommendations/challenges:

- Is there any migration policy which defines the inflow of people from one place to another?
- Can there be any policy restricting people moving around in their own country?
- Major challenges among the officials is to make a check on migrating population. Can we define a criteria for migration so that it may not create a messy situation in any city with growth of time
- Can migration be controlled by Governments or appropriate authorities?

Above mentioned factors were raised among city officials and no appropriate answer was found. The concerns are valid because:

- Most of the settlements in almost all cities are on Government land.
- The encroachments have long term impacts on the health and environment of the city
- The migration put additional pressure of slum development and housing schemes on the national and state budget

- And, original residents of the city are adversely affected with the development of slums

Solutions were drawn, which may not be relevant here with this query, but as far as migration is concerned, I strongly believe, there should be some provision to manage the inflow in any city/town controlled at some point by the authorities so as to know the exact situation. It seems difficult, but identification of reasons of migration and players who catalyze the migration in masses may lead us to some solution by making strict provisions for them. Here I am indicating real estate sector which today counts for heavy migration and leaves migrated population with no safety and security after finishing their tasks.

Shambhu Ghatak, Inclusive Media for Change Project, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), New Delhi

In connection to the discussion on developing a draft migration policy for India, which will be submitted to Government of India (GoI), I would like to share with all of you my following article:

Could Aadhaar be the game changer for footloose labour? 26 June, 2014 - <http://indiatogether.org/aadhaar-uid-address-proof-for-internal-migrants-economy>

Several recent studies bring out the abysmal deprivation from entitlements among India's vast internal migrant population. The article throws light on the problems faced by migrants and explores if the UID can indeed live up to its promise of making mobility a smoother process.

Amrita Sharma, Center for Migration and Labour Solutions (CMLS), Aajeevika Bureau, Udaipur, Rajasthan

Thanks for sharing the studies done by you on internal migration and for generating this query on social security and policy framework for migrants in India.

Just to introduce myself, my name is Amrita Sharma and I work with Aajeevika Bureau, a non-government organization engaging with issues of seasonal migrants in India, particularly in the context of south-Rajasthan-Gujarat migration corridor. Aajeevika has been working with the seasonal migrant communities for the last nine years and has been able to put together a package of services suited to their requirements – these services are meant to reduce the hardships workers face while in transit in the rural-urban continuum and also help them leverage migration as a livelihood opportunity. We are also working with 30 organizations across 10 states of India helping them develop interventions suited to different migration contexts. I felt that the experiences of this community might be of interest to you.

- 1) To start with you may want to look at the basic model of services set up by Aajeevika for migrant workers – it essentially runs with help of walk-in resource centers called Shramik Sahayata evam Sandarbha Kendras, based at both the ends of the migration corridor – the source and the destination. These centers offer a range of targeted livelihood services to this community including worker registration and photo ID, skill training and placement, legal aid and education, financial inclusion and social security linkages, healthcare, promoting worker collectives and more. These centers also work with the families of migrants left-behind, helping them cope with long term male absence and access basic entitlements. There is a paper documenting some of the core elements of this experience that you may want to look at – http://www.aajeevika.org/assets/pdfs/Creative%20Practices%20and%20Policies%20Paper_Final.pdf. This paper also talks of some other notable models of work with migrants, tried out by the wider group of civil society organizations in India.

- 2) A coalition of 30 plus organizations also put together a set of recommendations for creation of a migrant friendly policy, during the formulation of the 12th Plan (the name of the Coalition is now changed to National Coalition for Security of Migrant Workers/NAC-SOM). I am [attaching](#) the draft of the recommendations. You may find them useful.
- 3) Recently, Aajeevika also worked on the first ever seasonal state migration profile of Rajasthan, leveraging primary evidence on migration patterns, numbers and experiences of serving the migrant community, as garnered by 10 civil society organizations in the state. It carries set of comprehensive guidelines for Rajasthan government for better management of internal migration. These guidelines, however, would be relevant for the wider group of seasonal migrants in India as well. The document is now ready for release (in October 2014) but is still to be made available in the public domain. However, you may reach out to cmls@ajeevika.org for a draft of the document.
- 4) There is another initiative by UNESCO-UNICEF under which they documented best practices/solutions for internal migrants. The report was released last December titled "Social Protection of Migrant Workers in India". It documents experiences of a wide range of organizations across the country. You might be aware of this.

For more details you may want to visit www.ajeevika.org. There is a large pool of field studies done on migration patterns, service requirements of workers that you may find useful - <http://www.ajeevika.org/research-and-publication.php>.

I hope you would find the above information useful. In case you have any further queries, please feel free to write to us at cmls@ajeevika.org.

[R. K. Bhardwaj](#), IMS Group of Institutions, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh *

I have the following suggestion:

The Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) should be integrated with skill development / training programme in micro and small enterprises. There are more than 26 million Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). They normally have to employ unskilled rural youth as they can't afford high salaries offered by large sector. After a period of a year or more when the employee gets employable skills, he leaves for some large sector company due to better brand image.

Thus the SMEs have to employ unskilled youths again. If MGNREGS is integrated with skill development / training scheme by paying the amount under MGNREGS to employer of a new unskilled worker then it will compensate the employer for the rejection / productivity loss suffered while providing training to new employee. At the same time the employee will get employable skills and will not have to depend on MGNREGS perpetually.

I also want to comment on Vikas' response. Firstly, it is fundamental right of every citizen of India to move freely and make a living in any part of country. Hon'ble Supreme Court has said that no Government can change that. But even if for argument sake it is possible to seek Government permission to control movement from one place to another, I think you can imagine it would add to the misery of people; not reduce it. We don't have to control the movement of people but rather have to create job opportunities in rural areas.

Many thanks to all who contributed to this query!

If you have further information to share on this topic, please send it to Solution Exchange for the Work and Employment Community in India at se-emp@solutionexchange-un.net.in with the subject

heading "Re: [se-emp] Query: Social Security and Policy Framework for Internal Migrants in India – Examples; Advice. Additional Reply."

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