

**MIGRATION,
DEVELOPMENT
AND POVERTY
REDUCTION
IN ASIA**



IOM International Organization for Migration

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Publisher: International Organization for Migration
17 route des Morillons
1211 Geneva 19
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Tel: +41.22.717 91 11
Fax: +41.22.798 61 50
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Migration, Development and Poverty Reduction in Asia



IOM International Organization for Migration

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
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Finally, it has been a great pleasure working with the authors whose papers are included in this volume and we thank each of them for their contribution.

Gervais Appave and Frank Laczko
IOM Migration Policy and Research Department, Geneva

FOREWORD

The Regional Conference on Migration and Development in Asia, held in Lanzhou, China from 14-16 March 2005, was an important event in bringing together a group of key people – government representatives, international organizations, academics and practitioners – to look at internal migration and how it affects, and is affected by development in the countries of Asia.

Though there has been increasing attention paid to the potential role migration can play in fostering development, most of that attention has tended to focus on international migration. Internal migration has been somewhat neglected but is also an extremely important policy area.

The Lanzhou Conference focused on the contribution internal migrants make to local and national development, including poverty reduction, and how this can be complemented by strategies to reduce the risks of migration for poor people. Migration patterns and dynamics within the countries of the Asian region are very diverse, and policy approaches differ, but the countries have much to learn from each other. The Conference encouraged participants also to consider the linkages between internal and international migration. Internal migration is sometimes the first step before international migration, but even where it is not, there are important linkages and lessons.

IOM is particularly grateful to the Government of the People's Republic of China for hosting this conference and to the UK's Department for International Development which sponsored it.

This publication contains the background documents prepared for the Conference, and a summary of the statements made during the Conference deliberations. Together, they offer a wealth of information and advice, issues to consider and means to address them, based on the experiences of those who came together in Lanzhou. I hope that this collection will contribute both to a broader understanding of internal migration and development challenges in Asia, and to practical measures to enable the countries in the region to maximize the benefits of internal migration. We need to learn from successful models, and to build the capacity of policy makers to manage internal migration in ways that contribute to development and poverty reduction.

Brunson McKinley
Director General
International Organization for Migration

MIGRATION, DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY IN ASIA*

INTRODUCTION

Importance of internal migration

Earlier versions of the papers in this volume were presented at the “Regional Conference on Migration and Development in Asia”, held in Lanzhou, China, 14-16 March 2005. The conference, hosted by China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was organized by IOM and funded by Britain’s Department for International Development (DFID). Nearly 100 participants, including government officials, representatives of international organizations, civil society and experts attended the conference.

The Lanzhou conference was in part intended as a follow-up to the successful Regional Conference on Migration, Development and Pro-Poor Policy Choices in Asia, that had been organized by DFID, and the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit, University of Dhaka, and held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in June 2003.

At the Dhaka conference it was noted that while international migration is recognized as an important source of foreign exchange and investment, internal migrants are often “invisible” (DFID, 2003). It was therefore decided that the Lanzhou conference should devote more attention to the subject of internal migration and the contribution internal migrants make to local and national development, including poverty reduction.

In recent years the word “migration” has nearly always been associated with “international migration” (Skeldon, 2003), while internal migration has been subsumed under such terms as “population distribution” or “urbanization”. Those working on international migration seldom consider internal migration as relevant to their interests and vice versa (Skeldon, 2003). Internal migration, therefore, has tended to be neglected in the current debate about migration and development.

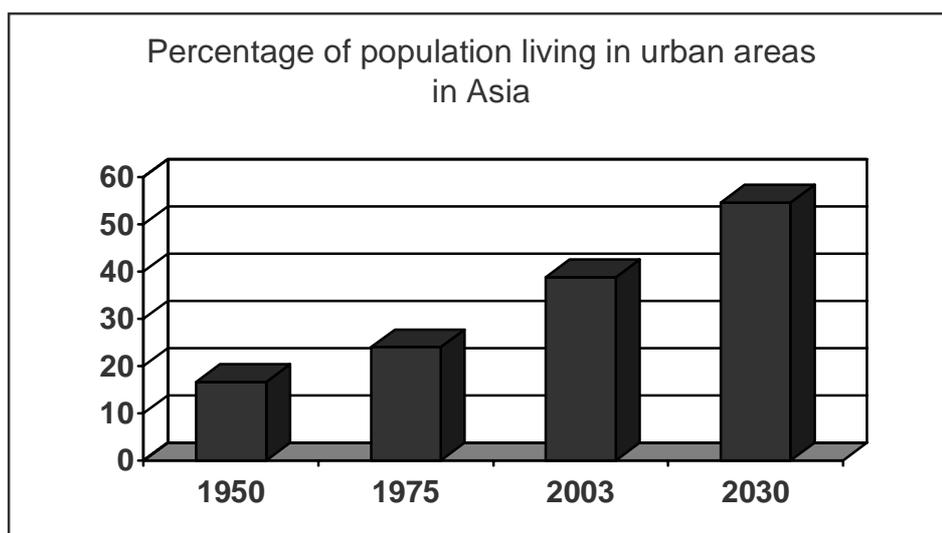
During the last few years the awareness that migration can and does contribute to development and poverty reduction has grown among policy makers worldwide. Research on this subject has also grown and several new publications by UN agencies and others are devoting considerable space to the effects of migration on development. This development notwithstanding, the debate concerning the linkages between migration and development focuses almost entirely on the impact of international migration, or how development affects the international movements of people (cf. e.g., Lucas, 2005).

* Frank Laczko, Chief, Research and Publications Division, IOM Geneva.

One reason why internal migration tends to be “less visible” is that internal migration tends to be even less well documented than international migration trends. There are no global figures regarding the number of internal migrants and few comparable data for Asian countries, as the papers in this volume make very clear. Yet, the scale of internal migration is likely to exceed international migration by far (Deshingkar, 2005). By 2000 an estimated 175 million people were living outside their country of birth, of whom nearly 44 million were in Asia (IOM, 2003). In the same year, according to the Fifth Population Census, China alone counted 121 million internal migrants (see Huang Ping, this volume). In Viet Nam, 4.3 million people moved internally between 1994-1999, compared with less than 300,000 moving abroad (see Dang, this volume).

Furthermore, there are indicators that internal migration in Asia is rising very rapidly and that it will become even more important in the future. By 2030, Asia is expected to be home to more than half of the world’s urban population (see Chart 1). Over the past few decades, Asia experienced the rapid growth of manufacturing industries in urban areas that drew migrants from the countryside. To give but one example, in Bangladesh migration from rural areas accounted for about two-thirds of urban growth since independence (see Afsar, this volume).

Chart 1



Source: UN, 2003.

As regards China, the growth in internal migration is especially rapid. In his opening address at the Lanzhou conference, Mr. Adrian Davis, Head of the DFID office in China, noted that:

China is currently undergoing the most rapid migration of the largest number of people over the shortest period of time in human history.

According to a World Bank estimate, 15 million rural migrants are moving to urban centres in China each year. Based on current projections, the urban population in China could increase from 36 per cent to roughly 57 per cent of the total population over the next 20 years (UN, 2005).

When considering the impact of internal migration on development and the policies to manage internal migration, it has to be borne in mind that not all movements are rural to urban, and that rural-urban, rural-rural, urban-rural and urban-urban movements are equally concerned. For example, the Viet Nam country paper in this volume shows that 37 per cent of internal migration recorded in the 1999 census consisted of rural-to-rural flows. In China, according to the 2000 census, approximately 30 per cent of flows were other than rural-to-urban (see paper by Huang Ping, this volume). Any examination of the relationships between poverty and migration has to pay due regard to rural-to-rural flows, as it is among these that we may find the poorest migrants (Skeldon, 2003). The rural poor may migrate for a number of reasons, the demand for cheap labour in different regions, the desire to break free from traditional cultural roles, the lack of job opportunities at home etc.

It has to be borne in mind that, just as international migration, internal migration can also be permanent or temporary, seasonal or circulatory, and that movements may be forced or voluntary. As the principal aim of the Lanzhou conference was to investigate, and to raise awareness of, the potential benefits of migration for development, its main focus was on economic migration rather than forced internal displacement resulting from conflict, natural disasters or environmental degradation.

Internal migration, poverty reduction and development

Though the links between migration and development are widely recognized, the emphasis is changing. Traditionally, much of the focus was directed on the negative effects of migration on development. Migration was habitually viewed as the result of poverty and lack of development, or as a factor contributing to poverty in urban or rural areas. Internal migration, therefore, was sometimes considered as an obstacle to development that had to be restricted and controlled (Dang, 2003).

But internal migration can also have a positive impact on development and poverty reduction. Internal migration can be a crucial livelihood strategy for many poor people, and an important contributor to national economic growth (DFID, 2003). Internal migration has the potential to contribute to development in a number of ways. By supplementing their earnings through off-farm labour in urban areas rural households diversify their sources of income and accumulate more collective capital. In the short term migration may result in the loss of local financial and human capital, but it can also be beneficial and contribute to the long-term development of rural areas.

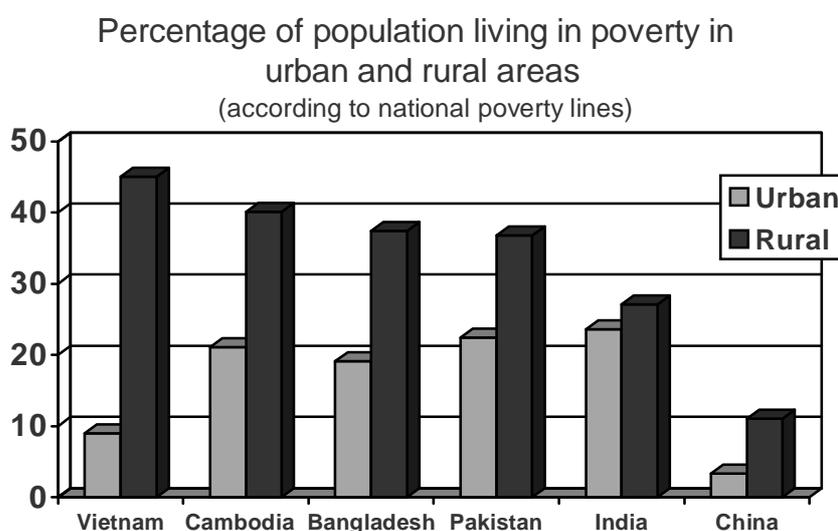
In particular, internal migrants' remittances can be a significant factor in alleviating poverty of rural households. Remittances from urban employment supplement rural incomes, boost consumption in rural areas, contribute to household savings and thus can stimulate the local economy. In China, an official survey of over 20,000 rural households suggests remittances are likely to become a more important source of income for rural households than earnings from agriculture. An estimated 98 million villagers who had migrated, sent or brought home roughly US\$ 45 billion in 2003, an increase of 8.5 per cent from 2002 (World Bank, 2004, internal communication).

Research on internal migration from several Asian countries indicates that remittances are a major source of income for those who remain in rural areas (Deshingkar, 2005). According to a study referred to in the India country paper in this volume, 89 per cent of outmigrants sent remittances back home. Another study in India found that one-quarter to one-third of households received remittances. In Thailand, remittances make up almost a quarter of all household income in rural north-east Thailand (Guest, 2003). In Viet Nam, the 1999 Vietnam Living Standards Survey showed that over 23 per cent of households received remittances during the 12 months prior to the survey and that they accounted for 38 per cent of all household expenditures (Dang, this volume).

Migrants who maintain links with their area of origin are likely to transfer resources (remittances, investments, human capital and information) to their home base and thereby help to raise the standards of living in rural communities, and contribute to local economic development. Return migrants, in particular, constitute an important potential source of investment, entrepreneurship and experience that can benefit the local population. For a more extensive discussion of the costs and benefits of return migration for development, see the paper by Rachel Murphy in this volume, which discusses the impact of return migration in China.

Although there is growing recognition that migration can play a role in reducing poverty, detailed research on how migration contributes to development is still lacking. For example, we know that at the macroeconomic level poverty has decreased substantially in China and India over the last 15 years, during a period when internal migration was rising rapidly. In fact, much of the progress made in reducing poverty throughout the world is based on a substantial fall in the poverty rate in India and China. The poverty rate in China dropped from 33 per cent to 17 per cent between 1990-2001, and in India it fell from 42 per cent to 35 per cent during the same period. China's low population growth rate and rapid poverty reduction resulted in 165 million people being lifted out of poverty (UN, 2005). The extent to which migration may have contributed to poverty reduction in these countries is not really known, but the effect could have been substantial. On the other hand, roughly three-quarters of the poorest people in Asia still live in

Chart 2



Source: UNESCAP, 2004.

rural areas and rapid development has accentuated regional inequalities and accelerated urban poverty in some areas. Chart 2 shows the extent to which poverty is concentrated in rural areas in Asia. The table also suggests that poverty rates in China and India are lower than in Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Cambodia.

Migration can be an effective tool to fight poverty in less developed countries, but it does not always play such a role. Appropriate policies and programmes must be developed if the chances for internal migration to alleviate poverty in the countries and regions of origin are to be maximized. The challenge for governments and other stakeholders is to recognize and facilitate migration that is most likely to lead to a reduction in poverty, while protecting migrants from abuse and exploitation. The movement of large numbers of people into urban areas puts pressure on services such as housing, health and education and may lead to the continued marginalization and vulnerability of migrants who fail to gain a foothold on the social ladder to personal improvement.

Migrants frequently lack access to basic social services when this depends on their being officially resident in an urban area. Newcomers may also lack the necessary knowledge and information concerning available services. Due to poor working and living conditions migrants may be exposed to increased health risks.

Many migrants work in the informal sector in urban areas. The benefits for employers – lower wages, a flexible workforce, weak or no regulation of working conditions – translate into potential disadvantages for migrants who are subject to uncertain terms of employment, dangerous conditions of work and exploitation. The most serious forms of exploitation occur in cases of internal trafficking. Trafficking is driven, among other factors, by changes in the global economy that have created or accentuated major economic disparities between and within countries, thus exposing poor people to trafficking for economic and sexual exploitation. A recent study of trafficking in Asia, published by the Asian Development Bank, found that the “most commonly identified push factor driving the trafficking process is poverty” (ADB, 2003).

Migration may also have a negative impact on communities left behind in sending areas, particularly on such vulnerable groups as the elderly and children. Elderly people, for example, may face increased work burdens, lack of emotional care and, in some instances, lack of income or social support. These problems are discussed in more detail in the paper by Rachel Murphy in this volume.

Policy issues

One of the main aims of the Lanzhou conference was to provide an opportunity to share information regarding different policy approaches and to identify practical ways to promote the benefits of internal migration for poverty reduction and development.

For those dealing with development policy, one of the key challenges is the integration of a migration perspective into strategies aimed at promoting development and reducing poverty. Currently, internal migration is barely mentioned in key policy documents that provide a framework for poverty reduction and development strategies in developing countries.

The current UN frame of reference for development is set by the eight Millennium Development Goals:

1. Eradicating extreme hunger and poverty;
2. Achieving universal primary education;
3. Promoting gender equality and empower women;
4. Reducing child mortality;
5. Improving maternal health;
6. Combating HIV and Aids, malaria and other diseases;
7. Ensuring environmental stability;
8. Developing a global partnership for development.

Over the next ten years, the international community will work towards the achievement of these goals. However, the role of migration in regard to these goals has not yet been clearly defined, particularly as regards the reduction of poverty, and there is often little specific mention of the contribution that migration can make to development (IOM, 2005). For example, in the recent UN report “Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals” (UN, 2005) there is little specific reference to either internal or international migration.

Although migration and remittances are important processes through which low-income households can escape poverty, this is rarely acknowledged in national poverty reduction strategies. For example, in her paper on Bangladesh, in this volume, Afsar notes that:

...some donor policies indirectly address migration issues through capacity development programmes in small and medium-sized towns, but there is no focused effort on migration issues.

A recent review of 48 poverty reduction strategy papers (PSRPS) found that 21 made no mention of migration; nine saw it as a cause of “brain drain”, while others perceived internal migration in negative terms as a cause of urban poverty, the spread of HIV/AIDS or other problems (DFID, 2004).

National policy frameworks

Another objective of the Lanzhou conference was to gain a better understanding of the different national policy approaches, and the extent to which internal migration was being managed to achieve particular development goals. The conference provided an opportunity for countries to learn about the policy experiences of their neighbours.

There are many different policy instruments that national governments use to try to manage internal migratory flows. A distinction can be made between direct measures targeted at migrants or potential migrants, and more general measures to combat poverty that may have a special impact on migrants, such as rural development policies.

Some governments try to restrict migration through a variety of means, including measures to control the growth of large cities, police registration, travel restrictions and location-specific work or residence permits. Others aim to encourage migration and provide those wishing to migrate with vocational training and information about employment opportunities elsewhere.

Another policy approach concerns rural development and efforts to boost development in migration-generating areas and to help those “left behind”. These policies can be motivated by a desire to offer an alternative to migration, or to protect those who are unable to migrate.

However, it is often difficult to identify the actual national policy approach of a particular country, as many different ministries are responsible for different aspects of internal migration. As internal migration affects the work of many different government departments dealing with agriculture, labour, urban development, health, social welfare etc., it is sometimes difficult to identify a clearly defined national policy. As Deshingkar comments in her paper, in some countries “internal migration is everyone’s concern and nobody’s concern”. However, in other countries, such as China and Viet Nam, a national policy towards internal migration is in place and, in the case of China, there has been a shift in favour of encouraging internal migration in order to boost economic development (see paper by Huang Ping).

Conference objectives and structure of this report

Like the 2003 Dhaka conference, the Lanzhou conference focused on the migration and development experiences of a selected number of Asian countries – Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Pakistan and Viet Nam.

These countries were selected to illustrate a variety of different migration trends and policy contexts. In addition, the conference was organized around five main themes that were discussed in workshop sessions:

- The role of internal migration in poverty reduction.
- Gender-specific features of internal migration.
- Health challenges related to internal migration.
- The links between internal and international migration.
- The expansion of an evidence base to support internal migration policy.

The first three themes relate to core development objectives. Eradicating extreme poverty, promoting gender equality, combating HIV and Aids and improving child and maternal health are among the key goals that the international community has agreed to work towards to achieve the “Millennium Development Goals” (MDGs). The fourth and fifth themes are important because too often the relationship between internal and international migration is overlooked. Internal migration can potentially facilitate international migration as migrants move from villages towards urban areas where migrants can find information about opportunities overseas and assistance to move abroad (Skeldon, 2003). Conversely, international migration can have an effect on internal migration. For example, the loss of people from one area or region due to international migration may stimulate internal migration as other people move into these areas to take advantage of jobs that have been vacated. Unfortunately, because of two quite distinct research trad-

itions, with one dealing with internal migration and another with international migration, rarely do you find studies of migration and development which examine this relationship between internal and international migration (Skeldon, 2003).

One of the key aims of the Lanzhou conference was to identify more effective ways to enhance the benefits of internal migration for poverty reduction and development, and how this could be complemented by strategies to ensure that migrants have decent working conditions and access to health and social services. The conference focused on several questions of particular importance for migration and poverty reduction. First, what conditions ensured that migration reduced poverty and vulnerability effectively? Second, how could it be ensured that development policies and interventions were based on local realities that built on the resources and strategies of the migrants themselves and their communities? Third, what lessons could be learned from successful examples of practical interventions in one country that might be replicated elsewhere? Fourth, how to strengthen the capacity of policy makers and government officials to manage internal migration in a way that it contributed to development and poverty reduction? In addition to these objectives the conference also sought to raise awareness of the importance of internal migration for development in Asia, and discussed ways in which a migration perspective could be better integrated into developing countries' poverty reduction strategies.

This report includes several different types of papers. The first paper, prepared by Priya Deshingkar, is a regional overview that compares trends in internal migration in the region and discusses the impact of internal migration on poverty reduction. The paper also discusses policy responses and examples of innovative projects and programmes which seek to enhance the benefits of internal migration for development. This is followed by a series of country papers on China, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Viet Nam. These papers provide a more detailed analysis of the factors contributing to internal migration in each country, and a discussion of the implications for poverty reduction strategies.

The following series of papers relate to some of the themes of the conference. Two of them focus on health issues, and two on gender perspectives. These short briefing papers were prepared to facilitate the discussions in the conference workshops dealing with these themes. The thematic paper prepared by Rachel Murphy concerning the impact of internal migration on rural areas in China, and especially on those "left behind", completes this section.

Finally, we conclude this volume with a report on the conference proceedings and a synthesis of the main discussions. A number of recommendations for further action arising out of the conference discussions are presented at the end of this report. On the conference website especially created for the Lanzhou conference, the reader will also find information about case studies of migration and development projects that represent examples of innovative practices – see www.iom.int/chinaconference/.

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**MAXIMIZING THE BENEFITS OF
INTERNAL MIGRATION FOR DEVELOPMENT**

**Dr Priya Deshingkar
Overseas Development Institute, London**

This paper was prepared by Dr Priya Deshingkar, Research Fellow from the Overseas Development Institute, London.

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not engage either the Organizations or the national authorities concerned.

MAXIMIZING THE BENEFITS OF INTERNAL MIGRATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The paper contrasts and compares the evidence on internal migration in Asia to gain a better understanding of the links between migration, poverty reduction and development. Recent field studies across Asia show that internal migration is growing and, if managed properly, can play an important role in poverty reduction and the redistribution of the benefits of location-specific growth to underdeveloped regions. As always, there are differences in the specific drivers of migration, the conditions under which people migrate, wages of migrant workers, the costs and risks of migration and the impact of remittances on the household and the wider economy, depending on the respective locations. Current development policies need accompanying measures to make migration less risky and less expensive for both those leaving and those staying behind.

Fresh evidence from a range of sources, including official statistics, village studies by academics, NGOs and donor agencies indicates that the main new pull factors attracting people from the overpopulated and fragile rural hinterlands is the spread in urban services, manufacturing and construction. The result is a growing tide of rural-urban migrants. Even if migrant jobs are in the risky informal sector, the gains to be made can be several times higher than wages in rain-fed agriculture. Seasonal pushes have now been superseded by all-year pulls in many locations. At the same time, rural-rural migration from poor areas to rich areas for fish processing, plantation and peak season operations continues to be important.

Although the question whether migration perpetuates or reduces poverty will never be wholly resolved, this paper argues that migration has led to a rise in disposable incomes in many rural areas, and this can lead to better living standards. Concerns over worsening inequality as a result of migration are also addressed and recent evidence of the equalizing effects of migration presented. In particular, substantial remittances can offset the effects of the loss of local labour that were feared by many analysts, and also stimulate the local economy and land market over time. The manner in which remittances are utilized varies, and although much is used for sometimes criticized consumption purposes, the paper argues that these, too, can have positive impacts on sending households and exert a multiplier effect on the economy, in turn leading to a virtuous circle of poverty reduction and development in the countryside. The paper also highlights a common problem with pessimistic migration analyses; namely that they fail to pose the converse question of what these households would have done in the absence of the opportunity to migrate. The paper concedes that although migration is not the ideal solution to employment generation and poverty reduction, it is turning out to be an important route out of poverty in places where conventional development efforts have had limited success.

On a more cautionary note, the paper draws attention to the threats these virtuous circles created by migration can face, especially in sectors where protective policies regarding some industries are removed and competition from other countries is severe. The example of the ready-made

garment industry is discussed in some detail as it has attracted millions of rural-urban migrants across Asia in the last decade. The end of the Multi-Fibre Agreement (MFA) in 2005 will inevitably result in the closure of less competitive garment manufacturing units. It is argued that countries such as Cambodia and Bangladesh could face disastrous consequences, such as downward spirals in the economy and pushing retrenched workers into dangerous occupations, unless timely efforts are made to retrain workers and open up other areas for diversification.

The projects and policies reviewed in the paper indicate that scattered efforts are being made in this direction, but that most are still at the conceptual stage. The slow policy response is in part due to inadequate data sets and methods for understanding migration and remittance flows. Another barrier is the traditional orthodoxy of tackling local poverty mainly by pouring more resources into poor and marginal areas, without due regard to the limitations of doing so. Added to this is the fear by the middle-class population of overburdened cities that denies poor labourers basic rights, while exploiting their cheap labour. In the meantime, poor people are braving a range of adverse circumstances to access new markets and opportunities. Migrants remain one of the most vulnerable social groups in any country, and women are particularly vulnerable to underpayment, sexual abuse and heavy workloads.

The paper is presented in three sections, starting with the main patterns of internal migration by region. These are contrasted and compared, and major policy challenges identified. We touch upon the issue of cross-border migration, especially in countries with porous borders and where both sides belong to culturally similar groups, as in the case of India and Bangladesh, or Cambodia and Viet Nam. The first section also discusses the (lack of) adequacy of data sources. This is followed by a discussion on migration and poverty reduction both in terms of poverty as a driving force of migration, and the impact of migration on poverty. The relationship between migration and inequality is also discussed. The last and most detailed section of the paper provides a review of policy and programmatic approaches using examples of good practice. It explores ways in which migration might be incorporated into development policy and practice, and identifies knowledge gaps and research needs, especially for the improvement of data on migration.

A. MAIN PATTERNS OF INTERNAL MIGRATION IN ASIA

More people migrate internally in many countries

International migration has attracted a great deal of policy attention in recent years, obscuring the fact that internal migration is often far more important in terms of the numbers of people involved, and perhaps even the amount of remittances they send back home. This is especially true of large and populous countries such as China and India. For example, there are between 60-120 million internal migrants in China against a mere 458,000 people migrating internationally for work (Ping, 2003). In Viet Nam, roughly 4.3 million people migrated internally in the five years before the 1999 census, whereas the number of international migrants was below 300,000 (Anh et al., 2003). In India, too, internal migration numbers run into millions, while international migration is only a fraction of this (Srivastava and Sasikumar, 2003). Likewise, in Nepal rural-rural migration from poor mountain areas to the agriculturally prosperous plains

accounts for 68 per cent of total population movement, while rural-urban movements make up only 25 per cent (Bal Kumar, 2003) despite the country's image as an exporter of *Ghurkha* workers, where mountain dwellers go to the plains to work as drivers, security guards and similar occupations. There are references to the importance of internal labour migration and remittances in many other countries, including Bangladesh (Afsar, 2003), Pakistan (Gazdar, 2003), Cambodia (ADB, 2001), Viet Nam (Anh et al., 2003; Government of Viet Nam, 2003), Lao PDR (Acharya, 2003), Mongolia (Tsogtsaikhan, 2003).

Clearly, there is a high degree of spatial mobility among workers, not just concerning the scale of movements, but also the increase in the diversity of migration streams in terms of the distance, destination, nature of work and gender composition of the migrant workforce, as the following paragraphs show. The drivers of these movements include regional imbalances in employment opportunities, improved communications, road and transport networks and changing aspirations of the younger generation.

Temporary migration is increasing

Developing country populations have never been static and people have moved around a great deal for a number of historical, cultural, climatic and economic reasons. However, as we will see in the coming paragraphs, recent household surveys together with anecdotal evidence suggests that there has been a dramatic increase in internal and cross-border population movements. In many poor countries rural-rural migration still dominates as labourers from poorer regions travel to the agriculturally prosperous, often irrigated, areas where there is more work. Rural-rural migration typically involves poorer groups with little education or other assets, as it requires lower investments.

Although still not the main form of migration in many developing countries, rural-urban migration is rapidly gaining in importance, especially in urbanizing economies, as rural-urban wage differentials grow and the returns from migration increase. Even in poorer South-East Asian countries, such as the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Cambodia, rural-urban labour migration has been on the increase in recent years due to urbanization and industrialization (Acharya, 2003).

As expected, there is a great deal of diversity in migration streams and the drivers differ according to history, social context, markets and policy environments. The countries and geographical regions discussed below¹ illustrate various differences and the policy challenges they present. The available evidence suggests that migration patterns in South Asia are similar to South-East Asia to the extent that a lack of opportunities at home, unequal regional development, urbanization and manufacturing are major drivers. Differences relate to the macroeconomic context, especially the shock of the economic crisis of 1997, as well as the expansion and shrinking of specific sectors, such as the garments industry or the bicycle rickshaw economy. There are also differences related to the ethnic/caste profile of migrating communities and their different propensities to migrate, as well as gender, with more women migrating in South-East Asia.

South-East Asia

In South-East Asia urbanization and the expansion of manufacturing, especially for export, have led to an enormous rise in both short- and long-term migration. Although the economic crisis of 1997 radically altered the economic context and migration streams, and hit informal sector occupations particularly badly, it did not curtail or reverse the long-term growth in labour migration. While some labour markets did shrink, others in different locations and sectors emerged. Return migration has emerged as a phenomenon that warrants attention. Now, with greater integration of regional economies, there is also more cross-border migration, which we also touch upon.

In general, migration and commuting have been greatly aided by relatively good road networks, communication technology and export market links that have emerged as many countries have opened up their economies. Temporary migration is increasingly important, particularly in the movement to large cities. Sheng (1986) for instance, maintains that the population of some cities grows by 10 per cent during the dry season owing to temporary migration.

Thailand²

In Thailand, migration flows are generally from the poorly endowed northern areas to the south. Temporary moves, which include both seasonal and other forms of short-term movements, have been estimated to account for one-third of all migration with lengths of stays of one month or more. Although precise statistics are lacking, comparisons of the 1998 Census and the 1996 Demographic Survey show that the number of persons leaving their rural place of residence in Thailand increased. Data also show that people are moving over greater distances as more people move to a different province. More than half of the people who changed their place of residence had moved to another rural area. But, over time, there has been a decrease in rural-rural migration and an increase in rural-urban migration.

Thailand stands apart from Cambodia and Lao PDR because there are remunerative jobs (including many in the non-farm sector) in rural areas. But the economic crisis of the late 1990s had a major effect on migration patterns. According to the Labour Force Survey conducted by the National Statistics Office, roughly 15.6 per cent of the people over the age of 13, or 7 million people, were migrants in Thailand in 1995, the year before the economic crisis hit. But the figures for 1997 were much lower, with roughly 327,000 workers moving from agriculture to manufacturing; 532,000 to construction, 215,000 to commerce and 130,000 to the service sector. Construction and services were the worst-hit sectors. Return migration increased, causing unemployment in rural areas. But it appears that this trend was reversed in 1999, with workers going back to towns and cities (Sauwalak, 2000, cited in Paitoonpong et al., 2001).

There has been a clear trend towards the feminization of migration in Thailand. The ease with which women can enter and leave many urban occupations and hence circulate between rural and urban centres, has been observed in northern Thailand by Singhanetra-Renard (1981, 1987). Women combine agricultural work with a variety of urban occupations, particularly petty trading and work in the construction industry. The employment of women is greatest in the five major export-oriented, labour-intensive industries, which are electrical machinery, electronics and computer parts; textiles and ready-made garments; chilled, frozen and canned food; pre-

cious stones and jewellery, and footwear (Clausen, 2002). Employment in the sex-trade is also significant which, while bringing more disposable income to women and their families at home, may put them at great personal risk. Recognizing the special needs of women migrants and enabling them to access safe and remunerative jobs will be crucial.

Viet Nam

There has been a perceptible increase in temporary migration of labourers, workers traders and carpenters from rural to urban areas, such as Ha Giang and Hanoi.³ Other studies confirm this: Grace (2002) notes that Ho Chi Minh City experiences a massive seasonal influx of people to its outskirts when the Mekong River floods. Regional cities such as Da Nang, Ba Rai-Vung Tau and Can Tho are also major destinations for rural migrants. There is much migration from the Red River Delta. A study conducted by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) in the region, while noting an increase in long-distance migration, also notes the high levels of short-distance temporary migration to nearby destinations and Hanoi. Most migrants covered in the study preferred long-term leave permits rather than registering as permanent migrants at the destination. This allows their families to continue to cultivate their land on their behalf (IIED, 2004). Another migration stream from the Red River Delta was to the Central Highlands, which, until recently, was a major coffee producing area (Winkels, 2004).

Easy access to remunerative jobs and urban facilities by rural-urban migrants is made very difficult by the elaborate and complex KT⁴ classification system for residents. Reforming this could bring many benefits to both migrants and the economy.

Cambodia

Although poorer and less urbanized than Viet Nam and Thailand, Cambodia has also recently witnessed a sharp increase in rural-urban migration as more young girls and women migrated to urban areas to work in garment factories, as domestic helpers, bar girls and sex workers (ADB, 2001; Acharya, 2003). Roughly 3 per cent of the labour force was employed in garment manufacturing units (Sok et al., 2001). But, as will be discussed later in the paper, the phasing out of the MFA is threatening the garment industry in Cambodia as it is likely to face stiff competition from other countries. There are fears that this could push women into dangerous occupations, such as prostitution.

The 1997 economic crisis had negative impacts here too. According to surveys conducted by the Cambodia Development Resources Institute (CDRI), the most severely hit internal migrant jobs were petty traders (women), cyclo drivers and porters, scavengers (men and women), waitresses, rice field workers, garment workers, motorcycle taxi drivers and skilled and unskilled construction workers.

Otherwise rural-rural migration dominates: a 1996 survey on labour and migration conducted by the National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning in Cambodia, covering 20,000 households spread across 667 villages and urban settlements across the country found 570,000 migrants in the population aged 7 and above. Of these, 72.5 per cent were rural-rural migrants working in agriculture and fisheries. According to this survey, 70 per cent literacy rates among male migrants were slightly higher compared to 69 per cent in non-migrating households. How-

ever, development practitioners in the country indicate the lack of literacy as well as difficulties for ethnic minority migrants as important barriers to obtaining safe and remunerative jobs. The problem of trafficking is serious and represents a difficult challenge for the country. Cross-border migration and trafficking into Thailand is being addressed at the policy level with the help of international organizations such as the IOM and ILO, and considerable progress has been made in signing MOUs to protect the rights of migrants. But more needs to be done to address the issue of internal migration; it is conspicuously absent from the National Poverty Reduction Strategy of 2003-05.

Lao PDR

There is relatively little formal information on internal migration in Lao PDR. Anecdotal evidence shows that there is much migration of labour to timber processing areas.⁵ A migrant worker earns roughly 20,000 kip a day (US\$ 1) but the contrast with agricultural wages is not as pronounced as elsewhere, because rural wages can be as high as US\$ 1.5-2/day in plantation work. Here, too, urbanization and industrialization, especially in Vientiane Municipality, Svannakhet, Pakse, Thakek and Louang Prabang, have become major drivers of rural-urban migration and this is increasing. Although data are not available, increased settlement in urban areas is visible. The impact of the Asian economic crisis was minimal and does not appear to have significantly affected migration patterns (NSC and NERI,⁶ 2001). Some women migrate to the two garment manufacturing units in the country, but in much lower numbers than in other South-East Asian countries (Acharya, 2001).

Low levels of formal education and ethnic differences pose important policy challenges for Lao PDR. A government study highlights the problems of young women and men from ethnic minorities migrating from remote areas to towns and cities for work. They are at great risk of exploitation because of their limited knowledge of Lao, especially women. This severely limits their ability to engage with healthcare workers, extension workers, traders and others outside the village.⁷

Indonesia⁸

As shown in a number of studies by Hugo from the 1970s, Indonesia has also witnessed an increase in circular or temporary migration. A longitudinal study of 37 villages in Java carried out over the period 1967-91 (Collier et al., 1993) concluded that most of the landless rural families in Java have at least one person working outside of the village in a factory or service job. Indonesians are moving over an increasingly wide area to improve their and their family's life chances. Census data relating to migration reveal that interprovincial migration within a province has increased drastically over the last 30 years. Data show a 67.8 per cent increase in the proportion of Indonesian males who have lived at least once in a province other than their own in the late 1990s. The figure for women was 98.2 per cent. Individual mobility has been transformed with greater ownership of motorcycles and motor cars, and by the rapid development of public transport.

The economic crisis of 1997-98 changed the economic context in Indonesia, which had the effect of influencing both existing patterns of labour mobility and also setting off new mobility

patterns in response to the crisis. Jobs in Java seem to have been hit especially hard, triggering a net outflow of people to the outer parts of the country where large projects for the extraction and processing of natural resources such as minerals, oil and timber employed migrant labour. At the same time, there was an increase in return migration: censuses showed that up to a fifth of all interprovincial migrants were return migrants.

Ethnicity also poses difficulties for migrants in Indonesia. Migrants comprise more than 200 distinctive ethno-linguistic groups. Universal education and improved transport and communication networks have made a difference, but more efforts are needed in this direction.

China

In China a number of changes have occurred simultaneously, all fuelling the movement of people. They include market liberalization and the spread of export-oriented manufacturing, and the lifting of employment and movement controls (Ping, 2003; Zhao, 2003). Many migrants are unregistered temporary migrants, often referred to as the “floating population” who may outnumber registered migrants by approximately four to one (Guest, 2003). Liu and Chan (2001) note that non-*Hukou* migration has greatly increased in the post-reform period. These migrants tend to concentrate in coastal regions and cities, peripheries of cities and construction sites and factories. But a long-term study conducted by the Ford Foundation on labour mobility in China since 1994 (Wu, 2001) finds that these increases stabilized after the economic crisis set in, and that the coastal areas were not absorbing as much labour as it used to. Competition between migrant and urban workers was increasing in large cities, where state enterprises were restructuring and applying policies that excluded migrant workers. Migrants have therefore begun to move to small and medium towns in other destinations. However, the four provinces of Guangdong, Zhejiang, Fujian, Jiangsu and the cities of Beijing and Shanghai continue to absorb nearly 80 per cent of all flows.

The Ford Foundation study also found significant return migration rates of around 2.5 per cent, with the ratio being almost twice in the western region. While returnees have used entrepreneurial skills to establish enterprises and small businesses in some areas, the overall skill level of returnees was found to be lower than the average for all migrant workers, possibly reflecting the rising skill requirements in the urban and non-farm labour market. Building human capital will be a key area to focus on in the future, as it could remove the barriers faced by uneducated people in accessing emerging remunerative markets.

South Asia

Bangladesh

A study of internal migration in Bangladesh (Afsar, 2003) based on the analysis of data sets generated by the United Nations, the ILO and the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, showed that all types of migration had increased significantly. Rural-urban migration was found to account for nearly two-thirds of outmigration from rural areas.⁹ The share of rural-to-rural migration was 10 per cent compared with 24 per cent for overseas migration.

The latest estimates by the Coalition for the Urban Poor of migration into the capital of Dhaka indicate a 6.3 per cent annual increase in migration.¹⁰ (Dhaka is the most common destination because it offers greater work opportunities. Most people look for work in the garments industry, rickshaw transport and the domestic sector. Rapid urbanization is creating these kinds of jobs that exert a stronger attraction than traditional push factors such as frequent natural disasters and poverty and destitution. The garment industry currently employs around 1.8 million people (80-90% of whom are women) in more than 3,500 small and medium-sized factories spread around “Export Processing Zones” and urban areas of Dhaka, Narayanganj, Chittagong and Khulna.

India

Recent official statistics show that rural-rural migration continued to dominate, accounting for roughly 62 per cent of all movements in 1999-00 (Srivastava and Bhattacharyya, 2003). Workers from backward states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan routinely travel to the developed “green revolution” states of Maharashtra, Punjab and Gujarat for the transplant and harvesting season.

However, new insights into migration in terms of patterns, causes and effects are continuously emerging. This section presents illustrative case study material obtained from discussions with field practitioners, NGOs, donor organizations and in-depth multidisciplinary village studies.

Three important trends may be discerned:

1. Very high levels of temporary migration;
2. An increase in rural-urban migration due to a variety of new pushes and pulls;
3. A greater propensity to migrate among certain castes.

An estimated 20 million people migrate temporarily each year in India.¹¹ High levels of temporary migration are reported in a number of village studies. For example, a study of Bolangir district in Orissa estimates that nearly 60,000 people migrated during the drought of 2001 from that district alone (Wandschneider and Mishra, 2003). Bolangir is one of the three infamous KBK (Koraput-Bolangir-Kalahandi) districts in Orissa with persistently high levels of poverty. Studies in the drought-prone areas of West Bengal by Rogaly et al. (2002) observe that over 500,000 tribals, Muslims and lower caste people migrate seasonally to the rice-growing areas of the state.

Madhya Pradesh shows similarly high levels of outmigration from both drought-prone and forested tribal areas. For example, Deshingkar and Start (2003) found that more than half the households in four out of six study villages in Madhya Pradesh included migrant family members. The proportion was as high as 75 per cent in the most remote and hilly village with infertile soils. A study by Mosse et al. (1997) of the first phase of the Western India Rainfed Farming Project (Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan) funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) revealed that 65 per cent of households included migrants. A few years later another study in the same area found that in many villages up to three-quarters of the population to be absent between November and June (Virgo et al., 2003). In Andhra Pradesh, a study by Society for the Promotion of Wasteland Development (SPWD)¹² in the highly drought prone and

poor district of Ananthapur similarly showed an increase in migration between 1980 and 2001¹³ (Rao, 2001). Migration among small and medium farmers has increased mainly because of the lucrative Bangalore market which pays Rs.100 to 150 per day, nearly three times more than the local wage.

Karan's study of labour migration in northern Bihar based on primary survey data collected in 1981-83 and 1999-2000, from six randomly selected villages (two each in Gopalganj, Madhubani and Purnea districts) showed that increasing rural-urban migration to work in the non-farm sector was the new trend. The traditional destinations of rural Punjab and Haryana are not as popular as they were 20 years ago because fewer jobs were available as agriculture became more mechanized. He found that migration rates had almost doubled from 7.5 per cent to 13.4 per cent of the total population during the intervening period. There had been an increase in long-term migration, but this concerned mainly the upper and wealthier classes. Though migration duration for the poor also increased, there were still more short-term migrants among them. Roughly 24 per cent migrated to work as non-farm labour in 2000 against 3 per cent in 1983. The figures for agricultural labour were 15 and 1 per cent, respectively. Dayal and Karan (2003) studied 12 villages in Jharkhand, using household surveys and PRA methods. They found that one-third of the households had at least one member migrating. Short-term migration was higher among poorer groups, involving over 80 per cent of the landless and 88 per cent of illiterates.

Studies conducted by the Society for the Promotion of Wasteland Development (SPWD) in Rajasthan show very high migration rates. In Jhadol *tehsil* of Udaipur, a typically drought-prone area, 50 to 75 per cent of the population migrates seasonally to work in agriculture in Gujarat. In Girva, another drought-prone *tehsil*, 25 per cent of the households have commuters who work in sand mining, stone quarrying and construction work and another 25 per cent migrate over long distances to work as, e.g. truck drivers, while a further 10 to 15 per cent work in service sector jobs in the urban informal economy.¹⁴

These are just a few examples; a number of other village studies show very high levels of temporary migration, particularly in the case of underdeveloped regions.¹⁵ The main point is that, in the absence of other opportunities to diversify locally, many households are exploring opportunities outside the village.

An important but under-researched dimension of migration in India is the relationship between migration and the caste system. Some studies have noted that certain castes and tribes have a higher propensity to migrate. Deshingkar and Start (2003) for example, found that the scheduled tribes had higher migration rates in Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. Similar observations have been made by Dayal and Karan (2003) regarding Jharkhand: whereas 15 per cent of scheduled castes and tribes migrated, only 8 per cent of upper castes and 3 per cent of "other backward castes" migrated.

This is related to the generally poorer asset base and lower education levels of these social groups. A study of northern Bihar shows that migration rates among SCs and backward castes have risen more strongly than for other castes (Karan, 2003). Migrant job markets are often segmented along caste lines at the destination, and discrimination may prevent lower castes from earning as much as others for the same work. Policy needs to approach the issue of discrimination and social exclusion in conjunction with other measures to support migrants.

Until very recently there was not a clear-cut official position on temporary migration in India and how to make it a less painful process. But there has been a perceptible shift in official attitudes indicated by state-level multi-stakeholder meetings held during 2004. Both Andhra Pradesh and Orissa have deliberated on the issue of migration and how to tackle it within the respective states, and also alongside the issue of cross-border migration from Orissa to the brick-kilns of Andhra Pradesh. Programmatic approaches that have emerged from this process are covered later in this paper. Issues of underpayment and renegeing on contracts are common.

Regional migration

Whereas political boundaries may seem binding and the populations they contain may seem distinct from each other, the day-to-day reality is that many of these borders are quite porous and that there is a steady flow of goods and people across them. Given their similar cultures and ethnic backgrounds, this kind of migration is closer to internal migration than international migration. A good example of this is the India-Bangladesh border. For many Bangladeshis living near the Assamese border, Guwahati is the largest day labour market, and they congregate daily at railway and bus stations to find work on Indian construction sites or farms. Indian officials view this kind of migration with alarm as they are wary that the migrants will establish themselves, send for their family, acquire a work permit and then eventually a ration card which entitles the family to all kinds of pro-poor schemes.

Cross-border migration, especially of Cambodians and Lao workers to Thailand for unskilled jobs, and Vietnamese into Cambodia for semiskilled jobs, such as construction foremen, machine mechanics or wood processors is common. A study conducted in 2001 found that border controls were lax and fees paid to officials ranged between US\$ 50-100 in 2001. No work permits were needed. Informal levies of 1,000-20,000 *riels* per month may be charged. Laos also receives skilled workers from neighbouring countries. However, thousands of illegal workers are being deported from Thailand due to shrinking work opportunities there.

Two small-scale rapid assessment surveys conducted by CDRI in 2000 (cited in Godfrey et al., 2001) showed much mobility across the Thai-Cambodian border. Cambodians currently represent about 9 per cent of the over 1 million irregular migrants currently thought to be working illegally in Thailand, usually in unskilled jobs and often in sweatshop conditions.¹⁶ Thailand also hosts large numbers of irregular migrant workers from Myanmar and Laos.

Other processes are also shaping regional cross-border migration, such as the globalization of production processes, trade and foreign investment, heightening the interdependence of neighbouring economies. A few urban centres with large markets, manufacturing, technology, skills and resources have emerged as strategic places attracting migrant workers from neighbouring regions and countries. Examples include border towns, such as Mukdahan in Thailand and Savannakhet in the Lao PDR, which are evolving into areas of major interface between the Lao PDR's natural resources and Thai capital and skills. Another example is Lao Cai in Viet Nam, a border crossing point between Yunnan Province of China and Viet Nam. There the trade sector is growing at an astonishing 40 per cent annually (ADB, 2003). Similarly, towns such as Sisophon and Battambang on the southern corridor in Cambodia are becoming subregional centres linking production and trade.

The CDRI surveys mentioned earlier show intensive commuting across the Cambodia-Thailand border with women commuting or staying away for a few weeks at a time to work in planting, weeding, harvesting rice, corn and sugar cane. Long-range migrants are better off and work as construction labourers, porters, farm workers, garment workers and unskilled workers. On the coast they work in fish processing, restaurants and shops. Long-distance migration declined after 1997, and it is likely that subsequently some migrants switched to commuting over shorter distances due to the economic crisis and internal political conflict.

The feminization of migration

More women are migrating for work independently and not only to accompany their husbands. This so-called “autonomous female migration” has increased because of a greater demand for female labour in certain services and industries, and also because of growing social acceptance of women’s economic independence and mobility. In fact, the feminization of migration is one of the major recent changes in population movements.

The majority of female rural-urban migrants in East and South-East Asia are young and unmarried, and the concentration of this group in urban areas is particularly pronounced in the “mega cities” (Guest, 2003). For instance, there are several types of interprovincial movements in Indonesia, where females outnumber males. The women migrating to cities tend to have low levels of education and obtain work as domestic workers or in the informal sector; women with secondary education work in the formal sector, especially in the expanding factories in the Botabek (Bogor, Tangerang and Bekasi) area. A study of the cities of Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh estimates that 40 to 45 per cent of migrants are female (Grace, 2002). The pattern in China is still largely male-dominated as shown by a number of studies (Zhao, 2001, 2003) owing to both cultural reasons that restrict female mobility and the nature of the demand for manual workers in urban areas. Even so, more women are migrating to labour-intensive industries in areas such as Guangdong. Although the migration of women has increased rapidly in South Asia, it is still not on a scale with South-East Asia, possibly because of cultural factors. However, the migration by women to the urban garment manufacturing industry is notable in both Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

Societal norms and gender-based stereotypes may exclude women from better paid work and result in lower payment of women for the same work. Breman (1996) observed that migrant women in Gujarat, carrying out equivalent tasks to migrant men earned considerably lower wages. However, in Thailand the commercial sex sector provides one of the few areas in which relatively high incomes can be obtained (Archavanitkul and Guest, N.D.).

Problems faced by migrants

Whether or not migration is poverty reducing, migrants travel and live under very difficult conditions. Poor immigrants usually stay in slums or even less secure accommodation. The estimates for Indian metropolises are sobering: roughly half of the population in Mumbai and 40 per cent in Delhi live in slums.¹⁷ Roughly 500,000 people migrate to Delhi every year mainly to work in the 95,000 factories there, or as workers in teashops, vendors and drivers. Of these, 400,000 move into the 1,500 illegal colonies and 1,000 slums in the city (Simha, 2003), with

very poor access to clean water, sanitation or electricity. Even those who earn reasonable amounts face constant threats of eviction, disease, sexual abuse, underpayment and police harassment.

Mosse et al. (2002) observed in their study of Madhya Pradesh, that migrants work long hours in harsh conditions, where injuries are common without adequate medical assistance or compensation. Water, fuel, sanitation and security are major problems. They quote a study by an NGO (DISHA) in Gujarat that found that over half of migrants slept in the open, and the rest had very perfunctory accommodation. They face harassment, abuse, theft, forcible eviction or the demolition of their dwellings by urban authorities or police. The sexual exploitation of women by masons, contractors, the police and others is routine but goes unreported by women for fear of possible consequences (loss of employment, violence). Migrants do not have right to food subsidies and have to spend a sizeable portion of their wages on basic food supplies. A study conducted in Baroda city in Gujarat (cited in Mosse et al., 2002) estimated that 56 per cent of migrants interviewed spent more than 75 per cent of their income on food, and another 74 per cent spent 40 per cent of their income on other necessities, including fuel, soap, tea and medicines. Rents are also substantial. Probably the most serious loss induced by migration is children's schooling. When entire families migrate, children stay behind to do household chores while the parents work.

In Bangladesh poor people in Battala and Bastuhara spoke about the high levels of insecurity faced by migrants during a participatory poverty assessment conducted there as part of the World Bank's Voices of the Poor series (Narayan and Petsch, 2002). Rickshaw pullers lose their rickshaws if they are late with rental payments, factory workers may be fired immediately if they miss a day of work, as they can easily be replaced by others. Workers are also at great risk if they attempt to organize. The owner of one garment factory in Battala cut employee wages to compensate for his losses during a strike.

Viet Nam has established an elaborate classification system – the KT system – which ranks inhabitants according to different residence categories, from the most stable, KT1, KT2, to the most unstable, KT3, KT4. Normal access to basic services and public facilities such as water supply, electricity, healthcare, schooling, notary public services, land and house ownership largely depends on which KT category the inhabitant belongs to. The same rule applies to getting a formal job. Temporary and illegal residents, KT3 and KT4, are deprived of normal access to urban services and opportunities: they have to secure the most basic services, e.g. water, at ten times the normal price. Other services, such as schooling, are totally inaccessible. They are limited to informal jobs, depriving them of better opportunities to escape poverty faster. Other problems include the increased risk of HIV/AIDS. Migration also strains family relations and places greater burdens on women and older people left behind.

The inadequacy of quantitative surveys

Data on migration are inadequate owing to the inability of most censuses and demographic surveys to capture seasonal and part-time occupations. Where migration is covered, it usually concerns only registered migrants; illegal migrants, who are mainly poor, are missed.

Inability to capture part-time occupations and unregistered migrants

Starting with the example of China: official data do not cover the huge number of unregistered “floating” migrants, who are often involved in short-term work. Estimates vary between 50-120 million, giving an indication of the accuracy of the assessments (Ping, 2003). Liu and Chan (2001) further note that the six major data sets on national migration¹⁸ are not comparable, because they use different categories of reasons for migration. There are several differences between the *hukou* statistics (which only cover *Hukou* or *de jure* migration) and the census surveys (which cover *de facto* migration), thus hindering meaningful comparisons.

South-East Asian data on migration are similarly inadequate. Thai census data do not capture much of the temporary and circulatory migration (Archavanitkul et al., 1993). Hugo (2003) notes that the examination of rural-urban migration in Indonesia is made difficult by the fact that national census migration data do not differentiate between urban and rural origins of migrants, and do not detect migration within provinces where a great deal of rural to urban migration actually occurs. Some indication of the importance of intraprovincial rural-urban migration is evident in the results from the 1995 intermediary survey. But it does not detect interprovincial movements since it only counts movements inside *kabupaten* boundaries.

In Pakistan, too, rural-urban migration and urbanization remain underemphasized because of definitions of “urban” and “rural”, and also the way that surveys collect information (Gazdar, 2003). The Population Census is the main source of data and this can only capture permanent relocations. Other datasets, such as the Labour Force Survey and the Integrated Household Surveys, provide more detailed information on place of origin (rural or urban), but they also use the census to define their sampling frames.

Serious underestimation of mobility

Even where data are better, as in India, the inability to capture part-time occupations and unregistered migrants can lead to completely flawed conclusions. The major sources of migration data in India, namely the National Sample Survey and Census, show that overall migration has actually decreased recently (Kundu, 2003) because they do not adequately cover temporary migration, while official statistics may even suggest a decline in migration rates. In a fascinating case study in the arid Panchmahals district of Gujarat (Shylendra and Thomas, 1995), a village that supposedly is completely dependent on agriculture according to official statistics (98.4% of the households and 97.7% of the labour force reported agriculture as their primary occupation in the NSS survey of 1993-94) was described as actually being very diversified. The study conducted by the Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA) shows that, in fact, 90 per cent of the households were engaged in non-farm activities, and seasonal migration was so high that 44 per cent of the labour force migrated, with the average number of persons migrating from each household standing at 2.2, including women (Shylendra, 1995).

Missing rural-rural migration

Probably the most serious problem from the poverty viewpoint is that official statistics on rural-rural migration are very scarce and inaccurate owing to the scattered locations of sending and

receiving areas, and the difficulty in enumerating all the streams. In general, the finer details of mobility are best captured through multidisciplinary methods. For example, Deshingkar and Start's research in 12 villages of Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh (2003) used a combination of household surveys, focus group discussions and key informant interviews, and found six different migration streams in AP and nine in MP, all distinct from each other in a variety of ways.

B. POVERTY AND INTERNAL MIGRATION

The relationship between poverty and internal migration is neither linear nor simple. Overall, the evidence to date suggests that those with limited access to land and other assets are more likely to migrate.

BOX 1

MIGRATION AS A SURVIVAL OR ACCUMULATION STRATEGY

While many studies on migration have tended to emphasize the impoverishing effects of migration, they have rarely posed the question of what these households and individuals would have done in the absence of the opportunity to migrate. In Indian writings, the term "distress migration" and "migration for survival" have often been used to explain migration by the poor as a response to natural calamities and other shocks (Murthy, 1991; Reddy, 1990; Rao, 1994; Mukherjee, 2001, who call it "distressed" migration). Distressed migration has also been noted in a variety of African contexts by the participatory poverty assessments (PPAs), though not necessarily using the same terminology.

But there is compelling evidence that the returns from migration can improve over time as migrants acquire more knowledge, confidence and skills, enabling them to cut out exploitative middlemen and contractors. The concept of accumulative migration (Deshingkar and Start, 2003) has been gaining acceptance. Rao's (2001) study of Andhra Pradesh distinguishes between "migration for survival" and "migration for additional income". He observes people from Rayadurga district were migrating for survival in the 1970s, but changed to migration for additional income in the 1990s. Another example is Bihar, where earlier studies described distressed migration, and more recent ones, such as the study by Karan (2003), describe migration in much more positive terms. In the PPAs, synthesized in "Crying out for Change", migration was identified by both men and women as an important factor leading to upward mobility: the importance of migration was greatest in Asia, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean, and less so in Africa.

For example, in Cambodia migration is most pronounced from the densely populated provinces of Kompong Cham, Prey Veng, Kandal and Takeo, which, according to the 1997 socio-economic survey, are characterized by small farm size, which is much below one hectare in three provinces (Godfrey et al., 2001). Zhao Zhu (2003) finds land size has significant negative effect on migration in China. Each additional *mu* (a Chinese unit of measure) of land reduces the probability of migration by 4.4 per cent if the decision model is individual-based, and by 2.8 per cent if the decision model is household-based. In contrast, Yao's (2001) study of the relationship between land and migration in China suggests that egalitarian land distribution promotes labour migration.

Comparisons between migration levels from northern Bihar in 1982-83 and 1999-2000 (Karan, 2003) show that the propensity to migrate among the middle categories of landowners (2.5-5 acres) fell, while it rose for those at extreme ends of the spectrum. Half of the landless and

marginal farmers owning one acre of land were sending members out. Higher castes with land were also migrating in larger numbers to work in more remunerative jobs.

The poorest usually cannot migrate because they do not have enough labour¹⁹ or the resources required for start-up investments on tools and other assets, transport, food and shelter. The move often involves bribes, and loans that have to be repaid. There is accumulating evidence of the existence of a “migration hump”,²⁰ even in the case of internal migration, where an initial rise in household wealth leads to an increase in migration rates. For example, Du (2004) analyses two complementary household datasets from China’s poor areas to examine how migration affects the rural poor in China. They found an inverted U-shape relationship between household endowments and migration.

While poverty is an important driving force, cultural factors also play an important role. In Indonesia, for example, there has been a long tradition of certain communities responding to poverty through particular mobility strategies. As we discussed previously, caste is also an important determinant of migration in the case of India.

New pull factors

The pull created by the demand for labour created by growing modern industrial complexes and the gap in rural and urban wages has been discussed since the 1950s. There have since been many models and debates on what motivates people to migrate, including theories of expected as opposed to actual wage differentials. Other pull factors include the desire to acquire skills or gain new experiences. In the case of voluntary migration of the poor for economic reasons, the wage gap is probably the most important pull factor and the most important recent determinants of this appear to be urbanization and the spread of manufacturing.

BOX 2

URBANIZATION

Urbanization has become a major driver of internal migration. Rates of urbanization influence rural-urban wage differentials: an increase in the demand for labour in urban areas can push up urban wages and increase migration. Rural-urban differences in average incomes increased in many South and East Asian countries during the 1990s, especially in China (IFAD, 2001; Eastwood and Lipton, 2000). Current ESCAP projections are that urbanization rates in South and south-west Asia will soon exceed other regions in Asia (Guest, 2003). This is already beginning to be reflected in the growing importance of rural-urban migration.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, informal sector jobs do offer prospects for accumulation and to exit poverty because, even if wages are not higher than in rural areas, more work is available and there are unmatched opportunities for switching rapidly between different non-farm jobs where entry barriers are low (e.g. security guards, street vendors, bicycle rickshaw pullers, house maids, porters, attendants, petty traders etc.).²¹ The previously mentioned study in Gujarat observed that urban incomes were so lucrative that not even government employment schemes, such as the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) and irrigation could reduce outmigration (Shylendra, 1994). In a paper on internal migration in Pakistan, Gazdar (2003) notes that many rural poor describe destinations such as Karachi as *Ghareebon ki maan* (the “mother of poor people”)

because of the prospects they offered for remunerative work. Wages of casual daily labourers can range from Rs.40 in southern Punjab, to Rs.150 in Karachi. A recent study by Thanh et al. (2005) in the Red River Delta shows that migrants prefer urban destinations as wages are higher there.

Even where urban incomes are not much higher than in rural areas, urban work may be available more regularly than rural work, which is often tied to the crop season. Many informal sector jobs actually become illegal because very few permits are issued and this fuels an enormous system of bribery and corruption known as the *licence permit raj* in India.

Is there more migration from poorer villages?

The literature on migration suggests that poorer villages (usually unirrigated and/or remote) tend to be the “sending” areas, and urbanized locations or richer villages (irrigated and/or well connected) the “receiving” areas (Dev and Evenson, 2003; Kundu, 2003). Indeed the situation is encountered in many semi-arid, forested and arid parts of India, as demonstrated by many case studies.²² Here, too, generalizations are difficult; anecdotal evidence from Lao PDR,²³ for example, suggests that migration is higher from the richer flood-prone areas and not poorer drought-prone regions, because the richer communities in flood-prone areas along the Mekong are better connected to the outside world and better able to take advantage of migrant labour markets when their lands are flooded. Inequality may be a more important driving force, as the much quoted Indian Village Studies project of the Institute of Development Studies (Connel et al., 1977; Lipton, 1980) argued. They found that unequal, not the poorest villages had the highest rates of outmigration. We return to the subject of migration and inequality below.

Are internal remittances contributing to poverty reduction?

Although the individual quantities are smaller, the total volume of internal remittances is likely to be enormous because of the numbers of people involved, especially in China, South-East Asia and South Asia. While consensus is being reached on the capacity of migration to reduce poverty, or at least prevent further impoverishment at the household level, there is still no agreement on whether migration reduces inequality.

Poverty reduction at the household level

The strongest evidence of internal remittances contributing to poverty reduction is from economies where urbanization and manufacturing have increased significantly, and where rural-urban migrants earn substantially more than they would in rain-fed farming. In situations where urban wages are high and employment is regular (even if informal) remittances can be significant.

Internal remittances may contribute substantial amounts to rural household budgets. In China, a recent Ministry of Agriculture sample survey of 20,089 rural households estimated that, in 2004, the remittance contribution by migrant workers to rural household incomes was about to overtake earnings from agriculture (quoted in Harris, 2004). These projections were made on the

basis of the previous year's figures, where the 98 million or so rural outmigrants remitted roughly US\$ 45 billion (Rmb 370 billion), up 8.8 per cent from the previous year. Mosse's study of migration in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat in India found that 80 per cent of cash income in project villages was derived from migration. Karan's study in Bihar showed that remittances accounted for one-third of the average annual income of landless and marginal households sending migrants. By caste, the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, and Muslims earned 29 per cent of their income through migration. The Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP) in Bangladesh estimates that migrants in Dhaka remit up to 60 per cent of their income to relatives. For the sending households, remittances provide up to 80 per cent of the household budget. The study conducted by Dayal and Karan (2003) of 12 villages in Jharkhand states that 98 per cent of the migrants reported an improvement in their lives because of migration. Remittances accounted for 23 per cent of the annual household income in sending households. Migrant households have a better diet and spend on average 15 per cent more on food than non-migrating households. 13.3 per cent of those owning 5-20 acres of land spent their additional income on productive uses. In addition, wages increased in the village due to migration-induced labour shortages.

There is a gender dimension too: women may remit more of their earnings than men, because of a deeper commitment to the welfare of their families. Osaki's (1999) study of Thai migrants shows that women are better supporters of the families left behind.

However, there are doubts relating to the potential for poverty reduction of remittances. It has been widely observed that the investment of remittances into productive uses is limited, and that consumption spending is greater. But this is not necessarily a problem, as consumption can include a variety of uses that may have a positive impact on the general well-being of the family and kin. Remittances can be used for many purposes (see Box 3).²⁴

BOX 3

HOW REMITTANCES ARE INVESTED

- Daily needs and expenses, including food, which improves food security and nutritional status.
- Medical/healthcare expenses or education, which can improve the livelihood prospects of future generations.
- Consumer durables (bicycles, motorbikes, milling machines, kiosks, televisions, stereos) some of which can contribute to income generation.
- Improving or building housing.
- Buying or leasing land or livestock.
- Investment in socio-cultural life (birth, wedding, funerals).
- Loan repayments (often loans contracted to pay for the cost of migrating).
- Savings.
- Income or employment-generating activities.
- Purchase of cash inputs into agriculture (hired labour, disease and pest control, etc.), resulting in better cultivation practices and higher yields (Carter, 1997); investment in agricultural implements or machinery (water pumps, ploughs etc.).

An analysis of Chinese remittance data (de Brauw et al., 2001) shows that the loss of labour to migration has a negative effect on household cropping income in source areas. However, they provide evidence that remittances sent home by migrants compensate for the lost labour effect, contributing to household incomes directly and indirectly by stimulating crop and possibly self-

employment. Taking into account both the multiple effects of migration and the change in household size, they found that migration increased household per capita income between 14 and 30 per cent. The work by Yang (2004a) in areas of high outmigration in China shows that total grain output in several locations declined by less than 2 per cent, while disposable household income increased by 16 per cent as a result of migration. Du et al. (2004) analysed two complementary household data sets from poor areas in China to gather empirical evidence on the role of migration in poverty alleviation. Remittances were found to have an important effect on measured poverty rates concerning both the migrants themselves and the household members left behind.

Similar evidence is emerging from South Asia. Research in poor and dry parts of Rajasthan (Conroy et al., 2002) shows that, whereas urban poverty has increased, rural poverty has declined partly due to increased remittances. In Bangladesh, Rahman et al. (1996, quoted in Afsar, 2003) found that the extent of poverty was much lower (around 30%) for households having migrant members than for non-migrant households (around 60%), based on an analysis of panel data sets. The proportion of those who perceived themselves as poor, or extremely poor, declined from around 60 to 30 per cent between 1990 and 1995. From her study of ready-made garment (RMG) sector workers, Afsar (2001) estimated that, from no income of their own prior to migration more than 80 per cent were able to earn enough to keep themselves above the poverty threshold after migration. Her research challenged the conventional wisdom that migration transfers rural poverty to urban areas. She also provides evidence on urban immigrant households having improved their incomes since arrival. At the same time, household incomes in rural sending areas have benefited from remittances received from migrant family members. Migration of workers also helped to reduce the unemployment rate, one of the major problems in Bangladesh (Afsar, 2000). In Pakistan, the Federal Bureau of Statistics, which provides information on incomes from different earning sources, collected data showing that remittance-receiving households are disproportionately located in the upper income deciles (Gazdar, 2003).

A recent study by Luttrell et al. (2004) in Viet Nam highlights the importance of mobility and migration as a positive livelihood option for the poor in coastal areas, who depend on fisheries and agriculture with sharp seasonal fluctuations and long slack periods. Remittances are a vital and important part of the economies of most households. Agricultural production provides just enough for domestic food, but other purchases often depend on remittance incomes. A new study of Nhat and Ngoc Dong villages in the Red River Delta area shows that migration has been particularly important in raising the standards of living in Nhat, where 36.8 per cent of households have at least one migrant, and remittances account for 17 per cent of household income (Thanh et al., 2004).

A survey of internal migrants in Cambodia conducted by CDRI in 2000 shows that many households reported positive impacts – 11 bought land, 40 opened small businesses, 25 built a house and a few bought motorcycles. 57 per cent of the households with a long-range migrant were able to meet short-term food and farming requirements in 1999. Almost all short-range migrants were able to save money. They also reported development of skills, such as construction and tailoring (Godfrey et al., 2001). The wage difference between agricultural work and unskilled work in Phnom Penh is very large: workers in paddy fields earn 4,000 *riels* (roughly 1 US dollar)

per day, while the prevailing wage rate for unskilled/semiskilled workers in the city is 6,000-10,000 *riels* (Pon and Acharya, 2001). Garment factories, pay at least US\$ 45 a month; with overtime payments, most such workers are able to net US\$ 60-75 per month (Sok et al., 2001).

Migration and inequality

In the early 1980s Lipton asserted that rural-urban migration does not tend to equalize incomes either between or within regions for the following reasons:²⁵

- a) The selective nature of migration, providing higher returns to the better off and better educated, prevents equalization within areas of origin.
- b) There are costs and barriers associated with migration, including access to information about opportunities, which tend to steer the gains of migration towards the rich.
- c) The absence of the most productive household members leads to a lowering of labour-intensity, which, according to Lipton, is “socially maladaptive, especially in the medium run, while the rural work force is growing much faster than other, scarcer factors of production”.
- d) The volume of net remittances is usually low, and
- e) Return migrants are likely to be the old, sick and unsuccessful, and skills brought back are unlikely to be of much help.

For a number of migration analysts these concerns remain just as valid today. For example, despite the fact that migration is seen as an important route towards poverty reduction in China there are still concerns that the poor and unskilled will face barriers because of the registration system and lack of education in an increasingly skills-based economy. Rural-urban and interregional inequalities have increased and the poor continue to be concentrated in the west, far remote from China’s booming coast (World Bank, 2001).

On the more positive side, migrant remittances are thought to reduce inequality because poorer families migrate and any increase in their incomes will reduce differences in the village (see works by Oberai and Singh). Studies by Guest (1998) in Thailand have shown that remittances help to reduce rural household income inequalities as well as interregional inequality. New research in Thailand shows that remittances help to redistribute income towards poor provinces, resulting in a lower level of cross-province inequality in household incomes (Yang, 2004b). Osaki’s (1999) research in Thailand also argues that remittances contribute to the equalization of income distribution among households having outmigrants.

In addition, migration may provide an escape from social hierarchies and in that way increase equality, at least in the destination areas where discrimination based on ethnicity can be less strong than in traditional villages. For example, Breman observed that migrants broke away from caste-prescribed behavioural norms of subservience at the destination. Participatory poverty assessments conducted in India by the World Bank in 1997 and 1998, reported that migration had eroded the hold of the upper castes on lower castes as they were no longer dependent on degraded land and local labouring for survival.

Remittances and overall economic growth

On the basis of research in Bangladesh, Afsar (2003) argues that remittances help to expand business in agricultural products and construction materials. Remittances also helped to generate savings, the major source of capital in the absence of institutional credit on easy terms. She believes that migration and remittances have invigorated the land tenancy market in rural areas: the proportion of tenant farmers increased from 42 per cent to 57 per cent between 1988 and 2000, and the land under tenancy cultivation increased to 33 per cent, an 11 per cent rise from 1988.

Similarly, the ILO study of internal migration in Indonesia concludes that migration to urban areas can be associated with macroeconomic growth. The most obvious impact of remittances is to support the subsistence and incomes for resident households of the migrants. Remittances increase individual household income, which stimulate demand, creating local markets and jobs for non-migrants.

Two studies in Thailand by Guest (1998) show that remittances are an important supplement to household income and have a multiplier effect on the economy with many major items of expenditure, such as construction materials and labour procured locally. Anh (2003) draws similar conclusions based on data from Bangladesh, China, Viet Nam and the Philippines. Anh identifies migration as a driver of growth and an important route out of poverty with significant positive impacts on people's livelihoods and well-being and concludes that attempts to control mobility will be counterproductive. The flow of money, goods and services between rural and urban areas can create a virtuous circle of local economic development by increasing demand for local agricultural produce, stimulating the non-farm economy and absorbing surplus labour (Tacoli, 2004). But this depends on access to infrastructure and a conducive trade/market environment. But, downward spirals resulting from migration have also been noted. For instance, the study conducted by Winkels of migration from the Red River Delta to the coffee producing highlands argues that it has resulted in environmental deterioration, economic and social exclusion of local inhabitants in the destination areas, unequal access to opportunities for migrants and exacerbated inequality. Temporary migration contributes more to the development of better off regions in the north rather than the development of the central highlands.

Generalizations on the positive outcomes of migration are not desirable; what can be said with some certainty is that there is growing evidence of potentially positive impacts and, with supportive policies, such instances are likely to be encountered more frequently.

Investment by migrants and returnees in sending areas

Returning migrants can bring skills, funds, information about markets and new technologies and different values back to their native village. This can lead to far-reaching changes. For instance, Zhao's (2001) study of Chinese migrants indicates that return migrants are more likely to invest in farm machinery, especially for harvesting, ploughing and threshing. Supporting return migrants in their endeavours should certainly become a policy objective. There have been some efforts in this direction, albeit not always successful.

C. POLICY AND PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES AND GOOD PRACTICE

Current policy approaches

Migration as a policy field represents the special problem of being at once everyone's concern (Ministries of Labour, Agriculture, Urban Development, Rural Development, Social Protection and Women and Child Welfare) and also nobody's concern. Though examples of good practice are few and far between, they nevertheless offer important lessons.

Also, owing to the greater political profile of international migration, there appear to be more concerted efforts in this area through government departments and civil society organizations, as in the case of Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Added to this is the problem that migration has tended to fall between several stools and, at best, there is a migration desk attached to a regional office or department. Programmes on rural and urban development may often have a perspective on migration, but this is implicit in their approach. We examine the current policy approach to migration as well as implicit migration-related issues in rural and urban policies.

Current policy responses are grouped into different categories depending on whether they are aimed at labour supply and demand, or are measures targeted at rural and urban areas, or measures that aim to reduce the risks of internal migration and enhance the benefits of migration for development.

Policies aimed at labour supply and demand

The Chinese²⁶ Government is pilot testing labour migration agreements among sending and receiving provinces. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security announced several measures aimed at improving the conditions for millions of farmer-workers currently working in cities. The measures include asking companies to abolish all limitations and unreasonable fees on such workers seeking employment. Public consultation organizations are also urged to offer services to farmer-workers free of charge. Local governments have been asked to draw up professional training and education plans for workers.

While internal migration continues to be somewhat neglected in South-East Asian countries, efforts are being made in the areas of trafficking and cross-border migration. An MOU has been drawn up between the Thai and Cambodian Governments to create a bilateral administrative process that provides structured employment procedures in such areas as recruitment, a mechanism for the return of migrant workers after their contracts expire, labour protection guidelines and prevention and intervention mechanisms to combat irregular migration and human trafficking. To what extent these measures will in fact help the poor who have to resort to dangerous means of migration is not clear.

India has initiated policies aimed at coordinating state efforts in labour sending and receiving areas. In the last year at least two meetings were organized in this regard at state level. In Orissa the meeting was organized by the DFID-funded Western Orissa Rural Livelihoods Project (WORLP) and brought together government officials and NGOs. While still at the initial stages,

the WORLP intends to devise ways to mitigate the adverse effects of migration. It will identify accessible opportunities for upward trajectories that the poor can access, and find ways of supporting them. Residential care centres have been established by the government in sending areas for the children of migrant workers.

In Andhra Pradesh the Commissioner for Rural Development is in the process of improving the database on seasonal migration, especially cross-border migration from Orissa into Andhra Pradesh. This is being done in conjunction with the DFID-funded Andhra Pradesh Rural Livelihoods Project. A special cell is being created within the Rural Development Commission under the direct supervision of the Commissioner to monitor the labour welfare measures. There are discussions with NGOs, such as Action Aid, to develop a suitable migrant support programme. Initial ideas include the possibility of issuing passbooks that migrants can carry with them to minimize harassment and facilitate access to services. A tripartite agreement among labour unions, labour contractors and employers is being discussed. NGOs are being entrusted with the task of improving awareness in sending villages of existing laws²⁷ designed to protect the rights of migrants. Meetings will also be held at the village level between employers (in this case brick kiln owners) and local government representatives to increase awareness of such laws and legislation. NGOs will be engaged by the labour department to monitor the implementation of such legislation.

More meetings at the state level between the labour ministers of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh are planned to discuss the issue of cross-border migration. Meetings among government officials from different districts within the state on the issue of migration are also planned. The possibility of providing migrants with access to subsidized food will be taken up by the Department of Rural Development with the Food and Civil Supplies Department. The government will also provide day-care facilities for working migrant mothers at brick kilns. Schooling for the children of workers will also be provided at brick kilns.

Policies aimed at reducing the risks and costs of migration

The Chinese Ministry of Labour and Social Security has removed the working card requirement for migrant farmer-workers in towns and cities. Previously, farmers needed such permits to work in provinces outside their place of birth. The ministry has also asked local labour and social security departments to reform policies and cancel illegal charges targeting migrant workers. In addition, it is working on a draft law on household register management to create conditions for free population movements and settlement.

The All-China Federation of Trade Unions has submitted a proposal to the Legal Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, suggesting that the ministry concerned issue a law for rural migrant employees to safeguard their legal rights, and advising the State Council to establish a special working committee on protecting these people.

The Chinese ILO CP-TING project, which aims to prevent the trafficking of young women and girls for labour, has succeeded in improving the conceptual understanding of migration and trafficking among policy makers. Hans van de Glind, the project manager, believes that migration will continue and many will use irregular channels if legal channels are not available. This

puts them at risk of trafficking and exploitation as it is very difficult to protect the rights of migrant workers if their movement is not managed through safe channels. The project is trying to develop cheap, fast and transparent labour migration channels on a larger scale, geared especially towards those with low education and skills levels.

The project was set up in collaboration with the Chinese authorities (through the All China Women's Federation) and it is roughly half a year into operation. The aim for the first year is to improve the conceptual understanding of trafficking – from a narrow understanding that trafficking is “abduction and kidnapping of babies for adoption and selling of women for marriage purposes”, to a broader one that also recognizes that many young girls leave villages voluntarily for lack of local opportunities. As many are neither well prepared nor well informed, they are vulnerable to trafficking in the migration process. Based on such improved awareness and understanding the project aims to improve the knowledge base on the issue. In the second phase (years 2 and 3), pilot models will be tested in selected target counties in “sending” provinces (Anhui, Henan and Hunan) and selected target cities in “receiving” provinces (Guangdong and Jiangsu). The final phase of the project in years 3 and 4 will involve work to influence policy. The project has already been represented at a national conference on migration and employment of rural women in China, organized by the State Council Poverty Alleviation Leading Group and ACWF.

In India a now well-known example is that initiated by the Grameen Vikas Trust in Madhya Pradesh under the DFID-funded Western India Rainfed Farming Project. GVT has worked closely with the local government of source villages and has developed an informal system of identity cards for migrants, which give them some protection against official harassment. GVT has liaised with NGOs in the neighbouring state of Rajasthan to set up migrant resource centres that provide them with information on job availability, wage rates and their rights.

Another example of a successful migrant support programme is the Aajeevika Bureau set up by an NGO, Sudrak, for migrants from southern Rajasthan. It is active in the following migrant support activities:

- Providing skills training to rural migrants and assisting with their placement in better paid jobs.
- Setting up a registration, information and tracking service for rural migrants.
- Supplementary education and skills training for children of migrant families.
- Research on migration processes across other blocks of south Rajasthan in order to determine future action.

Sadhana, an NGO from Andhra Pradesh, has started a residential school for the children of migrants in a high migration area of Medak district with support from UNICEF and the district administration. Now the children of migrants can stay behind and continue with their education. Such migrant support programmes appear to have been more successful than official programmes in ensuring fair pay and better working conditions. The key ingredients here appear to be a good rapport with potential beneficiaries, good social mobilization skills and a genuinely participatory and democratic approach. Such attributes are more commonly encountered in NGOs rather than bureaucracies, and continued support from government and donors is important.

Migrant-friendly financial services

However not all support services can be provided by civil society organizations. The private sector has an important role to play in providing migrant-friendly financial services. A widely acknowledged cost faced by migrants is the transfer of remittances. Formal banking channels are inaccessible to uneducated and poor people for a variety of economic and social reasons. Informal transfer mechanisms, such as the *hawala* system, or sending money through friends and relatives, are common. A few experiments to reduce the costs of sending remittances are being undertaken, but most focus on international remittances (see work by Siddiqi in Bangladesh). One example related to internal remittances is the ICICI bank in India that is currently conducting a household survey in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, to throw light on the usage patterns and needs for financial services for savings, credit and insurance (personal communication with Bindu Ananth, ICICI Bank). Similar surveys will be repeated in other major urban destinations. It is not clear why and how the initiative was undertaken, but it appears that banks are now viewing migrants as an untapped customer pool. If the services they design prove to be successful, other banks may follow suit.

Welfare funds

The idea of welfare funds for informal sector workers has gained currency in India and some have been piloted, but their success is mixed. The core idea is that these funds will provide social security for workers. Kerala has introduced a fund and it has provided some measure of social security to workers. But its functioning is embedded in the bureaucratic system, giving rise to a number of problems (Kannan, 2002). Some modifications will have to be made to improve its accessibility for the poor before it can be replicated in other states.

Lessons can also be drawn from the experience of welfare funds for international migrants. A comparative study of welfare funds in the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Pakistan conducted by Tan (2004a) shows that, although they provide similar services, the mode of delivery made the Sri Lankan model more effective. It used existing specialized institutions for delivery, such as insurance companies, schools and banks rather than attempting to do so internally as the Pakistan model did. However, the benefits offered do not reflect actual risks, such as, e.g. loss of lifetime income. In practice, risk varies greatly according to destination and occupation, but this is rarely reflected in the insurance policies. Nor are the funds able to deal with contract violations, a common complaint. Tan suggests that a system of tracking addresses of employers will help. But as Mosse notes in respect of India, workers may never know the name of the ultimate employers or even see their face because of the multiple layers of contractors and subcontractors involved.

What emerges from these examples is that, to make migration a less arduous process, migrant support requires some combination of:

- Better access to information on the job market;
- Mechanisms that allow access to services, food and the like and reduce exposure to potential harassment;
- Personal insurance against risk;
- Improved education facilities for the children of migrant families, and
- More accessible transport systems and better infrastructure.

Rural-rural migrants are in the greatest need of support because they are often poorer, invisible to the official regulatory system and much more vulnerable to abuse and hazardous living conditions. A clear focus on women and children in support programmes is important, given their especially vulnerable position.

Policies aimed at enhancing human capacity

A joint circular was released in 2004 by the Chinese Ministries of Agriculture, Finance, Labour and Social Security, Education, Science and Technology and Construction urging local governments to launch training programmes for the local rural migrant labour force. Called the Sunshine Programme, this is a major initiative across the six ministries on vocational training for 10 million rural labourers who plan to move to non-agricultural industries, or to migrate to cities. The programme has been launched in poor areas and in provinces with high outmigration rates. The central government has invested 250 million *yuan* in this and an additional 300 million *yuan* are being contributed by provincial governments. Of the 1.5 million farmers trained so far, 80 per cent have found jobs.

The State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development, and the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce have signed an agreement to work together to provide training or jobs for underprivileged people, including migrants and potential migrants.

Programmes aimed at improving the understanding of migration

In China several departments and academic institutes, such as the Research Center for the Rural Economy of the Ministry of Agriculture, have launched in-depth studies on rural mobility to better understand the causes and consequences of migration.

The Bangladesh Government has become aware of the importance of migration and many organizations are engaged in research, advocacy and interventions for migrant workers, but most of the efforts are concentrated on the higher profile international migrant community. Internal migration is not receiving either sufficient attention or funding.

Policies aimed at maximizing the benefits of migration

The Asian Development Bank is supporting work on the impact of regional integration in the Greater Mekong Subregion on the poor living along border areas. The focus is on the East-West and Southern Corridors of the GMS, spanning Viet Nam, Lao PDR, Cambodia and Thailand. The issue of migration will be at the forefront of the work as the most direct influence that increased integration has on people living near the borders. Specific benefits arising from cross-border movements (more job opportunities, access to better services, etc.), as well as negative consequences (more competition for jobs, human trafficking, increased crime, disruption of social capital, discrimination of migrant workers, etc.) will be researched.²⁸

Policies on urban development

While rural development departments are clearly moving ahead, urban policies remain hostile to migrants in some cases. An example is the Delhi Master Plan that is not friendly to migrants.

Another example is the *Mee Mumbaikar* campaign launched by the Shiva Sena in the Indian city of Mumbai that capitalized on peoples' fears of a disproportionate influx of people from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, although there are no official statistics to substantiate this. The Sena further alleged that the culture of the people from those states is altering the ethos of Mumbai.²⁹ Bangladeshi migrants are also being targeted.³⁰

Policies on rural development

Although not stated explicitly, many rural development programmes also aim to control migration. The underlying rationale can be found in the literature on common property resource management, watershed management and agricultural development that is replete with statements of expected declines in migration flows due to successful employment creation and resource regeneration.³¹ Watershed development aims to increase employment through labour-intensive soil and water conservation. Besides the short-term effects of watershed development on rural employment, there is a widespread belief that if watershed management (WSD) programmes succeed, then they will reduce the flow of migration. WSD implementation can affect migration through an increase in short-term employment as well as long-term productivity gains.

Incorporating migration into development policy

A policy framework

Classic dual economy models (e.g. Lewis) predicted that an expanding modern sector would draw cheap labour from the countryside where the marginal productivity of labour is zero. Such models viewed migration as an integral part of the development and modernization process that would even out inequalities and benefit both sending and receiving areas. Most neo-classical approaches to migration analyses used the basic tenets of rational choice, maximization of utility, expected net returns, factor mobility and wage differentials. The logical conclusion of these models was that wage differences would eventually disappear and migration would cease. But we know now that wage differentials persist and circulatory movements have become a way of life.

Structuralists, such as Breman, challenged neo-classical theories arguing that there was no equilibrium, and the kinds of dependencies evident in global configurations also shaped migratory flows where cheap labour was exploited by capitalists leading to accumulation by the latter at the cost of the former. Migration, it was argued, was no more than neo-bondage and could never lead to poverty reduction or asset accumulation for the migrant. Rather than reducing inequality as predicted by the neo-classical economists, structuralists argued that it exacerbated it.

Policy responses to migration have been conditioned by these ideological positions. Those who believed that migration was impoverishing and worsened inequality have sought to discourage it, while those who saw it as a redistributive process believed in letting it continue unfettered. This paper argues for a position that is somewhere in between: recognizing the potential benefits of free movement, but also recognizing that power relationships and imperfect markets exist, thereby compromising the benefits to poor labourers. Looking at the primary evidence on the

patterns and returns to migration, a policy framework that is guided by the principles of the **Sustainable Livelihoods Approach** seems to be in order. At the heart of the analysis is the **migrant** and the household that he or she belongs to. The migrant's ability to climb out of poverty is not just a function of his or her education, health and other assets, but also depends on the dynamics within the family in respect of resource allocation and the gender division of labour. These prospects are also conditioned by the outside context, as determined by the interplay of institutional, cultural, political, social and economic factors. A range of social science disciplines are employed to understand who migrates, for what reasons and the implications of migration for the individual, family and society at large.

Interventions in the area of internal migration therefore cannot nor should be the responsibility of one sector or one ministry alone. Rather, a more holistic approach needs to be taken where different components of rural livelihoods are viewed together. On the diagnostic side a number of disciplinary approaches may be adopted. Thus, economic theories should be employed to understand the impacts of labour depletion on household economics and inequality; social theories should aim to understand the importance of networks, and anthropological theories should aim to understand the importance of ethnicity and culture. In the tradition of structuralists, there is a need to acknowledge the importance of social hierarchies and power relations in shaping the different outcomes experienced by different social groups. Migration policy needs to tackle migration at different levels, through institutions that are geared to different sectors (labour, gender, agriculture, rural development, social welfare and urban development). There may be a case for creating a separate coordinating body to prioritize and sequence the needed interventions.

With these general guiding principles in mind, some areas for policy attention at the macro level can be identified:

Fostering rural-urban linkages

At the macro level there is a need for countries to foster rural-urban linkages in order to create the virtuous circles described previously and to broaden the perspective on rural and urban and not view them as distinct and separate. Some countries in the Mekong region are working towards this. For example, the Lao PDR has committed itself to strengthening rural to urban market linkages to support its rural development strategy. A recent project introduced in small towns in the Lao PDR demonstrated a significant potential impact of urban investments on the surrounding poor rural hinterland in terms of increased non-farm jobs for the rural poor, among other things. Viet Nam has also recognized the importance of rural-urban linkages. A principal thrust of its Central Region Development Strategy (2000) and the Viet Nam Urban Forum is to enhance rural-urban linkages. In other countries, such as Cambodia, with a relatively higher share of rural populations, an inadequate understanding of rural-urban links and migration led to a tendency to focus development efforts solely within rural boundaries (ADB, 2003).

Moving away from a focus on agriculture as the sole route to poverty reduction

Current poverty reduction policies tend to focus on agriculture. There is little doubt that the majority of the poor live in rural areas and are largely dependent on agriculture. But a number of authors are now questioning whether this necessarily implies that investing in agriculture is the

best way of reducing poverty (Song, 2004; Deshingkar, 2004). Agricultural growth rates remain low despite vast investments. The latest figures suggest that average aggregate agricultural growth is less than 2 per cent a year, which is too slow for poverty reduction in many rural areas. Not only that, the growth rate in South Asia is declining. The connections, if any and of what kind, between this and growing mobility need to be better understood.

Given the massive scale of investment needed to install even basic infrastructure in weakly integrated rural areas, and the growing search for jobs in urban areas, donors and policy makers should be addressing the question of whether more should be done to facilitate the mobility of people. This is particularly relevant as experience shows that the prospects of strong agriculture and natural resource-based growth in the more remote and dry areas can continue to be poor even with infrastructure in place.

Predicting collapse and supporting diversification

In the planning process it is important to recognize which sectors are important for migrant labour and to predict how these will fare in the future. Where downsizing or collapse is predicted, it is important to anticipate, and prepare for, the consequences. In the case of the export garment industry, it appears that preparations have been inadequate in Bangladesh, one of the hardest hit countries. Christian Aid (2004) has warned that the end of the MFA could push thousands of women into more risky occupations, including prostitution. They urge companies to assume more responsibility for mitigating adverse impacts, including the provision of cash to compensate laid-off workers and providing retraining through mechanisms that actively encourage women to participate, and resisting the temptation to lower labour standards in an effort to compete. Instead, it urges them to introduce the social and labour safeguards incorporated under the ILO's SA8000 standard.³²

In Cambodia, another affected country, multi-stakeholder policy discussions on the impact on women workers of the MFA phase-out have been organized by UNDP, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and UNIFEM (personal communication Samvada Kheng, Gender Specialist, ADB Cambodia). The ADB is also providing training to migrant women to help them to diversify.

The informal economy

Another area needing attention is the role of the informal economy and its potential for poverty reduction. Many governments continue to regard it as a low-productivity sector that perpetuates poverty and all kinds of social ills. However, many activities in the informal sector continue to be illegal because very few permits are issued. There is an overwhelming demand for and supply of services in the informal sector, which has assumed vast proportions and supports the rent-seeking among petty officials and policemen who are not above benefiting from the (illegal) livelihood strategies pursued by a majority of the poor in the informal sector. Clearly, there is a need to regulate the informal sector in ways that support multi-locational livelihood strategies; but, as Box 4 shows, this is not an easy proposition and there are few successful examples.

BOX 4

THE BICYCLE RICKSHAW ECONOMY AND POLICY CHALLENGES

In Bangladesh and India pulling a bicycle rickshaw is one of the main activities for poor and illiterate people when they move to the cities. In Bangladesh this is the second most important economic activity for the poor, after cropping (personal communication with Bijoy Kumar Barua, Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development). In New Delhi there were some 73,000 licensed and 300,000 unlicensed rickshaws in 2001.

Partially in response to civil society group pressure, the Government of India repealed the Cycle Rickshaw By-laws, and thus control over registration and regulation of rickshaws in 2001 in order to foster a more pro-poor environment. The impounding of rickshaws by the municipal corporation of Delhi (MCD) and by the Delhi police ended, barring a few "no rickshaw zones". However, this caused the numbers of rickshaws to literally explode to over 700,000 in just one year,³³ and the emergence of so called rickshaw-lords, people who own about 10,000 rickshaws each and charge a rent of Rs 50-60 per 12 hours, confronting the government with the problem that rent-seeking by officials was replaced by rent-seeking by these rickshaw lords. In case a rickshaw driver is unable to pay the rent, he faces the threat of being beaten up by the owner and having his belongings confiscated. Because of these unforeseen problems and also because intelligence reports had suggested that many rickshaw pullers were illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, the change in legislation was reversed.

At the same time, training in skills and education to help migrants to secure better-paid jobs and to match their capabilities with the emerging high-skill sectors remains a priority. Du's study of Chinese migrants showed that supply side factors (viz. education, land and labour availability of the household) are much more important than demand side factors in affecting migration decisions. They therefore recommend an emphasis on the building of human capital, and the creation of information networks. The efforts of the Chinese Government in this area have been discussed above. Elsewhere this is being left largely to market forces as a study of international migrant training programmes by Tan (2004b) shows.

The importance of improved infrastructure cannot be overstated, and many donors and national policies have rightly identified this as a priority area. Associated with this is the need for more accessible transport services that have been shown to have a major impact on mobility.

D. RESEARCH NEEDS AND MEANS OF INFORMATION SHARING

Levels and patterns of migration need to be reassessed as the general understanding is seriously distorted by the way data collection is conducted and structured, and where the emphasis on quantitative data tends to miss the finer details of mobility patterns. While it is probably unrealistic to expect large-scale surveys to engage everywhere with in-depth and highly time consuming analysis, it should certainly be possible to include some case studies using multidisciplinary approaches and a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. The extent to which such studies can be undertaken to throw more light on migration processes will depend on the availability of financial, human and institutional resources, and there is a clear need for donor assistance to build the necessary capacity in these areas. Better information on migration and its potential role in poverty reduction is also likely to lead to a change in official attitudes, and help in fostering a better understanding of the ways in which policy can both support migration and respond to its effects.

There are already many high quality studies on migration enabling a process of mutual “cross learning” regarding sampling frameworks, study designs, the mix of quantitative and qualitative methods used, as well as research skills. One example is the long-term study on rural-urban mobility being conducted by the Ford Foundation in China since 1994. This unique study provides vital information on population movements and the socio-economic consequences of such movements.

Non-governmental organizations have followed more innovative methods. Examples from South-East Asia include the work by Gubry in studying migration to Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC). A novel survey technique, called the tracing survey, was used to trace migrants from Can Giuoc district, a rural area in the Mekong Delta region to HCMC. This enabled the researchers to get the opinions both of the parents who remained in the countryside, and of the migrants living in HCMC about their move. Research by Villes en Transition (VeT)³⁴ in Viet Nam also deserves mention. VeT is working on raising the awareness of the adverse impacts of the residence registration on the urban poor in HCMC and Hanoi. This will complement the mid-term Ho Chi Minh City census implemented by the Provincial Statistic Office (PSO) and supported by the World Bank, which includes questions directed to migrants, including the unregistered.

UNDP in Myanmar is planning a study on international and internal migration in Myanmar (personal communication with Peter Resurrecion). The study, which is due to be completed in the first half of 2005, will be used to design appropriate HIV prevention education interventions for migrant workers.

In India, Seva Mandir, a reputed NGO in Rajasthan, has begun a detailed study on adolescent migration in an effort to introduce effective measures for the prevention of HIV/AIDS (personal communication with Ian MacAuslan, consultant, Seva Mandir).

Workshops and meetings involving participants from these projects could facilitate “cross learning”. In addition, major livelihood projects, such as the DFID-funded livelihoods projects across Asia and South-East Asia, could incorporate specific studies and support programmes for migration. As mentioned before, two Indian livelihood projects have already made some progress in this direction. Other donor-funded programmes could also incorporate specific work on migration. Discussions with World Bank and ADB officials in Viet Nam and Cambodia show that, while there is considerable interest in this area, little has yet been done in terms of actual programme development. The World Bank is considering work on labour migration in the Mekong Subregion (personal communication with Pierre Fallavier). Core interests are to: (1) improve knowledge about labour migration issues in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) with a special focus on the socio-economic impact of migration on both sending and receiving countries; (2) raise awareness of decisionmakers about these issues and their significance for poverty reduction, and (3) strengthen the capacity of governments and development partners to refine and implement a regional system to regulate labour migration.

CONCLUSIONS

Internal migration will continue in countries with strong regional inequalities. Besides considering means of improving the understanding of the causes and effects of migration, as well as

designing programmes to reduce the costs of migration, policy makers need to ask more fundamental questions about the best approaches towards reducing poverty and inequality. The current obsession with agriculture and rural development is shifting needed attention away from the powerful potential of non-farm occupations and the possible diversification through mobility to tackle poverty that has hitherto proven very difficult to reduce through the sole targeting of poor areas and the poor living there. Ensuring remunerative and safe employment in manufacturing and urban services should be a pursued policy goal and viewed as complementary to other rural development policies in the effort to reduce poverty in the countryside. Migration needs to be understood from a livelihoods perspective and policies need to be designed through multidisciplinary and multisectoral study and analysis.

ANNEX

The Migrant Labour Support Programme (MLSP)³⁵

The Migrant Labour Support Programme (MLSP) launched within the framework of the Western India Rainfed Farming Project aims to identify ways for poor tribal migrants to maximize the benefits from seasonal migration, and to replicate these approaches in tribal districts and destination areas.

Key components of the MLSP approach are the registration of migrants by the local government, the issuing of identity cards and employment record books, and making accident and life insurance available to tribal migrants. Migrants have to pay 5 Rupees (about 10 cents) plus the cost of a photo per ID card, but are very willing to do so. The MLSP had issued 10,000 ID cards by mid-2004 and expects to issue another 5,000 during 2005. The main advantage of carrying a card is that it offers some protection against official harassment from police who are on the lookout for “trouble makers” (a common perception of tribal migrants). In source districts the project has worked closely with the police who have also agreed to certify the ID cards. Nearly 500 migrants have purchased life or accident insurance, a number that is expected to grow quickly. By mid-2005, the MLSP pilot project is likely to have directly benefited over 100,000 people (migrants and their families) and will be ready for upscaling.

Two kinds of centres have been set up under the MLSP – the migrant information centres (*Palayan Suchana Kendra*, PSK) in home areas, and Migration Resource Centres (MRCs) in destination areas. The PSKs act as information and training centres for migrants, working closely with local government in registering the workers and providing ID cards. They act as a channel of communication between migrants and their families back at home.

The MRCs offer support for migrants in destination areas, providing information on jobs and where migrants can find assistance and support. The MRCs also assist migrants in case of disputes with employers about unpaid wages or other issues.

PSKs and MRCs work closely together in remitting earnings from destination areas to families in source areas; in fighting legal cases for non-payment of wages, and in providing ways for migrants to communicate with their families at home. Both centres run training courses for migrants on their rights. There are nine PSKs at present in Jhabua, Ratlam and Dahod districts and three MRCs, one each in Ahmedabad city and Vadodara town, two important destinations. The third is at Ratlam, a district town where migrants from tribal districts often congregate before catching buses or trains to destination areas.

GVT works in close partnership with the district administrations and local governments in home areas. Although it does not profess to take a rights-based approach as such, GVT works with other NGOs, such as DISHA in Ahmedabad, which are active in working for construction workers’ rights.

After the initial success of the programme, district administrations have indicated their desire to expand the number of PSKs in their districts in partnership with GVT.

REDUCING THE COSTS OF MIGRATION

This is being done through:

- Job information;
- ID cards and training on labour rights to help migrants to withstand harassment and exploitation when travelling and in destination areas;
- Loans for migrants at “reasonable” interest rates, to enable them to migrate;
- Means for migrants to communicate with their families at home.

INCREASING THE RETURNS OF MIGRATION

This is being done through:

- Skills training to enable migrants to access higher paying jobs;
- Less risky ways of saving and transferring funds home;
- Supporting migrants in disputes for the non-payment of wages.

PROVIDE AWARENESS TRAINING ON MIGRANT RIGHTS

The training is aimed at:

- *Mukkadams* (local labour-recruiting agents);
- Government officials in source and destination areas;
- Contractors in destination areas;
- Urban populations who generally hold negative views on migrants, especially tribals.

ASSIST MIGRANTS TO ACCESS BASIC SERVICES

The focus of this element is on:

- The Public Distribution System (the state system of subsidized food grains for people living below the poverty line);
- Basic education;
- Health, i.e. information on the location of the medical centre, how to access it, and similar assistance;
- Access to drinking water.

ADVOCACY WORK

This is aimed at government officials in districts and state capitals on migration issues to change policies and programmes (e.g. transfer of education, health and PDS benefits between states).

ENDNOTES

1. For some, including Bangladesh, China, India, Pakistan and Viet Nam, greater detail can be found in the specific country papers.
2. The findings summarized in this section are derived from Acharya, 2001; Godfrey et al., 2001; Paitoonpong et al., 2001; and Guest, 2003.
3. According to Participatory Poverty Assessments conducted by the Government of Viet Nam in 2003.
4. See page 24 for details concerning the KT classification system used in Viet Nam.
5. According to Anthea Kerr, working in Lao PDR for over three years with the UN and international NGOs.
6. National Statistical Centre and the National Economic Research Institute of Lao PDR.
7. National Poverty Eradication Programme, eighth roundtable meeting, Vientiane, 4-5 September 2003, Government of Lao PDR.
8. This section draws on Hugo (2003) and the ILO report “Migration: opportunities and challenges for poverty reduction”, one of 12 technical briefing notes for the Poverty Alleviation Committee in Indonesia, “Working Out of Poverty: an ILO Submission for the Indonesia PRSP”.
9. On the basis of panel data generated from 62 randomly sampled villages in Bangladesh (Rahman et al., 1996).
10. Personal communication with Mostafa Quaium Khan, Executive Director.
11. An informed guess by policy researchers on the DFID-funded Western India Rainfed Farming Project (see Jones and de Souza).
12. The Society for the Promotion of Wasteland Development is an internationally respected NGO working in India on participatory management of natural resources. The study was part of a larger research study on Household Livelihood and Coping Strategies in Semi-Arid India”, by the Natural Resources Institute, UK.
13. Based on focus group discussions and key informant interviews across eight villages.
14. Personal communication with Viren Lobo.
15. See, e.g. the work by Singh and Karan (2001) on Bihar; Dayal and Karan (2003) on Jharkhand; Mamgain (2003) on Uttaranchal; Andhra Pradesh Rural Livelihoods Projects (APRLP) (2003) on Mahbubnagar, Andhra Pradesh; Khandelwal and Katiyar (2003) on South Rajasthan and Grameen Vikas Trust, Mosse; Virgo et al. (2003) on Madhya Pradesh; Rafique and Rogaly (2003) on West Bengal. See also Breman (1985, 1993), Ghosh and Sharma (1995) Bora (1996), all cited in Karan, 2003.
16. Cambodia – Cambodian-Thai Labour Migration Workshop, IOM press briefing notes, 22 June 2004, <http://www.iom.int/en/archive/pbn220604.shtml>.
17. Report of the Working Group on Watershed Management for the Tenth Five-Year Plan.
18. The 1986 Urban Migration Survey, the 1987 One Percent National Population Survey, the 1988 Two Per Thousand Fertility Survey, the 1990 Census, the 1995 One Percent National Population Survey and the household (*hukou*) registration migration statistics.
19. The availability of labour within the household is a strong determinant of the likelihood to migrate. Having one extra member in the household increases the relative likelihood of that household migrating by 17 per cent in Andhra Pradesh and 19 per cent in Madhya Pradesh. A rise in the ratio of working to non-working members in the household also increases the relative likelihood of migration by nearly 75 per cent in Andhra Pradesh and by 221 per cent in Madhya Pradesh. Focus group discussions and participatory wealth ranking of migrating households corroborate these findings: labour-scarce households do not migrate (Deshingkar and Start, 2003).
20. The curve plotting the initial increase, and then the decrease of outward mobility with the growth of national economic productivity.
21. See Harris, 2004.
22. See, e.g. the work by Singh and Karan, 2001; Karan, 2003 in Bihar; and Dayal and Karan, 2003 in Jharkhand; Rao 2001 and APRLP, 2003 in Andhra Pradesh; Khandelwal and Katiyar, 2003 in South Rajasthan; and Grameen Vikas Trust in Madhya Pradesh, Rogaly et al., 2001; and Rafique and Rogaly, 2003 in West Bengal and the Western Orissa Livelihoods Project (WORLP) in Orissa.
23. Personal communication with Anthea Kerr.
24. Adapted from Sander’s (2003) study on international remittances, many of which also apply to internal remittances; also from IIED (2004) and Deshingkar (2004a).
25. Taken from de Haan, 1999.

26. All information on China in this section is derived through personal communication with Hans van de Glind, Manager/Chief Technical Advisor, ILO-IPEC project to prevent trafficking in girls and young women for labour exploitation in China (CP-TING project).
27. Existing central and state legislation in India includes the Minimum Wages Act (1948); the Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act (1979); the Contract Labour System (Regulation and Abolition Act) (1970); the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act (1975); for women under the Equal Remuneration Act (1976); the Construction Workers Act (1996), or the Factories Act (which sets a handling limit for women of 20kg).
28. Personal communication with Mr. Janmejaya Singh, ADB.
29. A parochial project LYLA BAVADAM, *Frontline*, 20(10), <http://www.flonnet.com/fl2010/stories/20030523004803200.htm>.
30. Thousands of Bengali-speaking Muslims who migrated to Mumbai over the years, Sources: Binooy Nair, "Sena renews plans to flush out B'deshis", *Mid Day*, 5 December 2004; Nithin Belle, "Sena to launch drive on issue of immigration", *Khaleej Times*, 6 December 2004.
31. See, for instance, the International Food Policy Research Institute's (IFPRI) evaluation of National Watershed Development Project Rainfed Areas (NWDPA), India, by Kerr et al., and studies of common property resources (CPR) rejuvenation in Rajasthan, cited in Chopra 2000.
32. SA8000 is the first social accountability system, devised by Social Accountability International, aimed at ensuring that retailers, brand companies, suppliers and other organizations maintain just and decent working conditions throughout the supply chain. SA8000 is based on international workplace norms set out in the ILO conventions on the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
33. "Rickshaw mafia have a free run", *The Hindu*, 24 November 2002.
34. VeT is a French NGO working in Viet Nam since its creation in 1995 in the field of urban development and social equality.
35. Based on a note prepared by Steve Jones and Ken Desouza.

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**INTERNAL MIGRATION IN CHINA:
LINKING IT TO DEVELOPMENT**

**Professor Huang Ping
Mr. Zhan Shaohua**

Huang Ping is Professor of Sociology and Director-General of the Bureau of International Co-operation. Mr Zhan Shaohua is Assistant Research Fellow, Institute of Sociology. Prof. Zhu Ling, Prof. Zhang Juwei and Prof. Liu Jianjin have joined the discussions and made important comments. Ms Zhou Yunfan and Mr Zheng Xi have helped to organize the discussions.

INTERNAL MIGRATION IN CHINA: LINKING IT TO DEVELOPMENT

1. INTRODUCTION¹

The most populous nation of the world, China also experiences the most extensive internal migration today. In 2003, the so-called floating population, i.e. people who are not permanently registered in their current place of residence, reached 140 million, most of them rural labourers moving from the countryside to cities and coastal areas.² For instance, as many as 114 million rural labourers participated in internal migration in 2003.³ Such internal rural labour migration and related issues, especially regarding poverty reduction, has become one of most significant research and policy concerns in China in recent years.

Even though China has experienced rapid urbanization since the reforms started in 1978, large numbers of people continue to live in rural areas and to work in the agricultural sector. In 2003, 769 million Chinese, or 59.47 per cent of the total population, lived in rural areas. In terms of employment structure, among the 489.7 million rural labourers, 312.6 million were working in agriculture in 2003⁴ (NSB, 2004).

In recent years, the Chinese Government pursued a more positive approach towards rural-urban migration, and adopted a number of policies in support of rural migrants in urban areas.

This paper shall emphasize the relationship between migration and development and poverty alleviation. It is proposed that internal labour migration can have a positive effect on development and poverty alleviation in the areas of origin. It will also highlight the new policies and practices initiated in recent years.

2. MIGRATION: ITS CAUSES, TRENDS AND PATTERNS

Causes and trends

Internal migration in China is characterized by two important features: first, most migrants left their farmlands for urban areas and/or for non-agricultural activities; second, such labour flows are basically directed from the interior to coastal areas, and/or from central and western regions to eastern areas. These two features overlap, and are closely interrelated with the macro socio-economic structure.

With the abolition of the People's Commune System, a new Household Responsibility System was introduced and, as a result, rural populations obtained more autonomy regarding what and how much to produce. The reform contributed greatly to the increase of rural households' income, and in the early 1980s caused the rural-urban income gap to decline to its lowest level: in 1983, the urban-rural income ratio stood at 1.70, the lowest since 1978.

However, though it was widely accepted that the income gap is the most important force driving rural-urban migration, some scholars argued that the current phenomenon of migration cannot be explained fully if other factors, such as institutional changes, the action of migrants as agents, and cultural change in terms of daily life and consumption were neglected (Huang Ping et al., 1997). It is certain that increasing numbers of rural labourers left their farmlands and villages for urban and coastal areas since the reform, especially since Deng Xiaoping's Southern Visit in 1992. The number of rural labour migrants rose to around 60 million in 1994, 88 million in 2000 and 94 million in 2002.⁵ In spite of such large numbers of rural migrant labourers, it is estimated that around 150 million "surplus" rural labourers continue to be active in agriculture (*China Daily*, 23 January 2003). Therefore, unemployment/underemployment in rural areas is often perceived as another important cause of rural labour flows to urban areas. At the same time, in part as a result of rural-urban labour migration, China experienced a rapid rate of urbanization since the reform, increasing from 17.6 per cent in 1977 to 40.5 per cent in 2003, i.e. a 0.88 per cent average annual increase. Many researchers predict that urbanization will continue to grow at this rapid rate, or even higher, for another 20 to 30 years (Bai Nansheng, 2003; Zhang Juwei and Wu Yaowu, 2004).

Regional disparity is often regarded as the key cause of labour flow from western and central to the eastern regions. Amongst 38.97 million extra-provincial migrants who left their home provinces, 84.65 per cent moved to eastern regions in 2002 (Liu Jianjin, 2004). Even though the regional disparity appears as a historical socio-economic phenomenon, the development strategies of the early 1980s also played an important role.⁶ With the pro-east development approaches, such as the creation of the Special Economic Zones (SEZ), lower taxes, favourable land usage and similar initiatives, eastern regions have absorbed the largest share of foreign direct investments (FDI): 90.7 per cent of total FDI were registered in eastern regions between 1983 and 1989, and 88.1 per cent between 1990 and 1996 (NSB, *China Statistical Yearbook*, 1984-1997). Aware of the serious regional disparities, the government began to adjust its development strategy as of the late 1990s and initiated the much publicized "Go West" programme and many pro-poor projects.

Despite many employment opportunities and presumably higher salaries in developed regions, a high proportion of rural migrants have sought jobs within their own counties, prefectures and provinces. Statistics showed that 75 per cent of rural migrant labourers were employed within their own provinces in 2000. Similarly, most migrants had not moved to metropolitan areas or large cities, but to small and middle-sized ones. Statistics showed that there were only 30.18 per cent of migrants employed in provincial capitals in 2000 (NBS and MOLSS, 2001). This stands to reason and rural labourers are also rational in their decisions, tending to reduce their economic, social and cultural costs when they decide to leave agriculture for urban or non-agricultural sectors.

Employment structure

The employment structure for migrants is highly correlated to the labour market and the amount of human resources available. With the advantage of large numbers of cheap and qualified labourers, China and the Zhujiang Delta and Yangtze River Delta in particular, has become one of most important global manufacturing bases in the 1990s, employing 37.22 per cent of all

migrant labourers in 2000. Besides the manufacturing sector, there are three other sectors that have also absorbed a large number of rural migrants, notably the construction, restaurant and commercial and services sectors. In 2000, 14.41 per cent of all migrants were employed in construction, 12.2 per cent in services and 11.93 per cent in restaurants and commerce (NBS and MOLSS, 2001). As many migrant labourers have relatively lower education and less skills it is easier for them to find in jobs in these sectors, while for their part, the large capacity of these sectors allowed them to absorb migrant labourers during the reform towards a market economy.

Regional diversity

Regarding inter-province migration, the central and western regions are main sending areas, and the eastern and coastal regions main receiving areas. But regarding provinces such as Jiangxi, Anhui, He'nan, Sichuan, large-scale labour migration had already occurred much earlier, starting in the early 1980s partly because their problems of "overpopulation vs. limited arable land" were more serious. But in some provinces in western China, such as Gansu, Ningxia, Inner Mongolia and others, large-scale rural labour migration took place relatively late, starting mainly in the mid- and late 1990s, when the "rural problem in three dimensions", i.e. rural economy, rural residents and rural communities, became one of most serious issues since the reform. Other provinces, such as, e.g. Yunnan and Qinghai, with large ethnic populations, never experienced large-scale labour migration to other developed provinces, even though they are poorer and economically more underdeveloped.

Return of migrant labourers

Research shows that most migrant labourers returned home because they were either unable to realize their work expectations, or they come back to marry and take care of their parents and may be expected to leave the countryside again when possible (Li Yinhe et al., 2000; Bai Nainsheng et al., 2002). However, the age structure of migrant labourers in large cities remained stable since the early 1990s, implying that many migrants actually returned to the sending areas, even though not necessarily to their villages and agricultural work, but to townships or small cities for non-farm activities. Moreover, it is true that most of the so-called "new generation" of rural migrants will not return to rural areas or work on farmland because, on the one hand, there is not enough farmland and therefore there are not enough employment opportunities in agriculture and, on the other, they are reluctant to return to rural areas and agricultural work. The real question is, therefore, if these migrants cannot stay in the big cities or the developed regions, where can they go and what can they do?

Shortage of migrant labourers in 2004

Many scholars and policy makers argued that there are still 150 million "surplus labourers" in agriculture who need to be transferred to non-agricultural sectors in the next one or two decades. But, in 2004, a new problem emerged in the form of a shortage of migrant labourers in many receiving areas. A survey showed that in 2004, 2 million migrant labourers were needed in the Zhujiang Delta region, eastern Fujian and south-eastern Zhejiang, where many manufacturing

enterprises were located (Mo Rong, 2004). The survey concluded that the problem of labour shortage was not due to institutional barriers, but rather to low wages, long working hours and poor working conditions. Some scholars attribute the shortages to the governmental pro-farmers/agriculture policies in 2004, which aimed at increasing rural incomes and, in fact, raising farmers' incomes by 300 yuan on average (*People's Daily*, 3 March 2005). Many people, especially those advocating for migrants' rights, actually welcome the issue of shortages, in the expectation that this would oblige foreign investment companies or joint ventures to raise wages and improve working conditions for migrant labourers (*Beijing Youth Daily*, 27 July 2004; *Nanfang Dushi Bao (Guangzhou: South Urban Daily)*, 3 August 2004).

3. MIGRATION, POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENT

Impacts on migrants and their families

According to the *White Book on China Poverty Reduction and Development*, released in 2000, around 30 million people live below the poverty line in rural areas. The government has identified 592 counties as "poor areas" across the country, with most of them located in central and western China (173 and 375, respectively). Rural poverty in central and western China poses a main challenge to local development efforts and is a key development concern in these regions.

It is evident that the remittances by migrant labourers have played a very significant role in reducing poverty and promoting local development in the sending areas, especially for the poor ones among them. On average, each migrant labourer remitted up to 4522.15 yuan (about 545 US dollars) in 2000 (NSB and MOLSS, 2001), that is, a poor family could basically escape poverty with the help of remittances. Comparative research showed that relative to those in other developing countries, migrant labourers in China saved more out of their wages to remit to their families (Li Qiang, 2001). These remittances are mainly used for daily living expenditure, children's education, house building and/or improvement, and even for agricultural production.

Moreover, the migration experience can be helpful for migrant labourers to increase their own human capital. Research showed that in the cities migrants learnt non-agricultural skills, became open to new experiences and knowledge, made new friends, and so on (Du Ying, 1995; Du Ying and Bai Nansheng, Eds, 1997). Many migrants, especially the "new generation" go to look for jobs in cities not only because of the income they can earn, but also, and more importantly, because of the new experiences they can gain there (Luo Xia and Wang Chunguang, 2003). In particular, female rural labourers can, to some extent, improve their status within their families and communities because of their migration experience (Rachel Connelly et al., 2004).

Impacts for sending areas

According to research, labour migration from rural to urban areas contributed 16 per cent of total GDP growth in the past 18 years. Migration should be regarded as one of the reasons for the national economy's high average annual growth rate of 9.2 per cent between 1978 and 1997 (Cai Fang, 2001). Through their hard work, high savings, low consumption and by reducing the

pressure on the land, these tens of millions of rural labourers have helped their family members who had stayed behind. Had there been no, or much less migration, the socio-economic gap between rural and urban societies would have been much wider.

Even only considering the amount of remittances sent by migrant labourers, there is no doubt that rural labour migration has greatly contributed to the local development of sending areas, especially the poor areas. For instance, in one poor county in Sichuan in the late 1990s, annual remittances sent through the county post office were five times higher than the total revenue of the county government. To realize the full significance it has to be borne in mind that remittances sent via the post office are generally only half the total amount migrants actually sent or brought home (Huang Ping, 2003). Labour migration has been regarded as one of the important strategies to promote economic growth by many local governments of sending areas, especially those of western China, such as Sichuan, Gansu, Chongqing. Moreover, labour migration has also been taken up as one of the national strategies to reduce rural poverty since the late 1990s.

Remittances could be a much more active factor in the promotion of local development if channelled towards productive investments and the development of human capital.⁷ Therefore, policies and development projects should aim to create an enabling environment for the expansion of the local economy, especially for small businesses.

Migrant labourers who have expanded their experiences and increased their human capital through their migration can become a positive force in the local socio-economic development of sending areas. Anhui Province, one of the main sending areas with large-scale migration since the early 1980s, has witnessed the return of a large number of migrants who created their own enterprises there.⁸ Moreover, some migrant labourers have become leaders in their communities after their return to their home villages. These new leaders can play a significant role in the local development process.

However, labour migration can also become a “brain drain” problem for the sending areas to a certain extent. Given that the prices of rural products are not competitive either on the Chinese or the world market, agriculture has become a less profitable sector and, even those who are not part of the so-called “surplus” labourers have also left their farmland in search for non-agricultural jobs in urban areas. As a result, in some areas it is mostly the women and the elderly who are working in agriculture. Research has shown that return migrants contribute positively to the economic development of their home areas, quite often even those who returned because their migration was “unsuccessful” or, in the case of women, because their family asked them to return. Successful migrants often return to escape the drudgery of urban wage labour and to use their savings and urban experience to set themselves up in small businesses in their home areas (Ma Zhongdong, 2001, 2002; Murphy, 2003).

Impacts on the receiving areas

Since 1992, south-east China, where overseas investment is concentrated and numerous rural labourers go to, has enjoyed rapid economic growth. Evidently, migrant labourers play a key role in this. Their low wages and relatively high human capital make the manufacturing industry in China more competitive relative to other countries. Moreover, rural migrants have greatly changed

the social structure of receiving areas. In some local areas, the number of migrants can largely outnumber local permanent residents. The incoming rural migrants are at the bottom of the social ladder. They are paid piece-rate wages and most work extra hours without any additional pay, few welfare benefits and little social protection (She Xiaoye, 1997; Huang Ping, 2003).

In some sectors in the cities, migrants greatly outnumber local urban labourers, partly because the latter are unwilling to work in these sectors. According to Lu Xueyi, 79.8 per cent of workers in urban construction are rural migrants, 52.5 per cent in mining, 68.2 per cent in the manufacture of electronic products, 52.5 per cent in social services, 58.4 per cent in the restaurants and tourism segment and 58.3 percent in sales (Lu Xueyi, 2003).

More importantly, a deeper change is taking place, of which migration and urbanization are partly the cause and result; namely, the abolition or relaxation of many institutional boundaries in Chinese society, such as those between rural and urban areas, the eastern-coastal and western-central regions, and agriculture and industry.

4. IMPROVING POLICIES

In the period 2000-2004, the Chinese leadership made a serious effort to fundamentally review the official approach to labour migration. Several policy initiatives to free the labour market across China and guarantee more equitable opportunities for migrant labourers were undertaken in this period:

***Hukou* reform**

Established in 1958, the Residence Registration System System (*Hukou*) was an institutional barrier to prevent rural-urban migration. But between 1984 and 2000, the system was progressively relaxed allowing rural labourers to leave their villages to seek non-agricultural opportunities in urban areas, though it remained very difficult for them to obtain an urban *Hukou*.

In March 2001 the central government decided to reform the *hukou* system. On 1 October 2001, China started on an experimental reform of the residence registration system in more than 20,000 small towns (*Beijing qingnian bao* (*Beijing Youth Daily*), 28 September 2001). In the same year, the State Development and Planning Committee (SDPC, since 2003 the National Development and Reform Committee (NDRC)) drafted the new five-year plan, which aimed at unifying the national labour market within the next five years, eliminating the restrictions on the flow of the rural labourers, and establishing a system of employment registration and a matching new social security system.⁹

Since the *hukou* reform of October 2001, the new labour migration policies can be stated as follows:

- Residence in small towns and townships is open to rural labourers who have found a job and accommodation there.

- Medium-sized cities and some provincial capitals have removed the limit on the number of rural labourers who can apply for permanent residence status.
- Mega cities such as Shanghai and Beijing have adopted a soft policy of “widening the gate, raising the price”, under which still limits the number of rural labourers for permanent residence status.

Creating a unified labour market

In early 2002 the State Council issued Document No. 2, which specifies how the free flow of rural-urban migrants under the *hukou* reform should be catered for in the cities. The document stressed that migrant workers are “members of the working class” instead of peasants, and that they have contributed much to urban construction and development since the early 1980s; therefore, no unreasonable limits or biased policies should be imposed on rural migrant labourers. Instead, they should be encouraged to migrate to urban areas. More importantly, the document set out four new policy principles: fair treatment, reasonable guidance, management improvement, and better service.

Furthermore, the labour authorities are gradually providing more and more employment services for migrant labourers. For instance, in January 2005, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security initiated a project called “Spring Breeze Movement”, which demands urban employment services to be more inclusive and to provide services for migrant labourers.

Ensuring fair treatment of migrant workers

In September 2002, the central government once again emphasized the importance of providing fair conditions for rural migrants (New China News Agency, 4 September 2002). In January 2003, the State Council Office’s No. 1 Document brought together in a unified framework the various elements of the earlier policies discussed above. The comprehensive nature of the document makes it by far the most important policy statement of the central authorities in this area. More concretely, the 2003 Document No. 1 of the State Council Office entails the following:

- Abolishing any excessive and unfair restrictions on rural labourers seeking either temporary or permanent employment in urban areas.
- Ensuring that proper legal procedures are applied when employing rural labourers, including proper work contracts and the timely payment of wages.
- Improving the working and living conditions for rural migrant labourers, especially women, including healthcare, safety at work and social security.
- Providing skills training and information on applicable laws and regulations for rural migrants, on a voluntary basis and at a reasonable fee.
- Providing access to education for the children of migrant workers similar to that for children of urban residents.
- Enhancing the proper management of migrant populations, including family planning, education for children, employment, healthcare and legal aid.

Providing social services and insurance for migrant workers

Pursuant to the 2003 Document No. 1 of the State Council, the central ministries have, sometimes jointly, promulgated a series of policies and initiated projects to provide social services and insurances for migrant workers:

- In September 2003, the State Council promulgated The National Plan of Training Rural Migrants in 2003-2010, which was jointly drafted by six ministries, including MOA, MOLSS, MOE, MOST, MOC, and MOF, to provide hundreds of millions of migrant workers with introductory training, such as vocational training and skill training programmes (e.g. information on applicable legal standards and regulations, healthcare, job-seeking skills). In March 2004, the MOA launched the “Sunshine Project” as part of the national plan to train and instruct new rural migrants in the sending areas, especially the identified poor areas.
- In September 2003, the State Council promulgated a document to improve basic education services for the children of migrants in cities, which was jointly drafted by six related ministries. The document specified that urban governments and their public schools must be responsible for the education of migrants’ children.
- Also in September 2003, the MOLSS and MOC jointly issued a notice to “Solve the Problem of Delayed Wages of Migrant Workers in the Construction Industry”. Again in September 2004, the two ministries issued another document creating an institutional arrangement for the payment of migrant construction workers, entitled “Provisional Management Measures on Migrant Workers’ Payment in the Construction Industry”.
- In January 2004, the Ministry of Health issued a document to improve health protection, control the incidence of and improve the diagnosis and treatment of vocational illnesses among migrant workers.
- In June 2004, the MOLSS mandated employers and enterprises to take out work-related injury and accident insurance for migrant workers, especially those in high-risk industries, such as construction and mining.
- Premier Wen’s Government Work Report, released on 5 March 2005, stipulated that migrant labourers’ salaries cannot be delayed, and that payment can be increased without decreasing efficiency.
- New Paradigm and Priority for Rural Development. In 2003, the central government launched a policy of “New Development Paradigm”, which emphasized a more balanced, comprehensive and sustainable development.
- The new paradigm calls for balanced future developments, especially regarding the gaps between rural and urban, and eastern and western regions. In the beginning of 2005, the central authorities prioritized the significance of establishing a harmonious society, and attached much more importance to social justice and social inclusion for different social groups.

- In 2004 the CPC and State Council No. 1 Document stated the priority of rural development and the increase of farmers' income. The 2005 No. 1 Document focuses on the improvement of agricultural production and the promotion of rural development. These priorities have been followed up on through a series of concrete measures.
- China's Premier Wen Jiabao stressed recently in his Government Work Report that the "rural problem in three dimensions" is still the top priority of the government in 2005. The report announced that the agricultural tax will be eliminated completely as of 2006, and that as of 2005, students in compulsory education will not have to pay for their textbooks and other fees in counties identified as poor. As of 2007 this policy is to be implemented across the whole country.

5. INTERVENTION IN SUPPORT OF MIGRANTS: GOOD PRACTICES

International organizations

International organizations have intervened in rural-urban labour migration since the mid-1990s. Most of them launched development projects in cooperation with local partners, to provide financial support for local actors, including local NGOs and non-political organizations (NPOs),¹⁰ the government and private sector. They have indeed played a significant role in promoting local development and influencing government policies. UNESCO and its projects are a case in point.

UNESCO and its project "Together with Migrants"

In 2002, UNESCO, jointly with Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, launched a six-year project on *Urban Poverty Reduction among Young Migrants* (renamed as *Together with Migrants* in 2003). Eight pilot projects were selected across the country to cope with the issue of internal migration in different situations. Of the pilot sites, four were located in western China (Kunming, Yunnan; Diqing, Yunnan; Chengdu, Sichuan; Chifeng, Inner Mongolia) and another four in eastern China (Beijing; Shanghai; Dalian, Liaoning; Zhuolu, Hebei). These pilot sites can be categorized respectively as sending and receiving areas, and as small, medium-sized and mega cities/prefectures. The aims of the project can be stated as follows:

- Considering the policy gap regarding rural and urban poverty reduction, the main aim of the project is to reduce poverty among young rural migrants in cities. Poverty here is understood not only in terms of income, but also social inclusion. The benefits for migrants would include skills training, information sharing, help in the building of social networks and the like.
- The project aims to mobilize and integrate all available resources, and has established a working partnership involving social science researchers, local authorities, NGOs and other aid agencies, local officials and policy makers at higher levels.
- The project seeks to explore alternatives to migration and local development; for instance, network building between sending and receiving areas is a main concern of the pilot projects

in Chifeng of Inner Mogolia and Kunming of Yunnan. Moreover, a nationwide working partnership has been established between all pilot sites.

- The project has attracted much attention from local governments, and has, to some extent, already had positive impacts on local development and related policies.

Generally speaking, the project has linked migration and development between rural and urban areas, western-sending and eastern-receiving areas, bridged the government policy gap concerning rural and urban poverty reduction, explored alternative development strategies in the local contexts, especially in regard to rural labour migration.

Local NGOs

In the Chinese context two types of local NGOs are concerned with internal migration. One type is grassroots and community-based, and seeks financial and public support from, e.g. international donors, the media and other interested parties, to enable them to work directly with migrant labourers. The other consists of mass organization and social actors, such as, e.g. women's federations, trade unions, voluntary organizations and associations, which, on the one hand, maintain a close relationship with the government and, on the other, enjoy a certain latitude in their routine work and project activities. To some extent, they act as intermediaries between the government and civil society.

Grassroots and community-based organizations

In the mid-1990s individuals, representatives of the private sector or migrants themselves established NGOs concerned with migrants and related issues. Though no detailed statistics are available, their numbers have been estimated at around 30 to 50 (Han Jialing and Zhan Shaohua, 2005).

The following examples are selected for a brief introduction.

1. Panyu Organization of Legal Services for Migrants

This voluntary agency was created in 1998 by a lawyer and a migrant worker and is situated in Fanyu District of Guangzhou city, Guangdong Province. It provides legal services for rural migrants working in the Zhujiang Delta that is in the south-east coastal areas. Such legal assistance was provided free of charge when the organization received financial support from an international donor in 2002. Since then, some 5,000 migrant workers have been able to benefit from these services. The organization's main activities include:

- The provision of legal assistance to migrants involved in a legal dispute.
- The sharing of information and knowledge among migrant workers.
- A hotline has been established for legal consultations. Lawyers are regularly invited to speak to migrant workers. Sometimes missions are sent out to factories to offer legal services to migrant workers there.
- Training sessions for migrant workers to improve their education and skills.

2. **Beijing Youth Art Team for Migrant Workers**

In May 2002, several young migrants organized a singers' group in Beijing and performed free of charge for migrants working on construction sites and living in the city's suburbs. After receiving financial assistance from some international organizations, such as Hong Kong Oxfam, the group was able to expand its range of services for migrants. For instance, in cooperation with a primary school and some neighbourhood committees, they can now provide migrants with training sessions, discussions, libraries, newsletters, lectures by experts, consultation activities and more. Owing to their success, the team has received much attention from the public, the media and even the Beijing authorities.

3. **Women's Federation**

The Women's Federation (WF) is a Chinese NPO established in March 1949, under the Chinese Communist Party. The network is vertically structured ranging from village to national level, and spans the entire country. WFs aim at improving the social status and capacity of women, protecting their rights and advocates gender equality. WFs have full-time staff at all levels and are partly financed by the local governments. Relative to government agencies, WFs have much less political power, but enjoy greater flexibility in their activities. Many WFs have put the provision of services to female migrant workers on their agendas.

- **All-China Women's Federation (ACWF)**

ACWF is situated at the top of WF system. Regarding skills training for female migrants provided by its constituents, ACWF has approved and praised local WF initiatives to provide services for female migrants.

- **WF activities in sending areas**

Some local WFs began to train prospective women migrants and help them to move to cities and other economically more advanced areas in the late 1990s. The approach of training and sending migrants has been used as a strategy to reduce surplus rural labour and alleviate local poverty in many underdeveloped areas, including western areas, such as Shaanxi, Sichuan and Inner Mongolia. Some WFs, such as Inner Mongolia's Chifeng WF and Sichuan's Jintang WF, have explored ways of protecting and assisting their female migrants after they arrive in the receiving areas.

- **WF activities in receiving areas**

The growing interest in labour migration in China generally, has caused the WFs to also expand their concern and services for women migrants. They established many supporting organizations for female migrants in areas of destination, such as the Pozi Street WF, and the Kunming WF. The WF in Guangdong, the largest and main receiving province, has provided training sessions and protection for female migrants by organizing law courses and increasing public awareness, as well as through consultations.

6. KEY ISSUES

In order to better appreciate the relevance of internal migration in China it should be seen as part of China's overall development strategy. China needs an integrated development strategy that

includes a viable and prosperous countryside as one of its key objectives. Migration can play an important positive role in the realization of this objective.

In the Spring of 2003, the central government introduced a new development paradigm striving for more comprehensive, more balanced and more sustainable development. Under the new paradigm, what seriously challenges us is how to explore a set of practical policy alternatives and strategies most appropriate for the most populated, resources-constrained among the world's developing countries. Internal migration can be focused on and taken up as one of the most important strategies towards achieving important economic and social breakthroughs.

“The rural problem in three dimensions”

“The rural problem in three dimensions” (rural economy, rural community, and rural residents) has been a long-standing concern in China. However, until recently the focus was on the rural economy, especially grain production, but, until recently, other aspects of the rural problem in three dimensions had been largely ignored, such as lower prices for agricultural products, the low income of rural residents, the decline of rural communities, and so on. In order to mitigate these problems, many scholars propose rapid urbanization. However, the rapid expansion of urban areas has been accompanied by the emergence in the cities' suburbs of large numbers of landless and jobless rural migrants (Ru Xin et al., 2004). Therefore, any scheme that aims to urbanize several hundreds of millions of rural people within 10 to 20 years are met with justified doubts and criticism (Pan Wei, 2004). It is more realistic to acknowledge that a huge number of people will continue to live and work in rural areas, though not necessarily in agriculture, and that rural development should, therefore, be given more serious consideration. In 2004 and 2005, the Documents of the State Council focused on the rural economy and farmers' income. Premier Wen's Government Work Report in March 2005 stressed that the issue of “the rural problem in three dimensions” was still the priority concern at all levels of government work. However, a comprehensive strategy for sustainable rural development and to deal with such issues as poverty reduction, labour migration, public health and basic education, local non-farm activities and gradual urbanization, regional disparities, village elections or grass-roots participation, local governance or community rebuilding, to refer to only some of the most pressing issues, still remains to be explored.

Unemployment and underemployment

After many years of research and discussions, researchers and policy makers have now arrived at a consensus that one of the priorities for China's future development in the next one to two decades is to tackle the problem of employment, rather than focusing only on GDP growth. The current policy focus is on balancing GDP growth and employment, including part-time or temporary work (*People's Daily*, 13 September 2002). An overlapping set of dilemmas has to be confronted if the problem of unemployment/underemployment is to be successfully addressed:

- Total labour force vs. structural constraints. Not only are there too many labourers, but also the supply of labour does not match the structural changes in the market. Many workers,

particularly those having been laid off, do not have the relevant experiences and skills in a market where old and labour-intensive sectors are declining and often new technology – or capital-intensive sectors are emerging.

- The urban unemployed vs. rural underemployed (the so-called “surplus labourers”). Rural surplus labour is faced with a new challenge: competition with the urban unemployed whose numbers have grown rapidly due to massive redundancies in state-owned enterprises.
- Elderly labourers vs. young new labour market entrants. Over the coming five years, there will be about 23 million new labour market entrants annually¹¹ who will need to find jobs in urban areas, where urban industries are expected to be able to absorb only 8 million, leaving almost 15 million to face the high possibility of unemployment per year.

Many researchers and policy makers now argue that it is still too early to establish a general social security and social welfare system for the whole country and favour job creation strategies – including temporary and seasonal work – even if these only command low wages and low levels of welfare and social security.

***Hukou* system reform**

Most rural migrant labourers in cities still have their rural *Hukou*. That is why they are called *Nong Min Gong* (Peasant Workers) in Chinese. Indeed, their *Hukou* distinguishes them from urban residents and to a certain degree excludes them from urban social welfare systems, including social insurance, public relief, public healthcare services, etc., even though sometimes it is they themselves who choose not to participate in these urban “games” due to their low salaries and informal employment. However, *Hukou* system has remained a main target for critics. Others argue that *Hukou* system has been modified greatly since 1984 when rural labourers were officially permitted to seek non-agricultural jobs and run businesses in cities. Moreover, the *Hukou* system has some positive effects also, such as protecting farmers and migrants. For example, with a rural *Hukou* rural labourers can legally have a piece of arable land, which is a source of their livelihood and able to reduce their risks in the urban labour market. It is also a sort of safety net for rural residents by protecting them from being landless, jobless and homeless.

Policy gap in poverty reduction

There still is an important policy gap as far as rural-urban migration and poverty reduction are concerned. The current poverty reduction programmes are designed to cover two types of poor: (a) about 30 million rural people living below the poverty line, and (b) the urban poor with permanent urban residence status who have either been made redundant by SOEs, or retired on low pensions, or the elderly with health problems, totalling about another 30 million. The rural and urban poor are dealt with under separate programme schemes, administered by different agencies: the National Poverty Alleviation Office is basically responsible for poverty reduction in rural areas, while the Ministry of Labour and Social Security is responsible for those in urban areas.¹² The absence of any linkages between them not only leads to resource misallocation, but

also to conflicts of interest. Furthermore, both programmes are mainly concerned with the income of the poor, and less with other forms of deprivation or disadvantage, with neither of them covering the millions of rural migrants.

7. CHALLENGES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Challenges

If we can agree that, first, it is impossible to stop rural-urban labour migration; second, that the government should not continue to earn resources from rural areas and rural people for urban capital accumulation, as has been the case for decades and, third, that it may be too early and risky to provide full subsidies and welfare to rural residents from urban sectors (cf. Lin Yifu, 2003), then the government should consider the possibilities of:

- a) **Either** abolishing completely the *Hukou* system as soon as possible to give all people equal rights to apply for urban residence permits, **or** improving the *Hukou* system gradually to diminish the risks involved for both rural and urban people, as well as for development and sustainability.
- b) **Either** privatizing the arable land at village level and introducing large-scale farming methods that lead to higher productivity, **or** entering into longer and more flexible contractual arrangements with rural households at village level, while ensuring that their plot of land continues to function as a safety net, or social security, for rural households whose main bread earners may have left the village for off-farm activities for some years.
- c) **Either** continuing the urban-centred and elitist education system which, while providing excellent opportunities for some talented children in villages, also worsens the “brain drain” in rural areas, **or** modifying it to create a better balanced system which also provides training in appropriate technologies and skills useful at the local level for young rural labourers for whom higher education is impossible or strewn with great difficulties.

Policy considerations

First, the government should consider the development of comprehensive and inclusive programmes for rural-urban migration to bring rural-urban relationships into a mutually beneficial balance. In order to do so, it is necessary for officials at various levels to gain positive experiences and, to a certain extent even more important, learn from the negative lessons of urbanization in other countries, both developed and developing. The existing range of local government experiences with the enlisting of rural-urban migration to advance the development in the sending areas in China itself and the lessons to be learnt should be better taken account of.

Second, the government should establish more practical policies regarding the process of urbanization to ensure that cities do not simply continue to absorb more rural migrants beyond their capacities, but rather ensure that urban residents, whether local or migrants, have access to

adequate employment opportunities and to social support and protection and public services, to avoid further growth and aggravation of urban poverty and slums.

Third, the government should encourage a gradual and thus more realistic strategy of urbanization that would allow rural labourers to look for non-agricultural working opportunities, often involving different kinds of off-farm activities, in urban areas and to become urban residents, including in nearby local townships and county towns, and to have the opportunity wherever they live and work to integrate into the local community. A main strategic thrust would aim for the balancing, instead of separating rural and urban development. Apparently such a strategy would require at least two preconditions: (1) to promote local development and allow people to find off-farm employment opportunities in nearby townships or cities, and (2) to improve rural labourers' non-agricultural skills to expand their possibilities of finding work in various labour market segments.

Fourth, it is important for local governmental officials to realize, and for higher authorities to acknowledge that poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon with both economic and social aspects in absolute and relative terms. Because of local polarizations within a community, it is not always meaningful to use averages as proxies for general situations. At the same time, an increase in income will not always necessarily improve a person's access to rights, information and services. Rural labour migrants may earn more cash than they would otherwise have, but if they have little social or legal protection and, in addition, have to shoulder burdens and responsibilities in their home village, they are often in a much worse position than urban residents.

Finally, before the onset of the reforms some real advances were made regarding gender equality in rural China. It is significant to rethink these gains in order to work out the new strategies aimed at narrowing the rural-urban, rich-poor and eastern-western gaps, and to minimize the gap between men and women. It is an ironic and embarrassing situation if, along with economic growth, gender equality were to deteriorate.

ENDNOTES

1. In this paper, internal migration primarily refers to the voluntary movement of rural labourers who leave their home villages for urban areas (ranging from townships, county towns and other small cities within or outside the province of original residence, provincial capitals and major cities), seeking non-agricultural work opportunities, usually temporary or seasonal, at least three months a year, sometimes together with their family members.
2. The statistics were released by the Commission of Population and Family Planning in 2004. Please see: <http://www.china.org.cn/chinese/2004/Nov/694075.htm>.
3. The statistics were released by the Ministry of Agriculture in 2004. Please see: http://www.news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2004-05/16/content_1472033.htm.
4. Agriculture in China includes planting, forestry, animal husbandry, and fishery.
5. In comparison with rural to urban migration, rural to rural migration is often neglected by most policy makers and scholars in China. But it is worth considering not only because there are about 20-30 million migrants moving into rural areas, but also because alternative strategies can be explored from different experiences and perspectives (Wang Xiaoyi, 2002).
6. However, migration occurs not only because of economic disparities, but also for social and cultural reasons. People are more likely to migrate where they can gain more social or welfare support and enjoy more services and infrastructure, provided they integrate there. For example, rural migrants of Inner Mongolia are more inclined to flow into the nearest and culturally related places: in 2000, Liaoning Province received 41.35 per cent of all migrants of Inner Mongolia, while Hebei received 26.92 per cent, Beijing 13.46 per cent, Tianjing 8.65 per cent and Jilin 5.77 per cent, whereas Zhujiang Delta and Yangtze Delta, the most prosperous economic zones with numerous employment opportunities, had absorbed much less (NBS and MOLSS, 2001).
7. Some remittances have indeed been used for children's education. But, once they have gained higher education, such as college students from rural areas, most choose not to stay in rural areas but to go to cities and more developed areas.
8. Amongst 400,000 migrant labourers of Wuwei County, 10,000 had returned and created around 1,000 enterprises in 2004. In Bangpu Prefecture of Anhui Province, about 4,000 migrant labourers returned and created some 1,000 enterprises, employing around 20,000 local rural labourers. Please see: http://www.agri.gov.cn/llzy/t20050216_319923.htm, and http://www.agri.gov.cn/llzy/t20050304_330027.htm.
9. In 2003, the central government modified the policy concerning beggars and wandering people in cities. Under the new policy, the municipal authorities, especially of mega cities, cannot send migrant labourers back to their home villages by identifying them as beggars.
10. NPO: Non Political Organizations is a Chinese official appellation.
11. Some researches show the number of new entrants at around 17 million (see Zhang Juwei and Wu Yaowu, 2004).
12. The Ministry of Civil Affairs looks after a third group, the disabled and abandoned children.

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INTERNAL MIGRATION AND PRO-POOR POLICY

Rita Afsar, Ph.D.
Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
Dhaka, Bangladesh

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not engage either the Organizations or the national authorities concerned.

INTERNAL MIGRATION AND PRO-POOR POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

There is a strong positive and negative poverty-migration nexus. Poverty induces migration as much as migration contributes to the eradication of poverty. Whilst poverty as a determinant of migration is often debated in migration literature, the role of migration in reducing poverty has not been adequately highlighted in the existing studies and policy documents.¹ Migration has been aptly called the “missing link” in current development policies. Although over time Bangladesh has become a leader in micro-finance initiatives to alleviate rural poverty, and much attention has been focused on poverty reduction in the country, discussions and policy papers tend to provide general overviews or to highlight issues specific to certain sectors.

Actions to improve urban or rural livelihoods still come mostly from an isolated sectoral perspective rather than a holistic one that acknowledges inter-sectoral links within or across locations (Garrett and Chowdhury, 2004). Like in many other developing countries, the government policy on the whole fails to address the reality of a changing rural landscape, rapid urbanization and the contribution to both made by rural-urban migration in Bangladesh (Afsar, 2003a). The purpose of this background paper is to re-examine the links between migration and development in the context of changes sweeping through rural Bangladesh and considering that migration-poverty interface remains a poorly researched area.

Internal migration involves men, women and children, and includes rural to rural, urban to rural, urban to urban and rural to urban flows. In order to mainstream migration in the pro-poor policies it is important to take advantage of the growing rural-urban synergies. It is in this context that this paper focuses on rural-urban migration. Drawing on official reports, available data, published as well as unpublished academic studies, the paper will specifically address the following issues:

- The relationship between poverty and internal migration, to the extent that poverty is a cause of internal migration, and the extent to which internal migration contributes to a reduction in poverty.
- The extent to which internal migration is included in current development policy strategies.
- A review of the different ways in which internal migrants are and can be actively engaged for development, e.g. social capital and networks, financial capital (remittances and investments), employment and business creation, human capital and education.
- A presentation of available policy tools that can reduce the negative impact of internal migration, e.g. institutional, legislative, macroeconomic and others.
- A discussion of possible future trends, policy challenges and data gaps.

2. POVERTY-MIGRATION NEXUS

The relationship between migration and poverty is ambivalent. On the one hand, migration is both a cause and effect of poverty; on the other, poverty can be reduced or induced by population movement. Given the complexity involved in the causal chain between migration and poverty, one will agree with Skeldon (2002: 67) that the relative impact of migration on poverty and of poverty on migration varies according to the level of development of the area under consideration.

Historically, internal migration has been part of the livelihood strategy of the poorer population ever since the passage of the Permanent Settlement Act of Bengal in 1793.² Under this arrangement land was transformed from common property to a commodity, and its acquisition was subjected to the ability of tax payment to the Colonial Government. Increasingly, land became the major source of social stratification and, with a rapidly increasing population; the size of the landless population grew immensely. Over time, competing demands for other land uses and the 1961 Muslim Family Law of Inheritance also resulted in the squeezing of land frontiers. As a result, large-scale seasonal movements over long distances for harvests became common.³

2.1 Poverty as a factor for migration

Poverty can induce migration in many ways, most notably because of the shortage of year-round employment, limited land ownership, gender-specific constraints and ecological vulnerability.

Shortage of year-round employment

From a thorough review of literature the author found that the lack of year-round employment in rural areas has been one of the major reasons for outmigration by adult members in almost two-fifths of the households in small and medium towns of Bangladesh, namely Faridpur and Rajbari (Afsar and Baker, 1999). It can also be argued that these migrants must have some innate discontent or the desire to improve their situation as well as access to information and supportive networks enabling them to take the risk of migration. Migration could thus be viewed as both the “creator and product of poverty” (Skeldon, 2002).

Limited land ownership

In the context of Bangladesh, land is often considered to be an important factor, among others, mediating the flow and nature of migration. Kuhn (2000), for example, found that family migration occurred more often among the landless than those with land. While those with land seemed to be able to manage the periodic rain and flooding even when it damaged their property, over time landless households could not manage the follow-on effects. Being isolated from traditional social ties and security arrangements such as sharecropping and credit, they tend to have little capability to manage arising risks across various activities (Kuhn, 2000). This is corroborated by Afsar’s study of ready-made garment (RMG) factory workers, the bulk of who migrated to Dhaka city from landless rural households (Afsar, 2002).

In contrast to other studies, Hossain (2001), for instance, found that those who had larger land properties (more than 50 decimals)⁴ actually migrated more often than those with smaller bits of land (6-50 decimals). Indeed, the issue of landownership and migration is not always straightforward. Undoubtedly, those with greater resources (and perhaps greater involvement in non-farm activities) are likely to have more options in the labour market and to spread their livelihoods and risks over a number of geographic locations. The landless, on the other hand, have none other but to shift their whole livelihood base and therefore often embark on permanent types of migration. The marginal farmers might feel the crunch of being tied with limited land and limited or no access to the existing credit and input markets.

Gender-specific constraints

Even prior to the establishment of garment factories, poorer women, compelled by poverty and lack of social security arrangements, migrated to towns and cities in search of improved livelihood to work as construction labour or domestic help. With the advent of the RMG sector mainly in Dhaka city, the migration of young women experienced strong growth leading to some notable changes in women's mobility and occupations due to their entry into the formal sector. However, the demand for domestic workers in urban households remained and despite occasional supply shortages, the flow of female domestic workers from rural to urban areas was steady. In the face of the breakdown of joint and extended families and the lack of institutional support for childcare, upper and middle-class women in urban areas solicited domestic help in order to participate in the labour market.

Existing literature reveals that the presence of active male members is a critical intervening variable in determining the nature (e.g. family vs. single person migration) and types of migration (short-distance, long-distance, overseas, permanent, temporary, seasonal and circular). Both Afsar (2002) and Kuhn (2000) have demonstrated how the presence of more than one adult male member facilitates temporary migration both within and outside the country. From their analysis of seasonal migration and migrant streams in West Bengal, Rogaly and Rafique (2003: 679) also demonstrated the difficulties faced by women in single-earner households when husbands migrate: "when men migrate, women in single-earner households must adjust their own behaviour as a part of their investment in the social relations through which they access credit and other forms of support during their husband's absences".

Ecological vulnerability

Dynamics of space and population mobility regained attention only in recent years despite having been evidenced, such as in the case of the vulnerable ecology of the Bangladesh delta. Floods are recurrent themes of this riverine country and there are regional pockets that are more vulnerable ecologically, especially the river erosion belts of the Brahmaputra, Lalmonirhat, Gaibandha, Kurigram and Rangpur. These districts are located in the north-western part of the country and are the most depressed regions, recording high seasonal migration both during floods and during *monga*.

Hossain, Khan and Seeley (2003) from north-west Bangladesh showed that around a quarter of chronic poor households embarked on seasonal migration as an important livelihood strategy. Rogaly and Rafique (2003) found that seasonal migration was a more common livelihood strat-

egy among the poorest households in West Bengal rather than the slightly better off, given the arduous nature of the work involved. Seasonal migration often centres round agricultural work, patterned by the four main seasons when demand for additional workers in rice production peaks. In essence, seasonal migration can be rural-urban and rural-rural in nature. In their study of the Agargoan squatter settlement in Dhaka city, Majumder et al. (1996) observed that a large proportion of rickshaw pullers undertook regular reverse journeys to villages during the harvest season. Seasonal rural-rural migration also occurs between two villages, where the sending village is typically vulnerable to adverse ecology (and/or characterized by high population density as revealed by Rogaly and Rafique) and the receiving one benefits from a relatively favourable location and a land-man ratio that allows the use of more land to cultivate staple foods. Elsewhere, the author noted that migration triggered by ecological vulnerability, particularly floods, largely remained temporary and local and/or regional in nature (Afsar and Baker, 1999). This can be supported from Skeldon's broader canvass of survival migration that are likely to be mainly local, or regional at the most, and primarily within country (2002). Research from the alluvial floodplain (of Matlab Thana) of the country further suggests that seasonal migration by the chronic poor can lead to permanent migration only when the social ties are weak and when family has no labour to participate in seasonal migration (Kuhn, 2000).

Migration takes various forms and modalities depending on the level of poverty and landownership of the migrants and their families as well as the strength of their physical, social and human capital, among other factors.

2.2 Migration as a factor of poverty reduction

Migration as a poverty alleviator

There is both direct and indirect evidence available with regard to the impact of internal migration on poverty alleviation.

As direct evidence, the head count index, as well as unemployment rates and the growth of income in poor urban households – the bulk of which is constituted of migrants from rural landless and land-poor categories – show a definite trend of poverty decline and improved economic conditions. The author (2004) found that a per capita income increase of 42 per cent during 1991-1998 for the slum dwellers (the urban poor). This amounts to a 6.7 per cent annual growth rate as opposed to 3.4 per cent per capita growth for rural incomes. A clear link between migration and poverty alleviation can also be evidenced from the situation of the garment factory workers (Afsar, 2003b). From having no income of their own before migration, 80 per cent of these workers were earning enough to put them above the poverty threshold after migration.

From sending areas, Rahman and others (1996) found that the head-count index of poverty doubled in the case of non-migrant households (60%) compared to households having migrant members (around 30%). Indirectly, some of the recent developments in rural areas tend to support the role of migration in poverty alleviation in those areas.

A number of indicators show that rural-urban migration stimulated land tenancy in Bangladesh (Afsar, 2004). Both agricultural census data and household level panel data show a significant

and increasing trend of land under tenancy. With an increase in the frequency of tenancy, land-poor households got additional access to land. Households having less than 0.2 hectares of land were working nearly half of the tenanted land, signifying an important opportunity in a land-scarce country (Hossain et al., 2002). Moreover, migration and the shift in the rural labour force to non-farm occupations created labour shortages, which have encouraged mechanization, raised rural productivity and created scope for innovation (Afsar, 2004). A detailed analysis of remittances will be presented in Section 4.2; here it is sufficient to say that, using household-level data from the 1999-2000 national labour survey, Rahman (2004) found a significant inverse relationship between remittances and poverty, indicating that the inflow of remittances reduced the probability of a household's poverty.

Different types of internal migration will have different impacts

Whilst migration has the potential to boost income and reduce poverty, the gains from migration depend largely on the nature of migration, the types of physical, human and social capital of migrants, as well as the economic opportunities both at the places of origin and destination.

A large volume of literature suggests a negative causal link between internal migration and poverty. This view sees poverty as limiting migration incentives because of the implied costs that dissuade the poor population from migrating in order to alleviate their poverty.

Even when poor populations migrate, they run the risk of becoming vulnerable at the place of destination in the absence of resources and assistance and, hence, their scope to reduce poverty is also limited. Finan (2004), for example, finds that temporary migration is a routine livelihood strategy for the poor in south-eastern Bangladesh, but that its ability to lift the household out of poverty remained limited. Rather, it is a coping strategy to “keep the wolves at bay”.

Similarly, Rogaly and Rafique (2003) remarked that, “seasonal migration is for most of those involved, a way of hanging on. For a small minority of migrants with land, supportive family structures, other social assets and/or other sources of income, remittances may remain available for investment in agriculture or to make an impression through conspicuous consumption”. The authors also found that having more than one male wage earner in a household was likely to ensure better use of remittances and improved economic security. Afsar (2002), on the other hand, noted that in the case of contractual labour migration to overseas destinations, female spouses were more prudent managers of remittances compared with male spouses. In addition to the gender debate with regard to the use of remittances, there is contradictory evidence on distributional aspects of such remittances. According to Saith (1997: 27), remittances “accrue disproportionately to the richer regions, sectors and classes”. In contrast, domestic transfers are directed mostly to the poorer regions and the poorest classes, as revealed from a broader review of the Asia and Pacific region by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP, 2003).

Internal migration and sustainable development

However, gains from migration can be short-lived if there are no effective “asset building” policies covering a broad asset framework rather than the sectoral composition of growth for mitigating the problem of inequality. Existing macro- and micro-level data suggest whilst poorer

migrants fared well in terms of poverty alleviation compared with their non-migrant counterparts in the place of origin, a high level of income inequality is noted at destination, particularly in urban areas. Existing literature also suggests that income inequality is growing at a much faster rate in urban than in rural areas, and there is conspicuous gap in the quality of life indicators between the rich and the poor living in the capital city (ADB, 2004; Hossain et al., 1999; Afsar, 2004).

The author (2004) has demonstrated that the polarization in Dhaka accrued from the skewed investment in physical capital and human development accounts.⁵ In 1997-1998 the top 5 per cent of the population invested 55 per cent in physical capital⁶ whereas the bottom 40 per cent of the population invested only a meagre 2 per cent, and the middle 40 per cent of the population invested only 18 per cent (Afsar, 2004). Relative deprivation is also manifested through a very high incidence of morbidity and mortality in slum and squatter settlements where most migrants live. The increased vulnerability of the migrant poor is owing to many different reasons: violence and socio-political threats, death of the income-earning family member(s) and a weakening of the social and human capital. The continued adherence to a residential criterion by the NGOs and the government's targeted poverty reduction programmes tend also to exclude poor migrant populations from the existing development schemes and safety-net programmes.

3. DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND INTERNAL MIGRATION

3.1 Difficulty to integrate internal migrants into development policies

In its Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (I-PRSP) the government has acknowledged the need to arrest the growing inequality as a precondition if poverty reduction is to be achieved in a sustained and meaningful way (GOB, 2003). However, inequality is not limited to individuals and households, but is spread out across space and among different regions.

The government has rightly identified some vulnerable areas for priority policy interventions such as *monga* and *char* areas, and some flood-prone districts. However, it has neglected the needs of the urban poor in general and migrant poor in particular, who live mainly in rental and other temporary accommodation and often suffer from relative deprivation due to the inequitable distribution of income and other resources, as well as disadvantages in accessing existing services such as credit, health, incentive schemes for girls' education and existing socio-economic safety nets.

Internal migrants are often excluded from public welfare entitlements. Government pension schemes do not cover widows of urban poor agglomerations and, even within rural areas, extremely poor populations who are mobile and often lack a permanent address are not considered for relief or other types of entitlements. Moreover, the dominant mechanisms aimed at the extremely poor are food transfers, which, though vital, provide only short-term security.

An approach that is limited in time and one-dimensional is unsuitable to address the complex, cyclical and multi-dimensional aspects of poverty afflicting the extreme poor. Thus, Matin (2001) urged policy makers to look beyond the factors underlying household poverty towards market

and non-market factors that contribute to the creation of poverty traps. Similarly, NGOs do not cover poor migrant groups and there is general consensus that micro finance is not suitable for all categories of poor, despite its overarching appeal as an effective poverty-alleviating instrument.⁷ The interplay of demand and supply side factors systematically excludes the extreme poor from accessing micro finance through a process of peer screening and self-exclusion, rendering rigid credit models of micro-finance institutions incompatible with extreme poor groups' complex livelihood strategies and financial needs and behaviours.⁸

3.2 Limits of sector-specific development policies

At the macro level, a sector-led growth approach adopted by the government tends to miss out on the advantage of a virtuous cycle of rural-urban continuum in the development discourse. This approach resulted in a truncated development of different sectors owing to a lack of effective coordination among those sectors, as well as between geographical areas and the sectors of development.

Such an approach failed to provide an effective regional framework for decentralizing the industrial process around secondary towns and peri-urban areas, and transforming gains from rural non-farm sectors to high value-added activities. It also creates bottlenecks in the delivery of basic services.⁹

Moreover, budgetary allocations by the central government are apparently made on a per capita basis, disregarding regional needs assessments, and are often distorted due to political influence. In the past, sporadic attempts were made to foster secondary towns and the growth centres. The 1980-85 Five Year Plan envisaged infrastructure and service facilities to increase from 100 centres to about 1,200 growth centres, which were then to be connected by a transport network. In 1982, the government upgraded *Thana* headquarters to *Upazila* status, effectively making them part of the "urban" structure. Master plans had been developed for these new *Upazilas*, which, however, were later abolished and the plans abandoned by subsequent governments (Islam, 2003).¹⁰

4. MAINSTREAMING INTERNAL MIGRANTS IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT

In the 1970s, Lomitz (1977) noted that the truly poor and vulnerable have few resources with which to build networks of mutual assistance. They have nothing to keep them in the rural areas, nothing to return to, and they lack the necessary assistance to reduce the risks of settlement in urban areas. The risk factor is also overwhelming in Todaro's proposition of a job lottery in the urban labour market. Whilst connections and resources remain as useful means to reduce risks and smoothen the transition even in the 1990s (Feldman, 1999), what is emerging from the contemporary research is the ability of the poorer migrant population to create or strengthen social capital through networks and other group dynamics.

4.1 Internal migration, social capital and networks

From her 2004 survey of a cross-section of slum and non-slum households in Dhaka city, the author found that three out of five slum dwellers and squatters found work within a week of their migrating to Dhaka city. This is of major importance given that gainful employment is a prerequisite for poverty alleviation. One-third had information about their new job prior to arrival, and three-fourths got jobs with the help of social networks. This survey estimated the rate of unemployment of the active members of migrant households at 4 per cent, and double this figure for non-migrants.

Moreover, the unemployment rate among recent migrants was much lower as opposed to long-term migrants. Thus, by virtue of their strength of social capital, poorer migrants have rendered Todaro's job lottery perspective of urban labour markets redundant. Human and social capital, especially social linkages, become more important than wealth or land and can reduce the costs of moving. Between half and three-fifths of migrants received wide-ranging assistance, including free or rented accommodation, help in finding jobs, and financial support. For already over a decade social capital has received serious consideration as a determining factor in economic growth and development.¹¹

A recent study by Afsar and Ahmad (2004) showed that the outmigration rate and the share of remittances to household income were lowest for the villages with poor infrastructure, confirming one of the well-established hypotheses of a strong correlation between infrastructure development and migration (Kols and Lewison, 1983; Hugo, 1992; Afsar, 2000). In the absence of access to all-weather roads and communication networks, those villages depended predominantly on crop cultivation for their livelihoods and had limited or fewer opportunities to diversify their income sources.

With the help of ANNOVA¹² testing the authors also found a strong correlation between the level of infrastructure and social capital, indicating clearly that sustenance and enhancement of social capital depended critically on the ability of members of a community to communicate with other communities and with members of their networks living outside the community. This is only possible when the households and villagers are endowed with better infrastructure. Contacts beyond the village, including urban areas and other villages, are important for both migrants and their families who remain in the villages (Afsar, 2003b).¹³ Existing research shows that migrants of all categories, whether temporary and/or permanent, married and/or unmarried, rich or poor all send and receive assistance albeit in varying degrees (Kuhn, 2000).

4.2 Internal migration and financial capital

Estimates from areas of origin show that the share of remittances to household income has increased significantly over time and ranged between 13 per cent and 34 per cent. However, there is a clear dearth of cost-benefit analysis on internal migration given, first, the difficulty of disaggregating internal and international remittances data at the household level and, second, to isolate the impact.

Undoubtedly, remittances serve as important safety nets for poorer households at origin without which they would have been worse off. However, given the one-off nature of household surveys and the lack of adequate panel data, it was not possible to measure the “safety net” impacts of remittances. Nonetheless, overwhelmingly high consumption expenditure (up to 80-90%) and the disproportionately high share of remittances to incomes of poorer household compared to the net outmigration rate, tend to support the above proposition on the safety net function of remittances.¹⁴ Moreover, in his review of the process of poverty reduction Sardar (2003) pointed out that the villages with high inflow of remittances from overseas migrants also witnessed increased community support to the poor.

The multiplier effect of remittances has potentially contributed to the increase in incomes and generated employment in the rural non-farm (RNF) sectors, more particularly rural processing and storage, trade and transportation activities along with many other factors.¹⁵ Similarly, the frequent use of remittances for housing improvements, whether repair, renovation or extension, generated a demand for housing and housing materials for repairs and the subsequent expansion of the construction sector. Average annual GDP growth attributable to the construction sector increased from 6 to 7 per cent during 1981-1990 and 1991-2000 (ADB and Government of Japan, 2004) and construction-related employment grew by around 19 per cent between 1990-91 and 1995-96.

Moreover, internal and international migration is one of the major factors behind the information and communication technology (ICT) boost in rural Bangladesh. Grameen Telecom data (2001) suggests that the number of village phone operators increased from 1,000 at the end of 1999 to 4,543 in March 2001, an annual growth of 113 per cent. It is noteworthy that around 42 per cent of all calls from village phones involved remittances from family members living in larger cities within and/or outside the country. According to a 2001 study, a single phone call made to facilitate remittances from a family member working as a wage labourer in Dhaka city, saves between 2.64 and 9.8 per cent of the natal family’s average monthly income. The cost of travelling to another town to make a phone call would have increased the cost of the phone call within one’s own village between 1.93 and 8.44 times (Cohen, 2001).

However, a few studies analyse the links between ICT and migration, the impacts of remittances on households and the wider rural economy, the contributions of migrants to the urban economy or the costs they impose. The debt burden, for instance, may encourage households to send members out to look for work (Finan, 2004). The adoption of migration as a means of improving livelihoods may result in greater indebtedness in order to secure resources to move, especially outside the country. The impact on social connections and the conditions of the loan in these situations remain to be explored.

4.3 Internal migration and human capital

Unlike micro credit, information on the wider social, political, and economic consequences of internal migration are scarce.

- There are a few studies that tend to support the impact of internal migration on education. Around 40 per cent of temporary migrant families spent remittances to educate children and

treat sick members. School enrolment rates among members of migrants' families in rural areas are higher compared with similar age cohorts (Rahman et al., 1996).

- The increase in female net enrolment rates at the primary school level may be attributed to the demand for literate female labour from the RMG factories (Afsar, 2002). As a large majority of the garment factory workers are women who predominantly migrated from rural areas, they are the harbinger for the spread of education among their siblings and neighbours in rural areas. From a study of household expenditure pattern before and after migration of female overseas RMG workers, the author estimated that expenditure on education increased by 105.7 per cent (rising from less than 1% to more than 7% of total household expenditure) after migration. This indeed signifies a big leap forward towards human capital formation, which is inextricably linked with poverty alleviation.
- According to the World Bank (1995: 1) basic (primary and lower secondary) education “helps reduce poverty by increasing the productivity of the poor, by reducing fertility and improving health, and by equipping people with the skills they need to participate fully in economy and society”. As described by Dreze and Sen in the case of India, in Bangladesh the lack of investment to raise basic levels of education can be related to the biased impact of political activism and pressures of elites (Dreze, 1995).¹⁶ Future research must address the impact of those who leave the areas with their intellectual, social and perhaps financial capital on those who remain. The greater the flows of information that accompany migration, the broader the changes within society. According to Garrett and Chowdhury (2004): “With greater connections to urban areas, and perhaps increasingly busy days and less time to spend preparing meals, dietary patterns can change in rural areas to mirror urban ones. Additional freedom for women common in urban areas may ultimately influence rural mores. Of course, rural migrants can bring their social customs with them.”¹⁷

5. POLICY TOOLS TO OPTIMIZE BENEFITS FROM MIGRATION

The major implication of population mobility and the complexity of livelihood strategies in Bangladesh call for a specific policy thrust.

- Take advantage of urban-rural synergies to reduce poverty and spur economic growth in both urban and rural areas in order to translate internal migration in the development discourse.
- With diverse population flows and livelihoods spread across space, policy makers and planners must think regionally.
- Instead of adopting an isolated sector approach within restricted spatial concepts of what is urban and what is rural, policy interventions should concentrate on improving access to a wide range of assets with the aim of expanding livelihood options. Thus, for example, it is important to link agricultural and rural development with the development of small and medium urban centres through effective infrastructure, marketing facilities and information on prices, and ensuring access for the poor farmers to technology, skills and finance.

- As the resource-poor households are mostly engaged in activities at the lower end of the productivity scale, mainly because of lack of access to both physical and human capital, the policies must focus on increasing the returns on labour in both agriculture and non-agriculture sectors, and must ensure continued access to farming assets for poor and vulnerable groups. Existing evidence suggests a great disparity in the prices of vegetables and dairy products between urban and rural areas in general, and Dhaka city and the nearby towns and/or rural areas, in particular. Small farmers often sell these products at a marginal price in the absence of quick and regular information on market prices, safe transportation and cheap and effective cold-storage systems. This has implications for local food systems, including producers' income and consumers' rights, as well as food security. It calls for investment in post-production infrastructure, information and roads and transport networks and, above all, enforcement of law and order for the safe mobility of producers and their products.
- Following the examples of ICT's *chaupal* in certain parts of India that enabled farmers to purchase and sell agricultural products at competitive prices, or that of fishermen across the coastal belt in Pondicherry, who receive storm warnings and information on the price of fish, thereby improving their safety and earnings on the catch for the day, Bangladesh should aim for greater penetration and access to IT across all segments of society.¹⁸
- Simultaneously, small and medium towns should be made more attractive by developing infrastructure and communication, including efficient and safe transportation and an effective information system. By implementing computerization at the *Thana* and municipal levels, the government can improve property tax collection, land registration, income tax filing and more at the local level at the click of a computer mouse.
- The provision of a good standard of social services such as hospitals, schools and colleges can attract more migrants to small towns. In this regard, and following the e-medicine pilot programme of Kolkata and other north-eastern Indian states, Thana Health Centres should be linked to larger hospitals in a city using IT, thus enabling the patients to receive referral services of specialist doctors and much needed diagnostic and pathological services. This process of e-governance demands an effective regional framework by establishing planning departments in each *Thana* and municipality (with coordination responsibility for regional planning with the district and divisional governments), adequate infrastructure, generating enough resources through public-private partnerships and disaggregation of the national budget according to divisions and regions (Afsar, 2003a; Islam, 2003).
- The resource distribution is not well known and it may or may not correlate with actual regional needs (Afsar, 2003a). Therefore it makes it difficult to promote equitable intra- and interregional resource distribution. Tacoli and Satterthwaite (2003) emphasized the critical importance of paying attention to local contexts and needs. Given the variations in the nature and scale of spatial interactions and livelihood patterns both between and within different locations, policies must be tailored to fit local circumstances and the specific needs and priorities of different groups, especially poor and vulnerable ones. Thus, the local level is key through the decentralization of power, finance and the delivery of basic services to local governments, and the need for participatory planning.

- A growing volume of research in Bangladesh suggests a profound disparity in income distribution and service delivery in terms of space, class and gender, which often hinders the appropriate rate of poverty reduction (Hossain et al., 1999; GOB, 2003; Afsar, 2004). In this respect, policies need to focus on expanding the asset base of the poor in a broader sense, covering physical, financial, human, social, political and other forms of capital that strengthen the poor's bargaining power and ensure their fair access to resources, public services and decision-making, irrespective of their location.
- Given the fragile sources of income, and the income fluctuation of the poorest groups, it is important to provide flexible repayment and savings schemes and free withdrawal facilities on an individual and not a group basis.
- To enable the extreme poor group to overcome seasonal and life cycle risks and vulnerability, loan products should be sensitive to the demand, allowing clients to choose the size of the loan and repayment schedules according to their capacity and requirements (Hasan and Iglebaek, 2004). In this regard, innovative services for the Dhaka slum dwellers and the adoption of the model in a few rural areas by Plan International's partner organizations (viz. Come to Save Cooperative Limited, Dustha Shastho Kendro and People Oriented Programme Implementation) deserve special mention.¹⁹
- Further, health needs of the poor in general, and the migrant poor in particular, demand safe water and sanitation services to the poor. It is encouraging that the government has pledged to cater to the needs of the urban poor.
- However, as a precondition for the fulfilment of its pledge, the government must ensure tenancy rights of the urban poor, and provide low-cost housing for the poor and vulnerable groups in the city that they are currently not entitled to (Afsar, 2004).
- Similarly the safety-net programme planned by the government must be broad enough to ensure migrant labourers who constitute the backbone of the country's economy, against occupational hazards and retrenchments.
- Further, Female Scholarship Programme must also be expanded to include poor girls from municipalities who were hitherto ineligible for the scholarship.
- Migrants' contribution to home areas, need to be recognized and supported, as does their need for a safety net. Better coordination between civil society actors and local government can increase options for the productive use of remittances by pooling resources; for example, providing agricultural services such as tractor hire or ICT kiosk for information and internet use, which individual households cannot afford by themselves.

6. FUTURE TRENDS, POLICY CHALLENGES AND KEY RESEARCH ISSUES

Bangladesh is likely to experience rapid urban growth and a high concentration of urban population in its capital, Dhaka. The annual growth of Dhaka city was estimated at 6.17 per cent

between 1975 and 2000, the highest among the top 20 urban agglomerations with 10 million or more inhabitants in 2003, and is likely to remain one of the fastest growing cities to 2015 (UN, 2004).

One of the major challenges for policy planners in Bangladesh is managing high urban population growth in general, and with particular reference to Dhaka, and mitigating the adverse side effects of economic expansion, especially as concerns the environmental context. Urban and rural interactions entail both synergies and conflicts, particularly at the urban periphery (peri-urban areas) regarding natural resources. According to Douglass:

The ecosystem of the regions around large and prosperous cities is generally transformed by the demand for resources and the generation of urban concentrated wastes. For example, analyses of environmental degradation in the Jakarta metropolitan region in the 1980s have identified severe problems ranging from water pollution; loss and degradation of agricultural land through urban expansion; erosion, and threats to the remaining forest, coastland, and marine ecosystems from, among other things, the uncontrolled disposal of toxic wastes. (Cited in Tacoli, 1998)

In Bangladesh, policy makers started paying “intermittent” attention to ground and air pollution, although the principal causes of pollution such as increasing traffic, burgeoning cities, economic development and industrialization are growing exponentially. Banning of two-stroke “baby taxis” in Dhaka and conversion to natural gas for fuel is one example of positive action. However, this resulted in the transfer of the sources of pollution from Dhaka city to its periphery and surrounding towns with a consequent increase in pollution of the hitherto cleaner environment there. The risk from industrial pollution also looms large alongside pollution caused by agricultural activities (drainoffs of fertilizer, pesticides and herbicides) and livestock that occur on the urban periphery or even inside densely populated areas. Proliferation of farms that grow high-value fruits and vegetables close to the city and that often require greater use of agrochemicals may raise the risk of environmental damage. As urban areas grow and encroach on rural land, the potential for conflict over control, use and spillover effects (as with waste runoff) has increased (Garrett and Chowdhury, 2004).²⁰ Nevertheless, the ability to deal comprehensively with such pollution seems to be far beyond Bangladesh’s current political capabilities and institutional capacity. Considering the magnitude of the problem it requires not only intervention by the national government and international aid agencies, but also participation of the private sector and the civil society as a whole.

The example of Waste Concern, a community-based NGO for the removal and treatment of household wastes in urban neighbourhoods of Dhaka city, can be supported by networks of NGOs and city governments. Alongside there should be adequate legislations and policy measures to identify and penalize the polluters. Studies are urgently needed on the nature of the peri-urban interface and the extent of impact of pollution on the rural and the urban environment. Research must also be undertaken to work out strategies for Bangladesh to deal effectively with the growing competition for natural resources, particularly land and water, between urban and rural areas and between farmers and industrialists.

Future research must look at the causes and effects of migration, and the linkages to rural areas. These links are not independent, but have general economic, social and environmental consequences. An example from Kuhn (2000) illustrates the importance of understanding the dynam-

ics of migration in order to understand the dynamics of livelihood strategies. For instance, in Matlab *thana*, situated about six hours from Dhaka and Chittagong, outmigration to urban areas reversed 40 per cent of the population growth that Matlab would have experienced between 1982 and 1996. However, such studies and evidence are possible only because Matlab was covered by the demographic surveillance system (DSS) of the International Centre for Health and Population Research (popularly known as ICDDR,B).²¹ Without this type of analysis, it is difficult to establish a solid basis for appropriate policies to deal with migration or rural-urban development (Garrett and Chowdhury, 2004).

One major challenge facing the government is to recognize the importance of migration and to “incorporate an appreciation of the potentially positive role of migration in poverty reduction programs” (Skeldon, 2002). Given the complexity of the relationship between migration and poverty and that migration does not always result in a win-win situation for the parties involved despite the strong correlation between migration and economic growth, it is necessary for the government to realize and acknowledge the existence of such linkages and plan for them.

The challenge for policy makers is to facilitate the types of movement that are most likely to result in alleviating poverty, while also protecting the migrants from abuse and exploitation (Skeldon, 2002). In this regard, and although all categories of migrants deserve attention, women, children and the extreme poor populations must receive priority attention. Obviously, there is no short cut, and no universally valid recommendation can be made concerning the most desirable and appropriate pro-poor migration policy, but it is now widely acknowledged that migration policies must be linked with employment, social services, a safety-net and distributive justice to enhance the well-being of the greater number of people, with particular attention to the most vulnerable among them.

The interrelationship between migration, rural livelihoods, land use and the provision of services remains to be explored in Bangladesh. Comprehensive data and studies on infrastructure and its effects on poverty alleviation and rural-rural and rural-urban connections are practically non-existent, although some information on roads is available.²² Given the importance of ICT in poverty alleviation as demonstrated by a growing number of initiatives in India, appropriate feasibility studies of the successful ICT models in India should be replicated on an urgent basis for their effective implementation in Bangladesh.

Whilst it is absolutely essential to have surveys of individuals and households at the place of origin (urban or rural), in order to obtain better monitoring and macro-level data, there is a need for a migration module in Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), Census and Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) and Labour Force Survey data. To improve the quality of some of the statistics being currently gathered would also help. Finally, research and data collection are necessary at the local level to provide the local government with the necessary information for their planning and decision-making process.

GLOSSARY

Baby-taxi: Three-wheel taxi.

Bhadralok: *Bhadralok* is an elitist social class that emerged under the impact of colonial rule. In pre-modern times, the word *Bhadra*, a Sanskrit term, denoted many values including property, particularly homestead property. It was also used for behaviourally refined people. From the early nineteenth century, a *bhadralok* class began to emerge as a social category and became practically an institution in the mid-nineteenth century. In its institutional sense the term was first used by Bhabani Charan Bandyopadhyay (1787-1848) in his works. Native clericals and petty officials serving the British colonial state, the nouveaux riches, new *zamindars*, and entrepreneurs were made the themes of satirical works and criticized for their indifference about the religion and culture of their ancestors.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the *bhadralok* seemed to have received social recognition. From that time onwards, the administrative and the landed middle classes of the nineteenth century came to be known in general as *bhadraloks*, whose hallmarks were education and wealth. Until the second decade of the twentieth century, the *bhadralok* class was socially identified with Hindu elite groups because most *zamindars* and the educated elite were Hindus. Members of the Muslim elite were called *Ashrafs*. However, vast changes took place in the Bengali social structure during the Crown's period (1858-1947) and in the process all educated and respectable people, irrespective of religion, were recognized as *bhadraloks*. As a social category, *bhadralok* no longer exists. Today, people are more likely to be socially classified according to their profession, societal and political affiliations, and individual achievements.

[Sirajul Islam] (Accessed from banglapedia.search.com.bd/HT/B_0442.htm).

Chars: Small river islands created by silt deposits in estuaries.

Chaupal: *Chaupal* is a public place, fixed or changing, in the Indian villages where the villagers sit and discuss their problems, celebrate their pleasures, share the pains of an individual, family or a particular group, sort out their disputes in consultation with the village elders and traditional *panches* (judges) and retain the communal harmony by maintaining tradition, norms, rituals of village life. As a sacred place of secular nature, *chaupal* guarantees freedom of speech and expression to everybody in the villages without discrimination on the grounds of sex, religious affiliation, caste, rank, status, majority, minority. During the Indian freedom movement against the colonial government, and even after Indian Independence, this space and the concept of this space have been used by the freedom fighters, social animators, writers, filmmakers, politicians, development planners, policy makers, change agents, and local and central

government representatives as a dissemination platform for the benefit of the civil society (Mishra, 2002).

Marwaris: A commercial and industrial community originating from Marwar, an old state of Jodhpur in Rajasthan. Immigrants from Rajasthan into eastern India, particularly Bengal, established their credibility in commercial enterprises and emerged as the leading merchants and traders. Their friends and relatives, who joined them to help and open new firms, came to be known as Marwaris irrespective of their original homes, since they were either associated with the Marwaris or introduced by them. The credibility attached to the Marwari businessmen influenced other Rajasthani traders and merchants to present themselves as Marwaris. The Marwari diaspora to Bengal seems to date from the seventeenth century or even earlier. The pure Marwaris of Rajasthan belonged to several socio-religious groups, such as Agarwals, Maheshwaris, Oswals, Khandeshwals and Porwals. In some trading areas, such as banking, grain, cloth, salt, and money-lending, their presence was very large. The depression of 1929-30 and Partition of India in 1947 caused an exodus of Marwaris from east Bengal, but quite a substantial number of them stayed behind and continued their businesses, mainly in the cloth and jute trade. The communal riots of 1964 and the wars of 1965 and 1971 caused the departure of the community from Bangladesh. At present there are only 700 Marwaris living in Bangladesh, the Tularams of Narayanganj and Dugars of Dhaka are the best known.

[Prodip Chand Dugar] (Accessed from banglapedia.search.com.bd/HT/B_0442.htm).

Monga: In Bangladesh the months of October and November are called the *Monga*, the period when food stocks run out and job opportunities dry up just before the main rice harvest in December.

Thana: An administrative unit or police district.

Upazila: Sub-districts.

ENDNOTES

1. The famous “push-pull” debate regarding the determinants of migration still remained at the core of migration theory. Whilst “push” migration is believed to occur in a situation of distress and despair, “pull” migration is triggered by the perceived opportunities and the bright lights of city life. In reality, however, migration is largely a combination of both push and pull factors.
2. Migration of the upper and middle classes of *Bhadralok* was not uncommon, although they migrated mainly for higher education. Business migration was most prevalent among Marwaris and Western Indians.
3. The large majority of agricultural workers received payments in kind, and the monetization of wages and incomes was common only for a small minority of industrial and service workers up to the 1970s when the country attained independence (Abdullah, 1991).
4. Numbered by tens or decimal fraction. 50 decimal is equivalent to 0.5 acre or 0.2 hectares.
5. The gini concentration ratio of investment for the sample households of Dhaka city was estimated at 0.79.
6. Physical capital refers to non-human capital. Commonly known as “plant and equipments” it includes all the factories, offices and equipments contained therein and used in production of goods and services. It also includes consumer capital or durable goods such as washing machine, TV sets, etc. Land is also a form of physical capital.
7. Research revealed that 41 per cent of the eligible poor did not participate in any NGO activities (Hussain, 1998), or micro-finance services, and nearly three-quarters of the hardcore poor did not avail themselves of social services provided by NGOs, such as essential health and basic education (Rahman and Razzaque, 2000).
8. Either because of social or religious barriers, or because they find the rules of micro-finance institutions too complicated, extreme poor populations often do not want to borrow (Hashemi, 1997). The fear of not being able to repay and becoming further indebted haunts them. Rigid norms and operating principles of micro-finance institutions, including weekly meetings, group membership, fixed repayment schedules, loans for income-generation only, lack of immediate access to loan and mandatory savings that increase opportunity costs and dissuade hardcore poor to join. Further, the poorest are often excluded by their “peer” loan groups who regard them as too high a risk or as too unreliable as social collateral (Hulme and Mosley, 1997). Under the existing “group collateral” approach, each group member is asked to guarantee the repayment of the peers, thus, the process almost always compels members to screen out the hardcore poor members. Moreover, being preoccupied with loan repayments and the success factors, micro-finance institutions screen out the poorest from the purview of their services.
9. The Ministry of Health, for instance, is responsible for the health system in the rural areas, while the four city corporations operate their own health systems independently, with support from international donor agencies. Responsibility for health systems in other municipalities seems unclear.
10. Currently, there is no or only weak support for urban and regional planning. However, the creation of a Municipal Development Fund (MDF) is likely to improve municipal governance and services, which is indeed necessary in the face of growing population flows from rural to urban areas. Elsewhere the author reported that the MDF approach “has some advantages in terms of moving toward decentralization by developing technical, fiscal and administrative capabilities of municipalities and establishing a transparent and accountable system of fiscal transfer” (Afsar, 2003a). However, it is important to examine its actual scale of operation and effectiveness.
11. Please refer to Knack, S. and Keefer, P. (1997); Putnam, R., Leonardi, R. and Nanetti, R. Y. (1993) for a detailed review of social capital. The reasons for which social capital is gaining increasing recognition in the development discourse include, among others, the cost minimization strategy or lowering of transaction cost, mutually beneficial action or collective action leading to positive-sum outcomes; in this process social capital enables the accumulation of other types of capital for poverty alleviation.
12. Anova: analysis of variance.
13. In Bhuyan et al. (2001) 88 per cent of migrants visit the village occasionally to meet with family and 24 per cent go to look after their property (which also maintains the tie). Rahman et al. (1996) found that 20 per cent of households had migrant members who lived away from their families but got assistance from them at times, and also provided assistance to them.
14. From their study of social capital Afsar and Ahmad (2004) found that although net-migration rate from landless households ranged from around 8 per cent to 10 per cent, as opposed to the rural average of around 20 per cent, yet the share of remittances to household incomes was around 20 per cent on an average for all households and 17 per cent for poorer households.

15. Remittances contributed 12.8 per cent to the rural household incomes and with 10 per cent increase in incomes, a 6.5 per cent increase in demand for food was estimated (Hossain et al, 2002).
16. Chowdhury and Sen (1998) estimated that the poorest 20 per cent of households receive about 14 per cent of public expenditure on education, compared to the richest 20 per cent who received 29 per cent. Skewed allocation is mainly due to the effect of secondary and tertiary education for which the share of the poorest 20 per cent was estimated at 6 and 1 per cent, respectively. As a result, there are wide inequalities in educational achievements between males and females, rural and urban areas and between the poor and non-poor.
17. Bhuyan et al. (2001), however, also argued that some migrants cling to the age-old traditional practices, stating that among urban residents, 40 per cent still conducted child marriages, and 25 per cent still followed *pardah*.
18. E-Chaupal is a unique web-based initiative of ITC's international Business Division in Central India and caters to Soya growers regarding all information, products and services required in Soya farming. The Soya kiosks facilitate supply of high quality farm inputs and purchase of Soya at the doorsteps of the villagers. The project has started 23 tele-centres in Hoshangabad district of Madhya Pradesh and has around 600 kiosks in Central India. MS Swaminathan Research Foundation with support of IDRC Canada, connected ten villages near Pondicherry by a hybrid wire and wireless network in 1998. The network provides public services in local languages and also provides relevant information on fish density in ocean to fishermen community. The tele-centres functions more like public libraries and information centres.
19. Please refer to Hasan and Iglebeak (2004) for a detailed account.
20. Rural areas are not immune from the threat of pollution, such as arsenic poisoning of ground water and the smoke produced by ever larger brick factories, floating chemical and particulate pollution across both rural and urban landscapes. Combined with rain, the result is air and water pollution across a region. Even at the household level, urban slums and squatter settlements are gutted with pools of industrial waste amid piles of household wastes, unsatisfactory sewage and drainage systems. Mixing with waste, rainwater can flood houses or drain off into various neighbourhood ponds, which residents often use for washing clothes, bathing, and other uses.
21. DSS collated monthly statistics on birth, death, marriage, divorce and migration for every resident of the 149 villages since 1966. Obviously this shows the need for DSS for other major *Thanas* recording consistently high outmigration.
22. The role of other types of infrastructure, such as the construction of bridges and markets, electricity and telecommunication remains to be examined. For example, the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has developed a number of market places. Though these help to bring consumers and producers together, given the sex segregation and the existing vested interests, it is important to explore the impacts of these market places on farm and non-farm growth, identify the types of formal and informal barriers to entry, and how these market places can be made more accessible for women and the poor.

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**INDIA:
INTERNAL MIGRATION LINKS
WITH POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Professor Ravi S. Srivastava
Centre for the Study of Regional Development
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi, India**

Professor Ravi S. Srivastava is a Professor of Economics at the Centre for the Study of Regional Development
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.

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concerned.

INDIA: INTERNAL MIGRATION LINKS WITH POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

Labour migration is an important livelihood strategy in India. There are very significant migration flows, in some regions with considerable impacts on individuals, households and regions. However, not much is written on migration in India and its considerable costs and returns remain outside the public policy realm. The purpose of this paper is to review key issues relating to internal labour migration in India and its links to poverty and development.

There is considerable conceptual difficulty in defining a migrant, with the mobility of workers taking very different forms. It is useful to distinguish between “permanent”, “semi-permanent” and “temporary” migrants, based on how long they are away from home, the links they maintain with their homes, and the likelihood of their return to their places of origin. Temporary migrants are unlikely to stay away from their places of origin for more than a few months in a year.¹ Since this paper is centrally concerned with the links between migration and poverty, we have focused on migration streams that involve poorer people.

In 2001, India had a population of over 1 billion. Of these, 67.2 per cent lived in rural areas, and 32.8 per cent in towns and cities. Between 1951 and 2001, people in urban areas as a percentage of the total population increased gradually from 17.3 per cent to 32.8 per cent. Of the total workforce, 73.3 per cent remained in rural areas, a marginal decline from 79.3 per cent in 1981, and 77.7 per cent in 1991. Fifty-eight per cent remained dependent on agriculture. Regional disparities have grown, especially since the mid-1980s, with the ratio between the highest and lowest per capita incomes per state rising to 3.5 between 1997-2000 (Srivastava, 2003). The Planning Commission estimates that 26.1 per cent of India’s population lives below the poverty line. Over time, the rural poor have increasingly concentrated in eastern India and rain-fed parts of central/western India, characterized by low productivity agriculture.

Studies on migration in India have shown that poor households participate extensively in migration. Permanent/semi-permanent shifts of population and workforce in India co-exist with the “circulatory” movement of populations between lagging and developed regions, and between rural and urban areas, mostly being absorbed in the unorganized sector of the economy. Such movements show little sign of abating with development.

It should be noted that, except in some frontier areas, internal migration in India is not regulated. The Ministry of Labour at the central level and the departments of labour at the state level are chiefly responsible for formulating and implementing measures and legislation aimed at protecting migrant workers. In most cases, the safeguards are common to both migrant and non-migrant workers. Concerns of migrant labourers are also shared by some of the relevant social sector ministries, such as the ministries of, respectively, health and family welfare, human resource development, food and consumer affairs, urban affairs, and social justice.

2. MIGRATION TRENDS AND PATTERNS

The two main secondary data sources on population mobility in India are the Census and the National Sample Survey. There is reason to believe that these surveys underestimate some types of migration flows, such as temporary seasonal and circulatory migration, due to both empirical and conceptual difficulties. Furthermore, migration data relate to **population** mobility and not **worker** mobility, although economic theories of migration are primarily about labour migration. It is not easy to disentangle the former from the latter.

This is because, first, the definitions of migrants used in surveys, e.g. change from birthplace and change of last usual place of residence (UPR) are not employment related. Second, migration surveys give only the **main** reason for migration, and that too only **at the time** of migration. Moreover, secondary economic reasons could be masked, as in the case of married women, who migrate with their husbands and are not registered independently. Another problem is that migration data relate to **stocks** of migrants and not to **flows**, although different policy concerns relate to both stocks and flows. Many of these concerns can only be handled by micro surveys, which, however, have their own set of conceptual problems.

2.1 Population migration

In one view, population mobility in India is low (Davis, 1951; Kundu and Gupta, 1996). Migration statistics up to the early 1990s also suggest a decline in population mobility. In the 1991 census, using the change in residence concept, 27.4 per cent of total population was considered as migrants, that is 232 million out of 838 million persons, which is a considerable decline from 30.6 per cent in 1971, and 31.2 per cent in 1981. This decline concerns both men and women. In the case of males, it has declined from 18.1 per cent in 1971 to 14.7 per cent in 1991; regarding women, it declined from 43.1 per cent in 1971 to 41.6 per cent in 1991. However, recent evidence based on NSS figures for 1992-93 and 1999-00, and indirectly supported by the census, suggests an increase in migration rates from 24.7 per cent to 26.6 per cent over this period. This evidence suggests that during the last decade of the twentieth century there may have been an increase in the proportion of migrants in both rural and urban areas and for both the sexes.

Migration in India is predominantly limited to **short distances**, with around two-thirds of migrants changing their residence within the district of enumeration, and over one-fifth within the state of enumeration, with the remainder moving across state boundaries. A **significant proportion of women** migrate over short distances, mainly due to marriage.

2.2 Migration for work

The primary motive for migration recorded by the Population Census as well as the NSS is an important indicator of labour market-induced mobility. Of the 27.4 per cent who changed their place of residence according to the 1991 census, only 8.8 per cent moved for employment reasons, and 2.3 per cent for business motives. The proportion moving for economic motives was higher among males (27.8 per cent moved due to employment reason and 7.1 per cent due to

business reason) than among females, among whom only 1.8 per cent moved for employment reason and 0.5 per cent for business reasons.

The percentage of migrants moving out of economic motives is higher in long-distance migration, with a majority of male interstate migrants moving for economic reasons. Again, economic motives are more significant in the urban migration streams, especially for males. While the share of interstate in total migrants was only 11.8 per cent in 1991, such migrants comprised 28 per cent of all economic migrants. Similarly, while 49 per cent of male migrants were in urban areas, 69.2 per cent of such migrants migrated for employment (Srivastava, 1998).

The recent trends of labour mobility were analysed on the basis of NSS estimates from the forty-ninth (1992-93) and fifty-fifth rounds (1999-00) by Srivastava and Bhattacharya (2002). This period shows a sharp increase in urban male mobility, with a significantly larger percentage of male migrants reporting economic and employment-related reasons for mobility, while other migrant streams showed a decline in the percentage of migrants moving for economic reasons. These results, along with the decline in short-term migration, which we discuss below, suggest that the 1990s may have provided greater opportunities for labour mobility to those who were better positioned, e.g. males in urban areas and in the non-agricultural sector. However, these results are still tentative and need to be corroborated through further analysis from other sources.

2.3 Short-term labour migration

Temporary, or short-term migrants lack stable employment and sources of livelihood at home and belong to the poorer strata. There is another category of poor and destitute migrants who have virtually no assets in the areas of origin, and have lost all contact with their origin. **Thus not all poor migrants would fall within the category of seasonal/short-term migrants.** But, as stated earlier, for one reason or another, all these categories are likely to be underestimated.

In terms of the duration of migration, Census of India estimates that only 7.07 million, or 3.04 per cent of the migrants were short-term migrants (less than one year), with 1.37 million migrating for economic reasons. The 1999-00 NSS survey estimated that there were 8.64 million short-term immigrants, of whom 3.24 million had migrated for economic reasons. However, in 1992-93 the total number of estimated short-term migrants was 16.75 million, indicating a sharp decline in the intervening years. The NSS fifty-fifth round had, for the first time, separately estimated the number of short-term outmigrants in 1999-00 (those staying away for periods between two and six months for work, or to seek work).² Generally, this category would not overlap with the category of short-term immigrants who are expected to have stayed in their current place of residence for six months or more. A total of nearly 10.87 million persons stayed away from their UPR for work or to seek work for periods between two and six months. Of these, 8.45 million were resident in rural areas, and 2.42 million in urban areas. Among the 8.45 million short-term outmigrants in rural areas, 3.06 million were females and 5.39 million males.

Informal estimates of seasonal/short-term migration made from time to time suggest that these flows might be underestimated in national surveys. A quick estimate by the National Commission of Rural Labour (NCRL) of such labourers, based on their numbers in industries employing

migrant workers, indicates that in the rural areas alone there were approximately 10 million seasonal/circular migrants, including an estimated 4.5 million interstate migrants. Large numbers of migrants were found in agriculture and plantations, brick kilns, quarries, on construction sites and in fish processing. A number of recent field studies conducted during the 90s also provide rough estimates of the magnitude of seasonal migration in different parts of India. These attest to the considerable scale of such migration, especially among Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes (ST&SC). The bulk of this migration is rural-rural, ranges from a few weeks to a few months, and takes place in unorganized industry, mining and agriculture.

3. PROFILE OF MIGRANT WORKERS

Migration is characterized by enormous economic and social diversity spanning socio-economic variables such as caste, land holding size, age, sex, education, family size and composition, activity, consumption levels and more.

Although males predominate in most labour migration streams, in a number of other cases, **both men and women migrate together for work.**

Migrants are concentrated in different types of work in rural and urban areas. In the rural areas, self-employment is the predominant activity for both male and female migrant workers, followed by casual work, where, according to the NSS fifty-fifth Round findings, 33.4 per cent of male migrant workers and 44.2 per cent of female migrant workers were active in 1999-2000. In urban areas, 55.6 per cent of the male workers were in regular employment, while respectively 31.1 and 13.3 per cent of male migrants were either self-employed or in casual work. Regarding women, the highest percentage were self-employed (39.7%) followed by regular employment (35.1%) and casual work (25.2%), implying considerable economic differentiation among migrant households.

A little less than 50 per cent of the urban and rural migrants, and over 50 per cent of male migrants in both sectors are in the top two consumption quintiles. Among other factors, this may reflect the higher work participation rates among migrants as well as the propensity to migrate among the better off.

Micro studies show a bimodal relationship in respect of wealth/income and land, viz. a clustering of migrants at both low and high levels (Connell et al., 1976). The NCRL report suggests that labourers and farmers with too little or no land have a high propensity to migrate as seasonal labourers.

Data on individual migrants from micro surveys show a significant clustering of migrants in the 16 to 40 year age group (Connell et al., 1976), in particular regarding poorer semi-permanent or temporary labour migrants. In terms of education, migration rates are high among both the highly educated and the least educated, while there is a high preponderance of illiterates among seasonal migrants (Connell et al., 1976; Rogaly et al., 2001; Haberfeld et al., 1999).

In the overall migrant population, differences across caste groups are not significant, but ST and SC migrants are more often involved in short-term migration (NSS, 1999-00, Report No. 470). This is also corroborated by field survey data.

4. MIGRATION, POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENT INTERLINKAGES

4.1 The causes for migration

Given the diversity in the nature of migration in India, the causes are similarly varied in terms of space and time. Migration in India reflects household subsistence strategies in the face of social, cultural, demographic and other constraints. It is also influenced by the demand for migrant workers and development patterns (NCRL, 1991). The National Commission on Rural Labour, focusing on seasonal migration, concluded that uneven development was the main cause of seasonal migration. In the tribal region intrusion of outsiders, settlements in tribal areas, displacement and deforestation have also contributed significantly to the seasonal outmigration of tribals.

Most migration literature distinguishes between “pull” and “push” factors. These do not operate in isolation of one another. Mobility occurs when workers in source areas lack suitable options for employment/livelihood, and there is some expectation of improvement in circumstances through migration. The sought-for improvement may concern better employment opportunities or higher wages/incomes, as well as the wish to maximize family employment, or to smooth employment/income/consumption impacts over time.

At one end of the migration spectrum workers could be locked into a debt-migration cycle through some form of labour bondage, where earnings from migration are used to repay debts incurred at home or in the destination areas, thereby cementing the migration cycle. Where migration is essentially involuntary, and induced by debt relations or other coercive factors in the source or destination areas, it makes little sense to use voluntaristic models to explain the phenomenon.

At the other end, however, migration is largely voluntary, although shaped by limited choices. The growth of intensive agriculture and the commercialization of agriculture in different parts of the country since the late 1960s, have led to peak periods of labour demand, often also coinciding with a decline in local labour availability.

Migration decisions are influenced by both individual and household characteristics, as well as the social matrix, which is best captured in social-anthropological studies. Factors such as age, education level, wealth, land ownership, productivity and job opportunities influence the participation of individuals and households in migration, as do social attitudes and the presence of supporting social networks (Haberfeld et al., 1999; Rogaly et al., 2001; Mosse et al., 2002).

In many sectors, the preference by employers for migrant labour arises not because of local shortages, but because migrant labour is easy to discipline and less expensive. Not surprisingly, labour market segmentation goes hand in hand with the deployment of migrant labour in such situations.

4.2 The impact of migration on migrants and their families

The poorer migrant workers who are crowded into the lower spectrum of the labour market, have few entitlement in regard to their employers or the public authorities in the destination areas. They have few personal assets and suffer from a range of severe deprivations in the destination areas. As regards the source areas, **migration has both negative and positive consequences for migrants and their families.**

Migrant labourers, whether in agricultural or non-agricultural activities, in rural or urban areas, usually live in deplorable conditions with inadequate provision of drinking water and basic services. Seasonal migrant labourers live in open spaces or makeshift shelters in spite of the Contract Labour Act in force. Apart from seasonal workers, workers who migrate to the cities in search of work live in parks and on the pavement, in squatter settlements or slums. As labour migrants are not registered and have no access to PDS and temporary ration cards, they have to spend more on food and other living necessities.

Obligated to work and live in harsh and unhygienic conditions, migrant labourers are particularly vulnerable to diseases and occupational health hazards. Yet, because of their temporary status, if they are registered at all, they cannot access various health and family care programmes. Having no one to look after their children, migrant families often take their children with them to their workplace. Because of their poor and unhygienic living conditions, and exposure to dust at the work site, children suffer from various health problems. Moreover, they have no opportunity to obtain an education either in their original place of residence or where their parents work.

Where men migrate alone, the impact on the family unit and on women, children and the elderly left behind can be quite significant. The absence of men adds to material and psychological insecurity, causing pressures and requiring negotiations with the extended family members (Rogaly et al., 2001, 2002). On the other hand, male migration has also been seen to influence the direct participation of women in the economy as workers and decision-makers and increased the degree of their interaction with the world beyond the family and kin. But given the patriarchal tradition, women may have to cope with a number of problems that are further exacerbated by the uncertainty of the timing and size of remittances on which the precarious household economy ultimately depends. This, in turn, pushes women and children from poor labouring households to participate in the labour market under adverse conditions. Thus, the impact of migration on women can be twofold, but the strong influence of patriarchy restricts the scope of women's autonomy (cf. Teerink, 1995; Menon, 1995; Rogaly et al., 2001). The impact of male migration can be especially adverse for girls, who often have to bear the additional domestic responsibilities and take care of younger siblings. The absence of male supervision further reduces their chances of acquiring an education. Where women migrate together with the male members of their households, it is common for younger siblings and older children to accompany their parents and to work alongside them, drastically reducing their chances of getting any formal education. Family migration also usually implies the migration of the younger members of the family and leaving the elderly behind, who then have to cope with additional responsibilities, while at the same time fend for their subsistence and other basic requirements (Mosse et al., 1997).

Exposure to a different environment and the resulting emotional stress, affect the attitudes, habits and awareness levels of migrant workers, depending on the duration of migration and the desti-

ation. Such changes are more dramatic in the case of urban migrants, in whom migration develops a greater awareness regarding the conditions of work, reduces personalized dependence, and inculcates a change in their attitude towards personalized labour relations (Srivastava, 1999). Such modified life styles and changes in personal awareness may affect other family members in a variety of ways. For instance, the increased awareness which migrants gain, especially in urban areas, helps them realize the importance of their children's education.

4.3 Impact on source areas

The major impacts of migration on source areas occur through changes in the labour market, income and assets, the patterns of expenditure and of investments. Although seasonal outmigration might potentially have the effect of smoothing out employment of labourers over the annual cycle, rural outmigration could cause a tightening of the labour market in some circumstances. In other cases, however, it could push women and children into the labour market under unfavourable conditions.

As discussed earlier, labour outmigration may speed up qualitative changes in existing labour relationships in rural areas through changes in attitudes and awareness of migrant labourers and return migrants. Outmigration also leads to a more diversified livelihood strategy, which also supports these changes. This may push up levels of wages (reserve wages) in rural areas.

However, as regards India, seasonal outmigration as a result of debt at home is quite common. In such cases, short-term and medium-term outcomes are unfavourable or much less favourable to migrants.

4.4 Remittances and effect on sending area

We have no direct evidence of the amounts of remittance brought in by migrants, but some indirect evidence can be adduced from the NSS surveys on migration and consumption, and employment/unemployment. These surveys give the percentage of outmigrants making remittances, and households receiving remittances and depending on remittances as their major source of livelihood. The former estimates depend on the definition of outmigrants used in the survey design, which has not been consistent. Between 1992-93, 89 per cent of permanent outmigrants sent remittances back home. The percentage of all rural households receiving remittances is also fairly high, with one-quarter to one-third of households in some regions receiving remittances. Remittances are only one kind of resource flows occurring as a result of migration, others being savings brought home by migrants in cash or kind.

Field studies show that a majority of seasonal migrants also either remit or bring home savings out of migrant income. In many cases, a substantial proportion of household cash income is attributed to migrant earnings. However, the cash incomes which accrue may not always add to the resource base of migrant households since, in some cases, they are used to redeem existing debts (NCRL, 1991; Mosse et al., 2002).

Yet, it does appear that the income and consumption level of migrant households is generally higher than that of similarly placed non-migrants (cf. Sharma, 1997; Krishnaiah, 1997; Srivastava, forthcoming). But this conclusion needs to be carefully linked to migration impacts, as it is generally based on ex-post cross-sectional comparisons.

Remittances are mainly used for such purposes as consumption, repayment of loans and meeting other social obligations. These constitute, in effect, the “first charge” on migrant incomes. The evidence regarding investment is mixed. Investments by migrant households in housing, land and consumer durables are common, and migrant income is also used to finance working capital requirements in agriculture. Evidence of other productive farm or non-farm investments is generally scarce, but a number of studies do report such investment by a small percentage of migrant and return migrant households (Oberai, Singh, and Manmohan, 1983; Krishnaiah, 1997; Sharma, 1997; Rogaly et al., 2001). Overall, the long-term impact of some of these expenditures on migrant households could be positive. Thus, while studies do not fully discount the impact of some factors such as the life-cycle effect, rural outmigration provides some, although weak evidence of an improvement in the productive potential of source areas, and the ability of some poor migrant households to acquire small surpluses and strengthen their productive base and bargaining strength in the rural economy (cf. Rogaly et al., 2001; Srivastava, forthcoming).

It has been argued that rural outmigration, circular migration in particular, has strong “safety valve” features, helping to preserve existing relations in agriculture (Standing, 1985). But greater mobility of rural labour households can also lead to a less isolated and more generalized agricultural labour market and exert upward pressure on wages. Further, as was shown, there is also evidence of some impact through improvement in the resource base of the migrant households (cf. Srivastava, 1998).

4.5 Impact in destination areas

While shortages of local labour constitutes an important reason for labour migration, virtually all available evidence shows that recruitment of immigrant labour is as much motivated by strategies of labour control and wage-cost reduction. Moreover, the supply of labour can be easily increased or decreased with little cost to employers, and migrants can be made to work long and flexible hours. Flexibility of the migrant workforce is reinforced because of the role of contractors and middlemen in recruitment and supervision.

The impact of the labour market outcomes generated by labour immigration is to facilitate a certain kind of growth and accumulation in the destination areas, although this occurs through what can be described as a “low” road to capitalism.

Employers rarely honour their responsibility to provide other than wage subsistence requirements to migrants. While the poor conditions in which labourers subsist are the result of employers not internalizing the legitimate costs of hiring labour (in violation of many relevant laws), to society the resulting urban congestion appears to be the result of unplanned mobility. Therefore, in theory the costs of population mobility have been considered in the context of large costs imposed by population concentrations in large cities. The social, political and other consequences of immigration, especially where such migration involves linguistically, ethnically or regionally

distinct groups, have not been considered in the growing economic literature on internal migration, but figure prominently in the sociological and political literature on the subject.

5. GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

In India the employment conditions and rights of migrant workers are protected and regulated both as part of the general workforce and in recognition of their special characteristics as migrants. There are basic provisions in the Indian Constitution relating to the conditions of employment, non-discrimination, and right to work (e.g. Articles 23(1), 39, 42 and 43). India is also a member of the ILO and has ratified many ILO conventions. These constitutional provisions and international commitments, along with strong pressure from workers' organizations, have found expression in labour laws and policies.

Many of the labour problems faced by migrant labourers come under laws that concern all labourers in a particular sector or industry.³ In addition to these laws, the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 (ISMW), deals specifically with malpractices associated with the recruitment and employment of workers who migrate across state boundaries. The Act covers only those interstate migrants who are recruited through contractors or middlemen, and those establishments employing five or more such workers on any given day in the preceding year.

The labour laws aimed at protecting migrant workers have remained largely on paper. In the case of the ISMW, the Act became effective after initial hiccups, but few contractors have taken out licences, and very few enterprises employing interstate migrant workers have been registered under the Act.

The main reasons for the weak implementation of this legislation is that the regulatory authorities are over-stretched, there is a lack of commitment by the state, and migrant workers are extremely weak and vulnerable and lack support from civil society. Most migrant labourers are also employed in the non-organized sectors, which further increases their vulnerability because of the lack of proper labour regulations.

Following the recommendations of the National Commission of Labour (NCL, 2002), the central government has mooted new legislation (the Unorganized Sector Workers Act, 2004) in order to identify workers employed in the unorganized sector and to provide them with basic social security. The Bill builds on the experience of tripartite welfare funds already in existence for a few industries in some states. This is the first time that GOI has conceived of a comprehensive law to cover all unorganized sector workers, including migrants, and its scope and content need to be debated in all *fora* concerned with the welfare of such workers.

5.1 Other areas of government intervention and policy

Apart from labour laws, a range of government interventions and policies in favour of the poor also impinge on migrant workers, who are less well positioned to receive the benefits of such

programmes and interventions. Studies show that migrant labourers are not able to participate in the *gram sabha* (village assembly) meetings that identify beneficiaries for government programmes. This is particularly true in cases where entire families migrate out of the area.

The *Lok Jumbish* programme in Rajasthan became the forerunner of education programmes intended for migrants' children through boarding schools. Alternative models are now being applied in the District Primary Education Programme in several states (Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh among others).

The issue of migrant vulnerability to health problems and communicable diseases remains largely unaddressed, although seasonal migrants to rice fields in West Bengal have some access to doctors through their employers. The recent international focus on Aids has galvanized government attention on the link between migration and the spread of this disease, and resulted in a large number of NGOs working with migrant workers under the National Aids Control Programme, but other health-related problems of migrants continue to receive inadequate attention.

Government employment and watershed programmes can make major contributions to raise employment opportunities in dry and rain-fed regions and reduce distress migration. These programmes have now been stepped up and the government introduced legislation to provide for 100 days of wage employment for poor households, initially in 150 poorest districts. If well executed, the proposed Employment Guarantee Act could reduce distress migration.

The overall picture, however, is one of neglect, unwitting or otherwise. Thus, as with labour policies, few other government strategies have begun to accord adequate visibility to migration, and to include issues of migration in the design and implementation of their respective programmes.

6. INTERVENTION IN SUPPORT OF MIGRANTS: ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

As with governmental policy, migrants get only low visibility in the work of political organizations, trade unions and non-governmental/voluntary organizations. Regional political parties and organizations often ascribe economic and social problems to the presence of migrants. Trade unions often emphasize the negative role of migrant workers (for depressing wages or being instrumental in strike breaking) and are less active in organizing these workers to protect their own rights.

Nevertheless, various agencies and organizations are actively working to improve the wages and working and living conditions of migrant labourers and to improve the flow of information and credit to migrant workers in the source areas, protect their claims and entitlements and to develop these areas so as to curb distress migration.

- In West Bengal, the bargaining power of migrant labourers has improved due to the intervention of the *Krishak Sabha* and *Panchayats* (rural local communities). These organizations have helped the labourers in settling disputes and closing the gap between immigrant

and non-immigrant, and male and female wages (Rogaly et al., 2001, 2002). The *Krishak Sabha* has negotiated between employers and local workers at the district level so that migrant wages do not undercut local wages and employment, thereby reducing friction with local labourers.

- DISHA a voluntary organization in Ahmedabad is addressing the issues of living and working conditions of construction workers, migrating mainly from the *Panchmahals* area of Gujarat. The NGO has formed a labour union and has been able to provide shelters for the workers with government support.
- A few organizations like the *Nirman Mazdoor Panchayat*, the National Campaign Committee for Construction Labourers, and the National Federation of Construction Labourers are working to improve the wages and working conditions of construction workers, many of whom are migrants. *Nirman* has also started mobile day-care centres (*mobile crèches*) for the children of construction workers (Vaijanyanta, 1998).
- The *mobile crèches* organization was created in 1986 in Mumbai to meet the needs of children of migrant construction workers, to give the children basic literacy and numeracy skills, together with health education. A similar *mobile crèches* programme also operates in Delhi with the support of the Aga Khan Foundation.
- A voluntary organization, the Kimidi Multisectoral Development Society (KMDS), is playing an active role among women of the Saora tribe in Orissa in order to mitigate the adverse impact of male outmigration. Women activists of this organization hold regular meetings with women groups in the area to find solutions to their problems, and also provide some financial assistance to women under self-sufficiency programmes (Menon, 1995).
- The Banaskantha Women's Rural Development Project, set up by SEWA (Self-employed Women's Association), has played a key role in improving the economic position of women through dairy and handicraft activity projects in Banskantha district of Western Gujarat. There has been a significant decline in seasonal migration from this area since the inception of this project. In the whole process, the role of moneylenders and middlemen has been totally eliminated. The domestic workload of women has been reduced by the installation of piped drinking water facilities. Income generation has been closely linked with the formation of cooperatives, trade unions and skill and management training (Schenk-Sandbergen, 1995b)
- The Society for Comprehensive Rural Health in Jamkhed (Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra) has played a leading role in healthcare among the women at village level through forming *mahila mandals* (women's groups) and farmers' groups in which female village health workers play a pivotal role. Their scope has further widened to include socio-economic development and the creation of sustainable local employment for women, which is reducing survival labour migration from this area (Schenk-Sandbergen, 1995b).
- The Western India Rain-fed Farming Project is a participatory farming system development project covering village clusters in seven districts in three states (Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat). The project is being implemented through Gramin Vikas Trust (GVT) and

Indian Farm Forestry Development Co-operative (IFFDC). Development interventions (mainly soil and water conservation) have reduced the intensity of migration, mainly for working males. Both GVT and IFFDC have developed extensive multi-pronged strategies to deal with migration, with some differences in their respective emphases.⁴ One major dimension of the GVT strategy is to increase returns to migration by upgrading skills, improving awareness, enhancing negotiation skills and providing better information flows to migrants and potential employers, and strengthening linkages with government organizations and other service providers. The other dimension is to reduce the costs of migration to the migrants themselves through interventions both in the source and destination areas. Interventions in the areas of origin include improving communication possibilities with their families, providing them with identity cards, setting up shelters for the elderly and children, and pooled arrangements to take care of cattle. In order to carry the migrant support activities forward in destination areas, partnerships are being developed with organizations that concentrate on migrant support activities in the urban areas. An MOU has been signed with DISHA, an organization based in Ahmedabad, under which the organization will undertake awareness and organization building, set up resource centres and work to improve the migrant workers' access to shelters, credit, basic amenities, accident insurance and other protection and benefits provided under central and state laws (GVT, 2002, 2003).

7. POLICY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Migration policy not only concerns the support to be given to migrants, but also the linkages between migration and development. Some of the major issues in this context are summarized below.

- 1. Pro-poor development in backward areas.** One major set of policy initiatives has therefore to aim for a more vigorous pro-poor development strategy in the backward areas. These could take the form of land and water management through the watershed approach, public investment in the source area, such as better irrigational facilities, improved infrastructure and the creation of non-farm employment where land is scarce. These strategies need to be accompanied by changes that improve the access for the poor to land, to common property resources, social and physical infrastructure, and to governance institutions. The latter set of changes will require strong organizational intervention by, and on behalf of, the poor. In the rain-fed areas, the Employment Guarantee Act, which proposes to dovetail employment with the need for the building of physical and social infrastructure could have important implications for pro-poor development.
- 2. Food- and credit-based interventions.** It is quite likely that a successful focus on development in the poor regions will remedy some of the highly negative features of labour migration. Further steps can be taken to strengthen the position of the poor who resort to survival migration. This involves helping the poor overcome two major constraints they face, viz. food and credit. The poor's access to food can be improved through a more effective public distribution system, through grain bank schemes, or through "food for work" schemes that have now been proposed under the Employment Guarantee Act. Organizing the poor into self-help or savings groups, which are specifically tailored to the requirements of migrants, could help increase the access to credit at comparatively low cost.

3. **Ensuring basic entitlements in other schemes.** A major policy focus has to be on ensuring that migrant households have citizenship rights in the destination areas, and are able to access basic facilities and benefits of public programmes meant for poor households. A special focus has to be to ensure access of migrant labourers' children to schooling (and that they are not pushed into labour).
4. **Improving the information base and bargaining strength of migrant workers.** As described earlier, being economically extremely vulnerable, poor migrant workers lack bargaining strength. Further, their sense of vulnerability and social isolation is exacerbated by their ignorance, illiteracy and the alien environment in which they have to work. Some of the NGO strategies have been discussed in the preceding section. In Bolangir (Orissa), district authorities have formed more than 125 labour societies that take up the execution of public works, issue identity cards to workers, and negotiate with contractors.
5. **Role of *Panchayats*.** *Panchayats* (rural local councils) should emerge as the focus of the resource pool for migrant workers residing in their area. They should maintain a register of migrant workers and issue identity cards and pass books to them. Further, it should be mandatory for recruiters to deposit with the *panchayats* a list of the labourers recruited by them, along with other employment details. With growing IT-based communication it may become possible for *panchayats* or NGOs to maintain a record of potential employers and employees.
6. **Enforcement of labour laws.** At the work places, stricter enforcement of labour laws is essential. This may, however, also call for the closer scrutiny and simplification of some of these laws. The subjection of contractors and employers to the rule of law requires commitment on the part of the government.
7. **Enlarge the scope of discussion on the Unorganized Sector Workers Act and the National Commission on Unorganized Workers to cover issues pertinent to migrant workers.** The proposed Act for unorganized workers and the newly formed National Commission for Unorganized Workers cover many issues that are potentially beneficial to migrant workers. There should be a vigorous debate on how the Commission can meet the requirements of migrant workers as fully as possible. Particular emphasis has to be laid on creating modalities by which migrant workers can access existing or future entitlements and benefits.

Thus, the thrust of our suggestions is that both governmental and non-governmental intervention needs to support migrant labourers and pro-poor development as vigorously as possible. This would not only influence the condition of migrants and the pattern of migration, but also the patterns of development, which underlie and sustain the migration.

ENDNOTES

1. We have used the terms “temporary” migrants, “short duration” migrants, “seasonal” migrants, and “circulatory” migrants, somewhat interchangeably in this paper, because of the difficulty of drawing strict boundaries between these concepts in empirical work. In the case of temporary migration, we may like to also specify a minimum period of absence, thereby excluding, say, daily or weekly commuters. Most household surveys use a cut-off point to determine the usual place of residence (in India, this is six months) but such a cut-off point does not have a firm basis in the actual pattern of migration.
2. Thus, the survey would record all those in their current place of residence for six months or more as in-migrants, while those who left their homes for a period between two to six months for work/seeking work would be recorded as outmigrants. That would still leave very short duration outmigrants (those leaving home for work for periods less than two months) unrecorded.
3. These laws include the Minimum Wages Act, 1948; the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970; the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976; the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service), Act, 1996; the Workmen’s Compensation Act, 1923; the Payment of Wages Act, 1936; the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986; the Bonded Labour Act, 1976; the Employees State Insurance Act, 1952; the Employees Provident Fund Act, 1952, and the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961. The last three cover only organized sector workers and thus preclude temporary migrants.
4. IFFDC puts greater stress on local asset creation and employment generation to reduce migration (Tewari, 2003).

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**PAKISTAN:
INTERNAL MIGRATION AND POVERTY REDUCTION**

**Rashid Memon
Collective for Social Science Research
Karachi, Pakistan**

Rashid Memon is a Research Associate at Collective for Social Science Research in Karachi, Pakistan.

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PAKISTAN: INTERNAL MIGRATION AND POVERTY REDUCTION

1. MIGRATION AND POVERTY: SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR PAKISTAN

The linkages between migration and poverty reduction appear at first sight to be straightforward. That the migration of one or more members of a household significantly improves the economic and social status of the entire household is a well-established idea in the policy and popular discourses in Pakistan.¹ This is particularly true in respect of international migration to the Middle East. During the 1980s, remittances from the oil-rich countries constituted the largest source of foreign exchange for Pakistan and were a major contributor to a dramatic decline in poverty.

Yet, internal migration has not received the analytical or policy attention that it deserves. While there are authoritative studies that have looked at the empirics of mobility within Pakistan, the economic and social enhancement of welfare induced by such mobility has largely remained unidentified. This is partly because there is a dearth of purpose-designed household data on migration. Nevertheless, these studies have shown that **internal migration is a fundamental demographic, social and economic feature** of Pakistan, affecting **up to half the population of the country**.²

Given the frequency of mobility, it is tempting to draw an automatic link between migration and poverty reduction. However, labour market changes and conditions are generally implicit in most accounts of the migration-poverty reduction linkage. Workers are indeed assumed to move from low-wage and low-productivity rural labour markets to higher wage and productivity urban labour markets.

One aim of this paper is to document the magnitude of internal migration in Pakistan and draw attention to some of its salient characteristics. A second objective is to provide a nuanced account of the migration-poverty reduction linkage by attempting a more careful analysis of labour migration. Beyond the assumption of smoothly functioning labour markets, we will also explore the possibility of frictions in the operation of these markets.

The second section provides **a brief literature review**. **Available sources of data on migration** are presented in the third section. The fourth section describes quantitative data and provides an econometric treatment of the **determinants** of migration. The fifth section looks at **institutional challenges to internal migration**. The **conclusions** follow in the sixth section.

2. POVERTY AND MIGRATION: LITERATURE REVIEW

The historical literature on migration is rooted in models of development that postulate that all countries, at some stage of their development, have experienced the movement of their labour force from the agricultural sector into the non-agriculture sector. More often than not, this inter-

sectoral allocation of labour has implied geographical movement of workers from rural (agricultural) areas to urban (industrialized) areas.³

The main determinant of inter-sectoral movements is the wage or income differential across sectors. Micro-economic studies based on the utility theory postulate that rational economic agents decide the nature and geographical location of their potential job, based on the different wages in different sectors and locations, weighted according to the probability of actually finding a job. Migration can then be perceived as a route to economic opportunity. However, individuals with better education, skills and access to information are more likely to migrate, and migration is then seen as a selective rather than a random process.

The economic advantage gained through migration is not necessarily restricted to the individual migrant. In fact, the financial links individual migrants maintain with their families in areas of origin are well documented, and remittances are considered to be instrumental in increasing the welfare of geographically separated households.⁴

Another strand of literature, focusing on migrant-sending households in addition to migrants themselves, suggests that households allocate labour in order to diversify the risk of the overall household. Migration is perceived as a response to the absence of insurance markets, and by placing household members in sectors where risks are not covariate.⁵ Migration contributes to raising welfare levels and insulating them from exogenous shocks. This risk diversification is not relevant only in regard to labour migration, but also to inter-village marital migration.⁶

The benign impacts of migration are not exclusively limited to migrants and their households. Theoretically, as labour migrates to the non-agricultural sector, the consequent increase in the physical stock and mechanization increases the productivity of the agricultural labour sector, and wages increase. Empirical evidence is, however, mixed.

Ideas of migration and increasing household/individual welfare are also consistent with the notion that workers will move from sectors of low marginal productivity to those with higher marginal productivity, based on the assumption of well functioning market wages. This efficient allocation of factors of production should increase the productivity of the economy and raise the overall welfare level of the population.

Individual/household rationality regarding migration does not always translate into socially optimal levels of migration at the macro level. This is particularly perceived to be true in the case of rural to urban migration. Interestingly, while policy and popular discourse do not define the optimal level of rural to urban migration, migration per se, irrespective of its magnitude, is almost invariably correlated to urban congestion.⁷ Other studies affirm that the increasing size of urban areas implies an increase in the proportion of people with access to modern amenities and, hence, translates into social development.

3. DATA SOURCES/DEFINITION OF MIGRATION

While there is no database specifically designed to study internal migration in Pakistan, three data sets nevertheless contain some information on the same. These are **The Pakistan Inte-**

grated Household Survey (PIHS) 1998-99, the **Labour Force Survey (LFS) 1997-98** and the **Pakistan Census 1998**. The three data sets can be compared on the basis of four parameters: (1) coverage, (2) definition of migration, (3) the type of regional (rural/urban) movements they contain information on and (4) demographic and economic indicators on which data are available. Since neither data set was collected to study migration in particular, all data sets have their own limitations and need to be used in conjunction.

PIHS 1998: The Pakistan Integrated Household survey is based on a sample of 16,305 households that constitute 115,171 individual household members. A migrant is defined as a person who has not been living in the same **city/town/village** since birth. A person who has moved from one village to another within the same district is, therefore, also classified as a migrant. The place of previous residence is identified only by the urban-rural classification and not by district, province or any other geographical location. The PIHS is therefore useful for the analysis of migration by rural-urban-origin.

The significant advantage PIHS has over other data sets is that it contains data on asset holdings and household expenditure that is not available in any other data set. Since all these characteristics can be correlated with migration status, the PIHS can allow a much more nuanced analysis of the migration process. The ability to link migration with land ownership is a particularly important relationship that the PIHS allows to be studied. A major drawback of the data set is that the province of origin is not specified for migrants and inter and intra-provincial migration cannot be studied.

LFS 1998: The sample size of the Labour Force Survey is comparable to the PIHS and it enumerates approximately 18,000 households and 113,000 individuals. The LFS defines a migrant as one who has not been living in the same **district** since birth. Intra-district movements are, however, ignored. This said, the LFS allows for mapping intra- and inter-provincial movements, and that constitutes its advantage over the PIHS.

Population Census 1998: The Pakistan Population Census defines a migrant as one who is not born in the district of residence. It also provides information on the entire population rather than on a randomly drawn sample. The Census also provides data on inter- and intra-provincial migration and rural-urban migration. The latter is, however, limited to the extent that, whereas the destination region is known, the source region is not, i.e. it is possible to study migration into rural or urban areas, but not from rural or urban areas.

A major drawback of the Census is that only aggregated data at the level of an administrative unit (district) are available. This implies that one cannot directly link different characteristics of the basic unit (individual or household), and cross-tabulations are limited to those provided by the Census reports.

4. MIGRATION AT A GLANCE

This section presents some summary statistics from all three data sources to provide an overview of the entire migrant population. Most studies on migration have made use of either the

census or older versions of the LFS data,⁸ and the figures contained therein are consistent with those presented in Table 1.1. The PIHS, however, has not been used for such an analysis, and we find that it suggests a much higher ratio of migration. There is reason to believe that this difference emanates from the fact that the PIHS looks at **intra-district migration**, while the other data sets do not. Within the PIHS, however, one cannot distinguish between inter-district and intra-district migrants, so the actual magnitude of intra-district migration cannot be accurately determined.

Interestingly, the incorporation of intra-district migration also shifts the rural-urban distribution of migrants. Indeed, the percentage of migrants moving towards rural areas (from rural or urban areas) in the PIHS is much higher than that suggested by other data sets. This is consistent with the a priori expectation that intra-district movement would be more prevalent in rural areas, and perhaps associated with marital movements and seasonal migration. Note also, that this might be partly responsible for the higher share of women migrants in the PIHS. As we shall show more substantively later, women migrate usually because of marital and familial movements.

TABLE 1.1
NUMBER AND RURAL-URBAN DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND MIGRANTS

Variable	PIHS	LFS	Census
Number of migrants	15,645	9,976	10,829,264
Migrants as percentage of population	21.5%	13.5%	8.2%
Percentage of women	63.0%	54.2%	49.0
Percentage moving from rural to rural	45.8	12.3	-
Percentage moving from rural to urban	26.2	33.2	-
Percentage moving from urban to rural	9.8	28.5	-
Percentage moving from urban to urban	18.2	26.0	-

Source: PIHS 1998, LFS 1998, Pakistan Population Census 1998.

The suggestion that intra-district migration is correlated with marital movements is to some extent borne out by the data presented in Table 1.2. A caveat that merits mention is that reasons are reported by survey respondents. There seems to be concern in the literature⁹ as well as in policy circles that these may not represent actual motives, particularly in the case of women. In the case of the aforementioned data sets, there does seem to be evidence that, at least in the case of economic migrants, migrant characteristics do appear consistent with the human capital theory of migration,¹⁰ which suggests that younger, unmarried migrants with at least some education are more likely to migrate.

Moving on with this caveat, two features of the data stand out. First, **economic migration constitutes less than one-fifth of the total migration stream**. Since a lot of policy discourse has based itself in the Harris-Todaro¹¹ framework of economic migration, this finding casts a shadow on the applicability of economic (dis)incentives on the migration process.

Second, the **overarching category of marital and family movements hides a lot of nuance**. We know, for example, that this stream is mainly constituted of women, and we also know that movement due to marriage and family movements does not preclude labour force participation

TABLE 1.2
REPORTED REASONS FOR MIGRATION

Reasons for Migration	PIHS	LFS	Census
	Percentage of Migrants		
Economic	18.1	18.8	20.9
Education	1.1	0.5	1.2
Health	0.3	0.2	0.01
Marital and family movements	63.5	49.8	59.8
Return home	3.1	9.3	1.1
Independence (1947)*	8.4	N.A	N.A
Other	5.7	21.4	16.9
Percentage of economic migrants in full sample	4.7	1.7	1.7

* These migrants moved to Pakistan from India at the time of and after Independence in 1947.

Source: PIHS 1998, LFS 1998, Pakistan Population Census 1998.

after having migrated. But since there is no information on pre-migration labour availability, it is difficult to construct a scenario where women's post-migration wages, or the change in labour force participation status form part of the incentive structure to migrate.¹²

Finally, an interesting feature of the PIHS and the LFS is that both these data sets allow a look at migration at the household level. A migrant household can then be defined either as one where the household head is a migrant, or as one where at least one member of the household is a migrant. Table 1.3 presents data for both definitions.

TABLE 1.3
MIGRANT HOUSEHOLDS

	PIHS	LFS
Percentage of households with a migrant household head	26.2	17.6
Percentage of households with at least one migrant	46.5	25.5

Source: PIHS 1998, LFS 1998.

In both data sets the percentage of migrant households with at least one migrant is much higher than households headed by migrants. This implies that a typical household head usually has a migrant spouse, or other relative. The percentage of migrant households is an interesting indicator of the extent of migration since it implies that **migration is a norm rather than an exception**. It also hints at the importance of social institutions such as marriage, and kinship networks in enhancing human mobility, and also at the inter-spatial integration of the population.

4.1 Trends of general migration over time

Theoretically it is possible to use different rounds of the LFS and the PIHS to analyse time trends. However, as the definition of migration has evolved over time, different rounds of data

might express different realities. Therefore, here we construct trends from available cross-sectional data. In all data sets, there is some, albeit limited information, regarding the time period when a migrant made the actual move. Across data sets, migrants are classified into four categories; those who moved in 1997-98, those who moved between 1994-97 and those who migrated between 1989-93; the rest of the migrants are lumped into the fourth category “prior to 1989”. This latter category can be thought of as representing the stock of migrants in 1989, and the other categories representing flows within respective time brackets. These periodic flows can be further converted into annual flows through dividing by the number of years in the time period. Percentage change is then calculated by expressing the increase in the number of migrants in the ten years as a proportion of the migrant stock in 1988.

TABLE 1.4
CHANGES IN THE STOCK OF MIGRANTS, 1988-1998

Time Period	Annual Increment to the 1989 Stock (%)		
	PIHS	LFS	Census
Prior to 1989	Base	Base	Base
1989-93	4.9	4.4	3.8
1994-97	5.3	5.2	7.0
1997-98	10.4	7.4	12.4

Source: PIHS 1998, LFS 1998, Pakistan Population Census 1998.

There are three caveats to bear in mind before analysing data thus constructed. First, such a representation of data imposes stable annual flows within a time bracket. However, given the socio-economic conditions of the last ten years, one may not expect any individual year to be particularly conducive to migration. Second, the actual trend in migration needs to account for “survival rates”, i.e. those migrants who have died in the meantime. The available data precludes such an exercise.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, one needs to assume that migration is a one-off process. The lower the representation of seasonal or transitory migrants, the higher the accuracy of the trend. A significant presence of migrants who migrate more than once would manifest itself through a clustering of data points in the most recent time period of migration. Indeed, note that the flow of migrants in 1997-98, the latest year in which migration could have taken place, is extremely high. Since there was no significant exogenous shock in 1997-98 that could have motivated mass migration, and the trend of increasing migration is conspicuous even if one were to scale down the 1997-98 flows by 40 per cent for motivating mass migration; one can only suggest that this particular stream is composed of a significant number of transitory/seasonal migrants.

4.2 Trends in rural-urban migration

An analysis of trends in movements between rural and urban areas is permitted only by the LFS and the PIHS (see Figures 1.1 and 1.2). The 1988 column provides the composition of the mi-

grant stock, i.e. of those who migrated before 1989. The columns for other time periods suggest trends. For example, given the 1988 composition, Figure 1.1 shows that rural to urban migration has increased over the years.

This said, the two data sources do not provide trends that are consistent with each other. The only trends agreed upon by both sources involve the increasing urban to urban movement and the decreasing rural to rural movement.

FIGURE 1.1
PERIOD OF MIGRATION

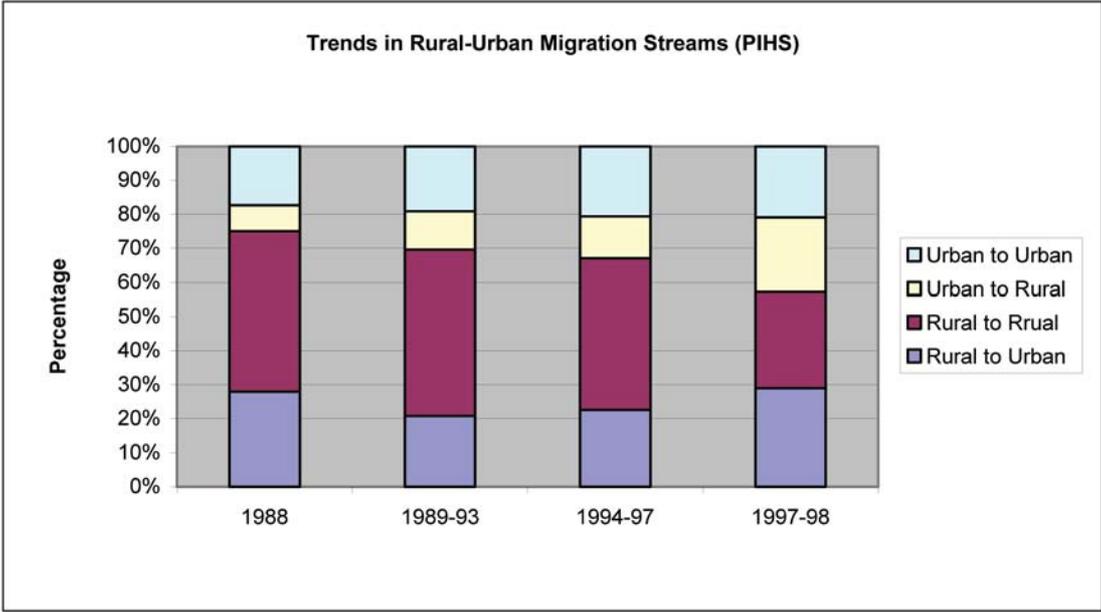
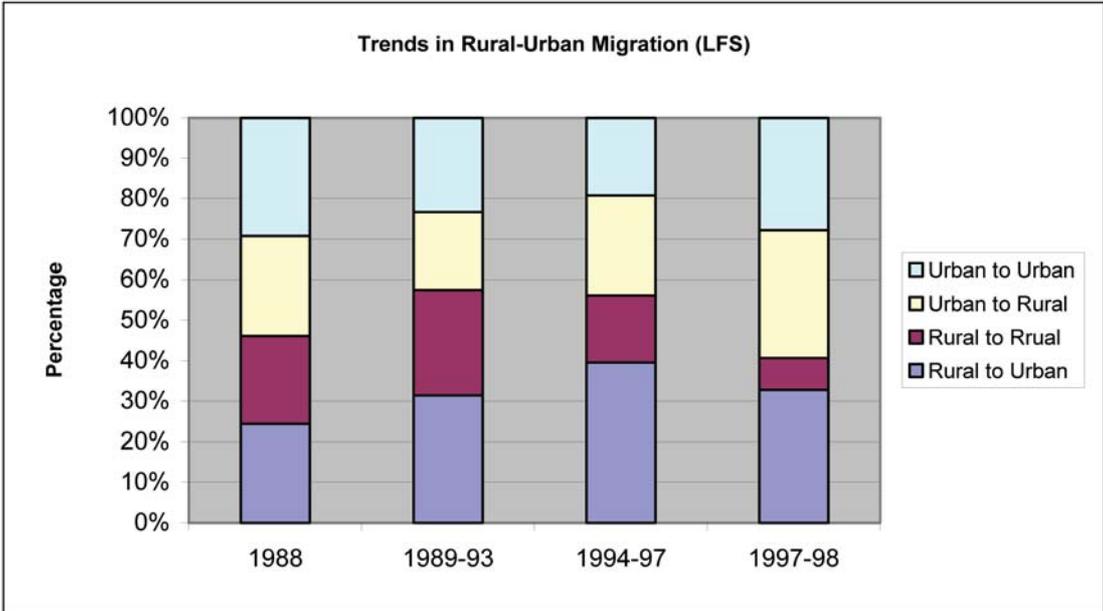


FIGURE 1.2
PERIOD OF MIGRATION



Other than that, the PIHS gives, for example, a clear increasing trend in the rural to urban movement, while the LFS gives an equivocal trend. This said, trends suggested by the PIHS seem to be more logical and also consistent with literature: rural to urban movements are increasing, and rural to rural movements are decreasing. Given that the PIHS is looking at intra-district migration, it is interesting to note that this does not diminish the importance of rural to urban movements, suggesting that a good proportion of intra-district movement involves movement from rural suburbs to urban towns/cities.

4.3 Migration of labour

The preceding discussion focused on all migrants. We now turn to a sub-sample of migrants, i.e. those who report to have migrated for economic reasons. While economic migrants constitute up to 20 per cent of total migrants, depending on the source of data used, they only form a very small proportion of the total population and observations are limited, thus precluding a disaggregated analysis. It is not possible, for example, to check for any time trends, since all data sets provide information on four time zones. The bulk of the migrants is situated pre-1988, and the number of remaining migrants spread across three time zones do not allow authoritative statistical determination of any underlying trend. Technically, the issue of sample size can be evaded by using the census, but this cannot be used since the census provides aggregated data and one cannot separate labour migrants from the apparently non-economic migrants for a closer analysis. The data presented in this section are, therefore, gleaned from the PIHS and the LFS.

TABLE 1.5
DEMOGRAPHICS

Variable	PIHS	LFS
Number of economic migrants	3,342	2,095
Economic migrants as percentage of total sample	4.7	2.9
Percentage of women in economic migrants	15.7	13.1
Percentage of women in the non-economic migrant stream	63	54.2
Percentage of women among non-migrants	46.4	47.0

Source: PIHS 1998, LFS 1998.

A very significant issue highlighted in Table 1.5 is the proportion of women in the economic migration stream. The **very low proportion of female economic migrants** suggests that, while to some extent the female population may not possess the requisite credentials to find a job as a migrant, labour markets in Pakistan may also be segmented along gender lines. It would follow that women migrate primarily because of marital and family reasons. However, though the majority of women “themselves” may migrate less for economic reasons and more as “tied-migrants”, this does not preclude ex-post participation in the labour market. In fact, their expected participation in the informal sector and the resulting addition to household income may well be part of the pre-migration calculus. It is not illogical to assume that for tied migrants the underlying cause of migration could be a change in the labour participation status, though the reported reason for migration may be family or marital. Indeed this is borne out by Table 1.6, and the

TABLE 1.6
OCCUPATIONS OF MIGRANTS AND NON-MIGRANTS BY GENDER (%)

	Non-migrant Men	Migrant Men	Non-migrant Women	Migrant Women
Percentage of adults earning a wage*	61.2	85.8	17.0	30.7
Personal and protective	5.8	11.0	5.53	25.3
Models/salespersons	9.0	10.19	0.78	3.3
Market-oriented skilled agriculture	26.6	14.28	31.0	19.5
Subsistence agriculture	10.7	4.6	18.6	3.1
Agriculture, fishery	4.5	3.9	12.4	22.6
Mining and construction	13.1	15.0	4.0	4.1
Sales and services, elementary	5.2	8.0	1.42	4.8
Precision, handicraft	2.7	2.7	11.8	7.7
Drivers and mobile plant operators	4.1	5.6	0.0	0

* These percentages correspond to those above 18 years of age.

Totals do not add up to 100. Occupations with less than 3 per cent incidence are not reported.

Source: Pakistan Integrated Household Survey, 1998.

percentage of migrant women working for wages is almost double the percentage of non-migrant women working for wages.

Another engaging finding is the difference in the rural-urban distribution of economic and general migrants. Table 1.7 presents the proportions contributed by the four different movements. Note that the distributions for general and economic migrants are structurally different. For non-economic migrants, the PIHS suggests that the rural-rural stream is the most dominant, followed by the rural-urban stream. For economic migrants, this is reversed, though rural-rural migration is still very much prominent.

The LFS also provides structurally different distributions for economic and non-economic migrants, but the distinguishing feature here is that the proportion of urban to urban migrants

TABLE 1.7
MOVEMENTS OF LABOUR
BY RURAL-URBAN CLASSIFICATION OF SOURCE AND DESTINATION (%)

Movement	PIHS		LFS	
	Economic Migrants	Non-economic Migrants	Economic Migrants	Non-economic Migrants
Rural to urban	41.7	22.7	32.2	33.4
Rural to rural	31.0	49.1	6.2	13.8
Urban to rural	7.3	10.3	27.1	28.8
Urban to urban	20.0	17.9	34.5	24.0
Rural-urban distribution of migrants	38 (R)		33 (R)	

Source: PIHS 1998, LFS 1998.

increases. While it is logical for urban to urban migration to increase in the economic migration stream, rural to rural migration is oddly low, especially in comparison to the PIHS. Since it is possible that intra-district migration reduces the proportion of urban to urban and urban to rural migration,¹³ both rural-urban and rural-rural streams increase much more, and it is this perhaps that drives the difference between the two data sets. This being said, it merits noting that the number of observations on rural-rural and urban-urban migration are very small in the LFS, 23 and 53, respectively, and should therefore be read carefully.

4.4 Determinants of economic migration

To provide an econometric treatment to economic migration, we followed the tradition of models motivated by Harris (1979) and Todaro (1978).¹⁴ The structural form has been rendered by Nakosteen and Zimmer (1980) and Agesa (2001).¹⁵ Due to the issue of migrant self-selection, the Heckman (1979) selection procedure was applied.

Table 1.8 presents the results of the Probit model,¹⁶ the earnings equation for rural non-migrants and urban migrants. All the regressors are well behaved and consistent with theory and empirical literature. We discuss the results of the main equation of interest, the Probit below.¹⁷

TABLE 1.8
ESTIMATES OF PROBIT MODEL AND THE EARNINGS EQUATIONS CORRECTED
FOR SAMPLE SELECTION BIAS*

	Probit Model		Urban Earnings (migrants)		Rural Earnings (non-migrants)	
	Coefficient	P-values	Coefficient	P-values	Coefficient	P-values
Constant	-3.5	0.000	8.2	0.000	8.5	0.000
Age	0.8	0.000	0.04	0.000	0.06	0.000
Age square	-0.001	0.000	-0.0005	0.000	-0.0007	0.001
Married	-0.23	0.000	0.29	0.000	0.30	0.000
Literacy	0.19	0.000	0.17	0.000	0.1	0.167
Years of education	0.03	0.000	0.03	0.000	0.05	0.000
Agricultural land	-1.2	0.000	...	...	0.1	0.024
Wage difference	0.9	0.000	...	...	...	...
Inv. Mills	...	...	0.19	0.819	-0.9	0.123
F-value	415.1		22.8		136.7	
	0.31		0.25		0.13	
	10,092		906		9,186	

* What needs to be underlined here is the sign of the coefficients. A positive sign implies that the probability of migration is increasing in that variable. For example an increase in the rural to urban wage differential will increase the likelihood of migration *given* other characteristics. In the Probit Model, the magnitude of the coefficients is not important.

The P values indicate whether a coefficient is statistically significant. A P value of less than 100 implies that the coefficient is significant; otherwise, it is not important.

Perhaps the most important policy variable in the equation was the rural and urban earnings differential and, as the results show, this is positive and significant. This supports the hypothesis that, given other characteristics, workers respond to positive anticipated earnings in the urban, viz. their earnings in rural areas. A very significant finding of the study is that **ownership of agricultural land significantly reduces the probability of migration**. In the case of agricultural land, this result is consistent with theory and empirical evidence, and can have two explanations. First, the presence of agricultural land can be a potential source of employment and can provide a certain level of guaranteed earnings in rural origins, which may be preferred to **expected** earnings in the urban destination. Second, sociological literature posits that agricultural land serves as a bond between rural communities and their geographical origins. In that sense, ownership of agricultural land may increase the social cost of migration.

Current research in migration is moving on from neo-classical perspectives to a more structural approach relating to wider processes, kinship networks, issues of power and the interaction between spatial mobility and the structuring of labour markets.

5. INSTITUTIONAL INSIGHTS¹⁹

This section highlights the social and political challenges confronting internal migration. From a poverty point of view, for example, it is as important to know who does and who does not migrate, and what determines the pace of migration.

The preceding discussion has suggested that in the case of Pakistan, migrants self-select on the basis of **human capital and assets**. But there is also increasing evidence that segmented **labour markets**²⁰ and **politico-ethnic issues** also determine who migrates, and at what pace.

5.1 Segmented labour markets and the importance of social networks

We can make a few preliminary observations that relate the functioning of labour markets as one determinant for internal migration.

First, it has been argued that the labour market is highly gender segmented. The female participation rate, no matter how it is measured and what data are used, is among the lowest in the world. It is, of course, true that much of women's work remains informal, unremunerated or unrecognized. Female-led entrepreneurial autonomous activities are increasing, but remain limited. While we generally agree with this view, it has been pointed out earlier, that **the percentage of migrant women earning a wage is much higher than that for non-migrant women**. In fact, this rate is higher than the percentage of women reporting economic migration as a reason of migration. We may suggest then, that although independent economic mobility is still not the norm, women's employment may still be an important part of the incentive structure for migration.

Second, at another level of organization, it is useful to distinguish between formal public sector jobs, formal private sector jobs and the informal sector. Qualitative work on the labour market suggests that jobs in all three sectors, and particularly the public sector, are rationed on the basis of parochial patronage.

5.2 Segmented labour markets: some evidence from south Punjab

Empirical verification of the issues discussed above is far from straightforward. Nevertheless, some light can be shed by a careful mix of qualitative and quantitative data. Table 1.9 presents migration data for selected districts of southern Punjab. These districts form perhaps the poorest region of the country,²¹ and there is evidence that daily wages in these districts are the lowest in the country.²² Wage differentials in these districts and some urban districts in Punjab and Sindh can be significant. It is interesting then that, as of 1998, migratory flows from these districts constitute only 1.5 per cent of the total migratory movement from Punjab.²³ This should be read in conjunction with the fact that migrants from Punjab constitute almost two-thirds of all Pakistani migrants.

TABLE 1.9
INCIDENCE OF MIGRATION FROM SELECTED DISTRICTS OF SOUTHERN PUNJAB

District of Previous Residence	Bahawalpur	Bahawalnagar	Rahim Yar Khan	Rajanpur
Total migrants	46,500	71,044	26,443	1,914
Total migrants as percentage of intra-provincial migrants in Punjab	1.5 %	2.4 %	0.9 %	0.06 %

Source: Population Census 1998, District Reports.

TABLE 1.10
PATTERNS OF INTERDISTRICT MIGRATION (% OF OUTMIGRANTS)

Previous Residence	Bahawalpur		Bahawalnagar		Rahim Yar Khan	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Sialkot	9.6	3.8	0.9	0.9	1.8	2.2
Lahore	22.3	11.0	18.6	10.8	27.2	15.9
Rawal Pindi	2.3	0.3	7.8	3.4	7.5	6.1
Faisalabad	18.0	10.9	10.6	6.1	18.8	16.6
Multan	4.6	13.9	3.6	8.2	2.7	4.3
Total	56.8	39.9	41.5	29.4	58.0	45.1

Source: Population Census 1998, District Reports.

It is difficult to say a priori why the incidence of migration from these districts is so low. However, it is interesting to note that migration streams seem to follow discernable patterns. Table 1.10 shows that, while there are many similarities in the flows from different districts, there are some very comprehensible differences. For example, migrants to Sialkot are mainly from Bahawalpur (from within south Punjab) rather than any other district. Similarly, migrants to Rawalpindi are mainly from Bahawalnagar and Rahim Yar Khan, but not Bahawalpur. Also, while Multan is perhaps as urban/industrialized as Sialkot and Lahore and much nearer to the southern districts, migrants chose to move to districts that are farther away. Also, there are many other industrialized urban centres around Lahore and Sialkot, but these do not seem to be receiving any significant migrant flows from southern Punjab.

These findings suggest that the poor are fairly heterogeneous in terms of their access to various types of capital, including **social capital** and this endowment set determines the incidence, pace and direction of migration. While to suggest that the incidence and patterns of migration are determined solely by social networks may be over deductive, it would be fair to say that **wage differentials are only part of the incentive structures for migrants**, and that the migratory process is much more nuanced than it appears.

5.3 Ethnicity and political sustainability of migration

Closely linked with the issue of segmentation and social network is the question of ethnic identity. In fact, more often than not, the social capital in question has been highly correlated with ethnic identity.

The link between ethnic preferences and migration is in fact rooted in the history of the Indian sub-continent. In nineteenth century British India, for example, certain communities of east Punjab received preferential access to land in west Punjab at the expense of local communities, because of their perceived efficiency at farming.²⁴ The British had similar ideas about the communities best suited for military service, and these perceptions are to some extent still entrenched in the functioning of the state.²⁵ It is widely perceived, for example, that access to public sector jobs, particularly in the military, is segmented along ethnic lines. The implication for migration is that public sector employees often have preferential access to agricultural and residential land all over the country, irrespective of provincial boundaries. Such allocation of resources and the notion of ethnic ownership of a geographical territory have led to the perception that migration is tantamount to the marginalization of native communities.

This perception has subsequently led to the genesis of ethnicity-based politics and is common in provinces such as Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan, which have received large numbers of migrants. Slogans such as “Sindh belongs to Sindhis” and “Gawadar is being taken over by Punjabis” are, therefore, part of the regular political discourse. It follows that the issue of political representation assumes supreme significance; the ability of migrants to vote in areas of destination rather than of origin are then considered acts of changing the ethnic demography of an area.

5.4 Urbanization: urban infrastructure and housing

Given the political and social constraints to migration, the issue of urban planning is also instrumental to controlling migration, though only that headed towards urban areas. Policy makers have traditionally vilified rural-urban migration owing to the implied strain on urban infrastructure and housing. In Pakistan, although the need for urban planning is recognized at all levels of discourse, this has not translated into any cogent policy. In fact, a *laissez-faire* policy has been adopted and access to services, such as residential land and water, is through an unregulated private sector. The issue of housing, in particular, is of prime importance since migration has given rise to a large number of irregular settlements known as *katchi abadis*.

Katchi abadis are basically illegal squatter settlements constructed by migrants on public property. Usually, once a *katchi abadi* has existed for a few years, the provincial government regular-

izes it. Interestingly, while services such as electricity and gas cannot be legally provided to houses without registered addresses, state-run utility providers have been known to provide services to *katchi abadis* based on their own allocation of house identification numbers.

The issue of *katchi abadis* has been looked at from various angles. Some argue that given the financial and technical capabilities of the local government, a laissez-faire policy is an optimal one. Proponents of migration, for example, correlate this policy with a reduction in the cost of migration. Others, however, argue that such a policy actually increases the implicit cost of migration; there are concerns that there are economic as well as political rents to be had from encouraging, or turning a blind eye to illegal settlements. It is well documented that ambiguous property rights can significantly increase the vulnerability of migrants. Protection can often be bought with certain political affiliations. Indeed, there are some who are concerned that the non-policy of “settle now, regularize later” is essentially a policy to change the ethnic demography of an area, and take political control.

6. CURRENT POLICY ENVIRONMENT

The official poverty reduction policy of the government of Pakistan is laid out in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). The PRSP envisages poverty to be multidimensional, and its targets and indicators are correspondingly diverse. Migration, however, does not feature in this policy as a substantive issue; rather there are only fleeting references to migration as a response to regional income and infrastructure disparities.

From the viewpoint of migration, it is useful to evaluate existing (non-)policy from three angles: restrictions on mobility, restrictions on jobs and restrictions on housing and associated facilities. At a policy level there are absolutely no restrictions on geographical movement. This is to some extent evident from the sheer magnitude and direction of mobility.

As far as jobs are concerned, there is some rationing in the public sector, but none in the private sector, be it formal or informal. Public sector jobs in the provincial government usually require that the incumbent possess a domicile certificate that, in turn, is issued if the applicant can establish to be a long-term resident of the province. Usually an applicant's father has to be domiciled in that area. Some jobs, however, are reserved for residents of other provinces.

This system is less stringent than it appears to be. First, domicile certificates are easily available on (illegal) payment and, second, irrespective of the place of birth and ethnicity, certificates can be legally had if a person has resided in an area for three years or more.

Concerning housing and associated facilities, internal migration, in particularly rural to urban migration, is closely associated with the incidence of irregular squatter settlements commonly known as *katchi abadis*, already referred to above. The PRSP does recognize *katchi abadis* as a poverty issue, and recommends policies in the line with the 1947 policy of “settle now and regularize later.” There is a need to ensure that these policies are made more proactive.

Besides the *katchi abadi* Authority, which rubber-stamps the transition from a squatter settlement to a regularized one, there is no other governmental body to manage migration-related urban housing. A number of non-governmental organizations, though, are paying considerable attention to irregular settlements. Prominent among them are the Orangi Pilot Project and the Urban Resource Centre. The former, in particular, is based around community-based organization, and assists residents to construct their own small infrastructure, such as sewage and street soling.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Internal migration in Pakistan is characterized by a **very open, laissez-faire policy**. There are no restrictions on mobility, and very limited ones on job acquisition, housing and associated facilities. In short, there are no insurmountable policy hurdles for potential migrants, and the costs of migration are apparently very low.

On the econometric side, our findings are that income differentials between rural and urban areas are indeed driving economic migration. Furthermore, lack of access to land also provides a significant impetus. While wage differentials are not only limited to the poorer segments of the population, landlessness (in the rural areas) certainly is. Putting together these facts seems to imply that internal migrants are following the route of economic opportunity, and that migration is probably an effective tool for poverty alleviation.

On the other hand, there is also evidence that human capital variables, such as literacy and years of education, are also significant, and this not only at the migration decision level but also through their effect on wage expectations. It is not unreasonable to expect this selection process to be negatively correlated to one's poverty status, i.e. it would be less viable for the poor to migrate. To sum up, while there is quantitative evidence supporting the hypothesis that, in general, it is the poor who migrate, this needs to be qualified with the observation that education also plays an important part in the probability of labour migration.²⁶

Furthermore, our exposition of the issue of **labour market segmentation** implies that migration could be as much a function of group identity as it is of economic deprivation. It is widely perceived that patronage of social groups that have prior access to economic and political resources is often necessary to secure economic opportunities.

Segmentation along the lines of gender is also apparent. While taken as a whole the migration stream is highly feminized, migrants reporting economic reasons as the motive for movement are predominantly male. Even when migrant women are participating in the labour market, movement itself is essentially tied to male relatives. This suggests that independent economic movement of women is not the norm, and that migration may not always be a tool of poverty alleviation accessible to women.

Our analysis has also highlighted that **population mobility goes far beyond economic migration**, which occurs over a variety of spatial, temporal and socio-economic contexts. From a research perspective, it is important to note that, contrary to the received view, rural areas rather

than urban are the dominant recipients of migration. We also find evidence suggesting a large “floating” population consisting of people who migrate more than once. There is an a priori concern that both the rural to rural stream and this floating population may constitute the most vulnerable and the least endowed groups.

Finally, there is a **long-term political concern** that follows migration as a corollary. In Pakistan the notion of ethnic demographic majorities, in particular geographic regions, is an active one. Given this notion, inter-provincial migration, the consequent acquisition of jobs by migrants and, most importantly, the ability of migrants to vote in provincial elections are often seen as attempts to affect the ethnic demography of an area.

These concerns are in essence an upshot of the laissez-faire policy of the government regarding migration. And, while the benign impacts of migration are welcome, it must be ensured that they do not translate into potentially violent scenarios.

ENDNOTES

1. See G.M. Arif, 2004 and F. Azam, 1991.
2. Precise estimates are discussed further below.
3. See A. Lewis, 1954.
4. See J. Hoddinott, 1994.
5. Non-covariate risks imply that returns in two sectors are independently distributed, i.e. if earnings in one sector go down, chances are that earnings will not be affected in the other sector. People working in non-covariate sectors are then usually able to help each other out in times of crisis.
6. See M. Rosenzweig and O. Stark, 1997.
7. Urban congestion, defined as an overload on infrastructure in particular housing can occur when urbanization occurs at a pace where urban planning cannot keep up with it.
8. See Khan and Shehnaz, 2000.
9. See Mullainathan, 2004.
10. See Memon, 2005.
11. The Harris and Todaro framework suggests that rural to urban migration is mainly driven by rural-urban wage differentials weighted by the probability of getting a job. This implies that migration can be controlled by economic (dis)incentives by either removing the wage differential, or by decreasing the probability of getting a job.
12. It can be argued that pre-migration information is not available for male migrants either. This is true, but there is ample information on the wages of male non-migrants from which to construct hypothetical wages for migrants had they not migrated.
13. It would be unlikely to find more than one urban centre within the same district.
14. As explained earlier, the Harris and Todaro framework emphasizes the role of wage differentials in rural-urban migration.
15. Theoretical models need to be translated into “equation form” for a regression to be estimated. This equation form is known as the “structural form”. In the case of our example, our equation is specified as:
Probability of Migration = constant + a(age) + b(age square) + c(marital status) + ... + w(log wage difference). The values of the coefficients a, b, c, ... w are estimated using Probit and presented in Table 1.8.
16. The Probit is an internationally accepted methodology of isolating the individual effects of different causative factors on the decision to migrate (in the case of migration). The Probit is used in a myriad of problems and many fields of study.
17. The results of the wage equations are available on request. These estimates suggest that there is some underlying self-selection mechanism (though not very significant) through which workers who expect higher earnings migrate, and others do not.
18. What needs to be underlined here is the sign of the coefficients. A positive sign implies that the probability of migration is increasing in that variable. For example an increase in the rural to urban wage differential will increase the likelihood of migration *given* other characteristics. In the Probit Model, the magnitude of the coefficients is not important.
The P values indicate whether a coefficient is statistically significant. A P value of less than 100 implies that the coefficient is significant; otherwise, it is not important.
19. This section follows the analytical framework set out by Gazdar, 2003.
20. Gazdar, 2004.
21. See Social Policy Development Center, 2003.
22. See Sayeed et al., and Gazdar, 2003.
23. It is not possible to monitor flows from south Punjab into other provinces.
24. See Ali, 1988.
25. This is not to suggest that the British created these divisions, but to provide a historical example.
26. This is analogous to the brain drain view with regard to international migration.

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VIET NAM
INTERNAL MIGRATION: OPPORTUNITIES AND
CHALLENGES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Dr Dang Nguyen Anh
Social Development Program
Asia-Pacific Economic Center
Hanoi, Viet Nam

Dr Dang Nguyen Anh is the Director of the Social Development Program at the Asia-Pacific Economic Center, Hanoi, Viet Nam.

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VIET NAM: INTERNAL MIGRATION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR DEVELOPMENT

The present paper focuses on the key aspects of internal migration that bring about opportunities and challenges for the country's development. It aims to evaluate existing research and the identification of challenges and priorities for further policy change and data collection. All is aimed at enhancing the actual and potential benefits of migration for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Setting migration within a context sufficiently broad so as to encompass both, the discussion focuses on the emerging issues of internal migration in Viet Nam, mainly voluntary economic movements, with special attention to rural-to-urban migration.

Such movement has become a viable option and key strategy for improving the poor's livelihood and economic opportunities, more than has ever been the case before. Migration has become an integral part of the development process as it represents interaction between provinces and regions. It deserves to be treated as a dynamic development resource, and not as a social evil. This research focus, though essential, has barely yet been pursued in Viet Nam. The topic should be given more attention in both academic research and policy dialogue with the aim to enhance the actual and potential benefits of migration for development.

1. THE TREND AND CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERNAL MIGRATION IN VIET NAM

1.1 The trend and context of internal migration

Migration and population redistribution have always been major policy concerns in Viet Nam. In the last ten years, Viet Nam has been remarkably successful in ensuring high levels of national economic growth and reducing poverty. As data from the 1999 population and housing census showed, this goes hand in hand with important shifts in population distribution and mobility (GSO, 2001). Although Viet Nam has a relatively low proportion of urban residents (around 24 per cent of the total population of over 82 million), this proportion increased rapidly during the past decades. As a response to socio-economic changes, both internal and international migration have gained momentum in Viet Nam.

The economic reforms, or *Rénovations (Doi Moi)*, introduced in 1986 marked a break with the past and affected migration in three main areas. First, the change was significant in the agricultural sector, where decollectivization and the introduction of the household contract system have unbound farmers from their land. The increasing commercialization of agriculture has been of major significance in dispersing the rural workforce and encouraging the move away from rural to urban areas. Second, in the emerging industrial and technology sectors, Viet Nam's incorporation in the global economy has resulted in an increase of foreign direct investment into the

country. As a result, migrant workers are attracted to areas where foreign investment has created industrial hubs. Despite the continuation of the household registration system in urban centres, it no longer acts to limit the acquisition of essential goods and access to employment. Third, parallel to this process, community-based social networks that connect places of origin and destination have expanded, and in turn influence population mobility (Dang, 1998). The development of transport systems, telecommunications and mass media across regions has facilitated spatial mobility and enhanced social contacts between rural and urban areas.

The economic reforms have widened the disparities across regions, provinces and sectors. New opportunities have produced different rates of economic growth, and levels of natural endowments have led to widening differentials in labour demand and labour mobility. Even remote areas are affected by economic change, thus linking rural areas and urban centres. Migration can open new opportunities for income, employment, education and social services. While economic factors, including higher incomes, appear to be the main reason for migration, other factors relating to culture, religion, family and marriage also play a role in the decision to migrate (Dang, 2001). Migration grows out of a growing awareness about emerging economic opportunities and income-generation activities. This process leads to an expansion of social networks linking places of origin and destination.

The country's transition towards a market economy has resulted in uneven development. The economic disparities between regions generally prove to be the main motive for migration. Since *Doi Moi*, inequalities between and within rural provinces and, even more, between rural and urban areas have increased. The highest levels of rural income inequality are in the Central Highlands, while increasing landlessness and poverty in the Mekong River Delta is linked to the commercialization of agriculture (Douglass et al., 2002). Previous survey results showed that, on average, urban incomes in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) are as much as five to seven times higher than the income of farming labourers in rural areas (UNDP, 1998). The latest available data suggest poverty rates in rural areas are six times higher than in urban areas (UN, 2003), indicating a growing gap between the two areas. This gap has placed rural residents at a disadvantage and encouraged outmigration to urban areas.

During the five years preceding the 1999 census, more than 4,350,000 people over five years of age moved across provincial boundaries, accounting for 6.5 per cent of the total population aged five and above. Among these migrants, 55 per cent moved within the same province, and 45 per cent moved across provincial boundaries within Viet Nam (GSO, 2001). This figure is considerably greater than an official estimate of 2,105,000 planned migrants who were relocated to different areas of resettlement by the government during that same period (MARD, 2000). This indicates that a significant proportion of spontaneous migration occurred outside the settlement programmes sponsored and organized by the government.

As shown by the census migration data, the majority of those who had migrated between provinces also moved between regions. Thus, more than two-thirds (67%) of the migrants who crossed provincial boundaries also crossed regional boundaries. Such moves predominantly involve long distances and are associated with changes in the workplace as well as shifts in income and work status (Table 1, Appendix). However, these patterns did not characterize all regions to the same degree. The proportion of interprovincial migrants varied substantially. Because of their attractiveness as destinations, the south-east and the central highlands in southern Viet Nam had pro-

portionately more interprovincial migrants in their populations in 1999 than did any other regions of Viet Nam. Since 1994, over 921,000 persons (8% of the population of the south-east) had moved there. The figure for the central highlands for the same period was over 248,000 persons, accounting for 9.5 per cent of its 1999 population. With abundant natural resources and cash crops, the central highlands attracted many in-migrants from other regions.

Spontaneous interprovincial migration occurred in three major directions during the 1990s: north to north, south to south, and north to south. Migration from the south to the north was not significant. This reflects the pull effect of the south-eastern areas and central highlands of Viet Nam in terms of economic development and natural endowments. Policies promoting industrial production and the service sector have attracted spontaneous migrants from the north to the prospering areas in the south.

In the 1990s, migration was mainly spontaneous and often temporary or circular in nature (IOS, 1998). Proverbs such as “where the land is lush, birds will alight” and “one destination, two homes” have encouraged people to consider relocating. Spontaneous settlement increasingly takes place in all provinces. This group of migrants lack permanent registration at their places of destination. In 1996, the government officially reported that spontaneous economic migration to all provinces had reached almost 212,000 households, comprising over 1 million people. Of these, 7,400 households migrated to northern upland provinces, 97,000 migrated to the south-east region, 70,000 moved to the central highlands and 37,000 households migrated to southern provinces (COSA, 1998). Ha Noi, Ho Chi Minh City, Dong Nai and Dak Lak were the primary destinations of these spontaneous migrants.¹ Available evidence from another study indicates that spontaneous migrants have been more successful in realizing their migration intentions than government planners predicted. Relying on their social networks, the spontaneous migrants reduced the social and economic costs associated with migration and encouraged even more movements (UNDP, 1998). Their income and living standards were also reported as being higher than those of organized migrants (Doan and Trinh, 1996).

The 1999 census data indicated that migration to urban areas accounted for over 53 per cent of all moves, mainly to Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City (GSO, 2001). As mentioned above, between 1994 and 1999, nearly 4.35 million people, or 6.5 per cent of the population over five years of age changed their place of residence. This figure does not include short-term, unregistered movements and movements that took place in the six months preceding the census date. Of the migrants recorded in the census, 1.6 million moved from rural to other rural areas. This movement was essentially away from the poorest provinces, and those with high population densities. About 1.1 million people moved between urban areas, and 1.2 million people moved from rural settlements to urban areas, while over 420,000 moved in the opposite direction, from urban centres to rural areas (Table 2, Appendix).

Rural-to-urban migration occurred mainly across the provincial boundaries and over relatively long distances. The development of transport and telecommunication facilitates the movement of rural labour to urban and industrial centres. It facilitates internal migration and enables such migration to become circular rather than a single permanent move. The multi-spatial households with their members working in different locations have become a common feature of settlement and a feasible choice owing to improved means of transport and telecommunication.

Major cities have become the primary destinations of migration streams. Ho Chi Minh City is a centre of migration activity, being the largest recipient of interprovincial migration. The city's positive net migration rate of 8.15 per cent is the highest in the country. Every year, the city receives around 700,000 KT3 and KT4 migrants² from other regions (IER, 1996). The figure for Ha Noi was +4.29 per cent, indicating more economic opportunities and better levels of income in Ho Chi Minh City. Indeed, people from Ha Noi also migrated to live and work in Ho Chi Minh City. Detailed findings from sample surveys revealed that the bulk of migrants currently residing in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City moved to take advantage of opportunities for a "better life", greater income or higher education. Others followed their families and relatives (IER, 1996; VAPEC, 2002). Ho Chi Minh City has become the driving force behind the country's urban growth. By the year 1990, 33 per cent of the urban population of Viet Nam lived in Ho Chi Minh City. This figure increased during the 1990s, and reached 38.4 per cent by 2002 (DS, 2003). Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City accounted for 53 per cent of Viet Nam's total urban population.

1.2 Internal migrants: characteristics and selectivity

Migration is a highly selective process. In Viet Nam, as in most regions of the world, internal migrants are predominantly young adults. Over half of internal migrants (52%) were less than 25 years old, and only 10.5 per cent were aged 45 years and older, compared with 48 and 20 per cent, respectively, for the non-migrant population. Although migrants are mostly concentrated in the young age group of between 20-24 years, the patterns show a high proportion of young migrants aged 20 to 22 in the rural-to-urban stream (see Figure 1, Appendix). While the age distribution of the rural-rural and urban-urban streams presents a skewed bell curve similar to that of the rural-urban stream, the age profile of the urban-rural migration reveals different characteristics.

Figure 2 shows the age and gender specific migration rates for interprovincial migration of the population aged five years and over. The data show internal migrants to be predominantly young adults. During the five years preceding the 1999 census, over half of all migrants were under the age of 25, and migration rates for ages 20-24 are about twice as high as for other age groups. Women accounted for a much larger proportion of migrants during the 1990s, reflecting emerging employment opportunities for young, mainly unmarried women in the service sector and foreign investment industries.

The social characteristics of migrants are also highly varied. Migration census data reveal that unmarried migrants account for a higher proportion in the interprovincial migration streams. Also, the migration propensity increases with the level of education. Much of the migration in search of better educational opportunities is directed to major cities where higher educational institutions are located. Rather than return to their places of origin after graduation, students tend to stay and find jobs in urban centres, especially Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City. In terms of occupation, labour migrants account for a large proportion of workers in the manufacturing and construction sectors. Migrants are least represented in agriculture, forestry and fishery. At the other extreme, high numbers of migrants are reported working in the service sector that includes mainly retail trade, transportation, restaurants, domestic and personal services. In general, the sectors generating cash incomes are responsible for attracting labour migrants to the major urban centres in Viet Nam.

Ethnic factors can also play a role in migrant mobility. Migration census data show that ethnic minorities comprise more than 4 per cent of total recorded movement (GSO, 2001). While ethnic Hoa and Khmer groups accounted for a higher share in local, intraprovincial migration, ethnic groups of H'mong and Dao were more likely to engage in longer distance interprovincial movement. The relocation of ethnic groups often takes place in the north-west region. Lai Chau and Son La provinces showed positive net migration rates coming from other provinces. In addition, a significant influx of ethnic H'mong and Dao migrating from Cao Bang and other north-eastern provinces to the central highlands was reported during the 1990s (Do, 2000).

2. EMERGING ISSUES OF INTERNAL MIGRATION

In this section, a number of key emerging issues of internal migration will be examined to provide empirical evidence and background for the policy recommendations presented at the end of the paper. Most of these issues have not been hitherto addressed by previous studies on internal migration in Viet Nam. The issues will both serve as challenges and opportunities for the policy discourse and planning in the country's new phase of development.

2.1 Migration as a viable option and key livelihood strategy

Viet Nam's poverty alleviation strategy and programmes have recorded a phenomenal success in reducing levels of poverty in the 1990s. Between 1993 and 1998, one measure of poverty shows that the share of the population at basic needs levels of poverty declined from 58 to 37 per cent (World Bank, 1999). According to the World Bank definition of the poverty line, the proportion of people living in poverty is currently about 29 per cent of the population, 6 per cent for urban areas and 35 per cent for rural areas (UN, 2003). If the government's definition of the poverty line is applied, the decline is even greater.³ Although poverty in Viet Nam is largely a rural phenomenon, poverty in urban centres should not be overlooked. There are clear linkages between rural poverty and urban poverty, and with migration.

Migration represents a livelihood strategy for most rural households. It is important to understand the strategies of households as a response to market opportunities and government policies. Decisions to migrate may not simply reflect the goals and needs of individual migrants, but the household's decision to maximize family incomes, or minimize family risks. Rural families often allocate their labour assets over dispersed locations to reduce risk and allow family members to pool and share their incomes. In this way, the flow of remittances is not a random by-product of individual migration, but an integral part of a family strategy behind migration – a livelihood strategy for poor people. However, migration is often not a readily available option for the poorest among the poor since it requires financial and social resources that are not available to the very poor and uneducated. Migration for this group is mainly the result of displacement by development projects or natural disaster, loss of land through debt, or personal failure, none of which are considered for discussion in this paper.

Migration is a process fostering development. The motive behind migration is not only to earn a daily income, but also to be able save for investments in the rural area of origin. There is increas-

ing evidence that migrants are among the most enterprising and most entrepreneurial in the countryside. Migrants often use their savings, skills and experience to set up small- and medium-sized business in the local economy and creating jobs and markets for their home areas (Dang et al., 2004). As migrants tend to be among the more innovative and better educated people in their home community, they can generate not only incomes for themselves, but also for local non-migrants in source areas, that can eventually generate capital and improve the community's living standards. Thus migration can reduce underemployment and disguised unemployment in rural areas.

2.2 Remittances and savings

Remittances reflect a long Vietnamese tradition of strong family support and play a significant role in the livelihoods of the people. Since in most rural areas the opportunities for agricultural diversification and for non-farm employment are limited, remittances are often an important component of household incomes, often pooled with in kind or cash farming incomes. Cash remittances have a profound effect on household incomes and can be helpful in repaying debts, covering schooling costs for children and paying for expenses incurred by illnesses. Cash remittances can reduce the need for farmers to sell their rice yield as a cash crop, and ensure greater food security for rural families.

Currently, comprehensive **data on migration and migrants' remittances is severely limited**, which hinders our understanding of the role of migration in poverty reduction. According to the 1999 Viet Nam Living Standards Survey (VLSS) statistics, over 23 per cent of households received remittances during the 12 months prior to the survey, and remittances accounted for 38 per cent of household expenditure (Le and Nguyen, 1999). Findings from migration surveys show that without participation in the cash economy, rural families do not have enough income to survive and/or to cover expenses for education and illness. Remittances by relatives form a significant part of the income of many rural households. Though by itself this source of cash income may not be sufficient for all family needs, when pooled with the income in kind or in cash from their farming activities, a household is more likely to be able to meet its subsistence requirements (IOS, 1998).

Remittances received from migrants are used either for **consumption or for investment in income-generating projects**. Among the poor households, however, a larger proportion of remittances is likely to be spent on consumption rather than on investment. The most frequently reported uses of remittances are contribution to daily expenses, repayment of debt, education and healthcare and housing improvement. However, it is difficult to distinguish between consumption and investment uses. For example, assets such as motorcycles can be used for work, and better housing usually increases its residents' productivity by improving their health status, while education and freedom from debt clearly expand long-term household prospects. A combination of income sources – farm, non-farm and remittances from migration – is essential for rural livelihoods.

The migrants who send remittances home often rely on their **social networks**. The networks of friends and relatives working in destination areas can serve as a channel for the transfer of remittances. The impact of migration on the wider village communities is more difficult to measure

than on household welfare. Migrant remittances can serve as a direct cash injection into the rural economy that increases demand for goods and services, creates employment and indirectly supports a wide range of activities. Housing improvement, for example, contributes to demand for construction workers, a sector that has greatly developed over the past years. Construction may now employ almost half the male population of a village and provide the main source of income for many households.⁴

2.3 Female migration and gender impact

Another emerging trend has been the increase in the number of female workers moving by themselves in search of employment. Analysis of the national data from the two censuses (i.e. 1989-1999) indicates a growing trend of female migration relative to males during the 1990s. The pattern changed substantially during the 1990s as a result of an increase in female migrants participating in long-distance interprovincial moves. For almost all age groups, females were just as likely as males to undertake long-distance moves, reflecting emerging employment opportunities for young, often unmarried women in the manufacturing and service sectors. Young women under 25 years of age made up the largest group of female migrants (GSO, 2001). Survey results in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City revealed even lower ages (18-22) among female migrants (IER, 1996).

With the increase in opportunities for women to live and work in urban areas, growing streams of female labour migration to Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City have been documented (UNDP, 1998; Population Council, 1998), reflecting a large demand for female workers in labour-intensive manufacturing, commerce and service jobs located in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City. The expansion of exports of Viet Nam's labour-intensive manufactured goods (textiles, garments, footwear, and food processing) is one of the main drivers of female migration. As in other Asian countries, this is partly linked to foreign direct investment, global economic integration and exports of Viet Nam's manufactured goods. The cheap and accessible labour force consists mainly of female workers, particularly those from rural areas. For the young cohort of rural women with limited options in the countryside, this has provided a route out of the agricultural sector.

The service sector is another major employer of female workers in the urban centres and throughout the country. Male employment in this sector has not expanded as much as female employment. This is clearly the case for Ha Noi and especially Ho Chi Minh City, with more female labourers having moved there. Migrant women comprise large numbers of the service sector as shopkeepers, housemaids, street vendors, café/restaurant workers, entertainers and trash collectors. Many women failed to secure a decent income from one job alone. Given new opportunities in a more liberal environment, female migrants are able or would be able to improve their situation. Many move to where greater opportunities and better incomes are perceived to exist. Part of this group may then experience greater autonomy than they had known in the past.

However, the long working hours in labour-intensive manufacturing also take their toll on the health and well-being of the workers. Female migrants who work as street vendors, basket carriers, café/shopkeepers and housemaids may confront difficult situations, including sexual harassment by employers. Because of their vulnerable status, female migrants may be lured into situations where they are sexually abused and inadvertently find themselves in sex work. With

unstable and low-income employment, migrant workers are often forced to borrow money and go into debt, or are forced into the sex industry. Others will “voluntarily” enter the sex business knowing what is expected of them, and tempted by the potentially lucrative earnings compared to low-income factory work or other jobs.

Overall, female migrants have shown great adaptability to their places of destination, either rural or urban. No matter how low on the economic ladder, migrants at the place of destination usually conclude that they have increased their income level by moving (Dang, 2001). The mental and physical stresses for a migrant woman are often counterbalanced by aspirations for economic security and upward mobility for her family, relatives and herself. Migration remains a growing opportunity for women’s economic advancement, in spite of its associated risks and high costs.

2.4 Access to social and health services

Migrants’ access to health and other social services is another critical problem. Local authorities and employers in destination places are not much interested in the improvement of migrant access to safe housing, health and social services. Their main interest in migrants is centred on benefiting from their labour and not on their welfare or well-being. Housing conditions for migrant workers in urban destinations are worse than at the rural origin. Most of the poor migrants are crowded in boarding houses without basic infrastructure and facilities. Temporary shelters exist without the necessary utilities such as water, sewage, electricity, hygiene and safety. Insofar as housing is privatized and offered without subsidy in the free market, the quality and costs of housing for migrants do not warrant policy attention and treatment.

Previous studies have documented the lack of appropriate and timely access to health services for migrants at the places of destination. Most temporary migrants have no health insurance, and fear of high medical costs often results in delays in seeking treatment (MRSC, 2002; Dang, 2001). Lack of health insurance means a visit to public health services is beyond their means. Official healthcare programmes, including reproductive health services, rarely reach temporary migrants for whom health services are much harder to find. Indeed, healthcare services and healthcare financing are rarely defined according to the needs of migrants. The current system of healthcare has received little, if any, additional budget allocation to meet the needs of the ever increasing migrant population.

The higher vulnerability of migrant women to sexual abuse and violence also places them at risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS, as well as a range of post-traumatic stress disorders associated with sexual abuse (COSA, 2002). Adverse health outcomes may also be the result of limited information that can prevent migrants from making the right decisions and making appropriate use of the available health services for which they are eligible. In such cases, the problem is associated with migrants’ poor and insufficient knowledge about contraceptives, reproductive health, STDs and HIV/AIDS prevention.

Reproductive health projects and programmes continue to neglect migrant workers due to their unofficial and disadvantaged status at their places of destination. Prenatal health indicators tend to be worse among migrants. At present, reproductive health programmes and the health protection of migrant women are inadequate both in terms of access and quality of services. Unmet

reproductive health needs often go unnoticed by employers or local authorities. Abortion rates are reported to be very high in industrial zones with a high concentration of workers (Thi and Kim, 2003). Unfortunately, few steps have been taken to explicitly tailor services to the needs of migrants. This has become a great challenge for the achievement of the social equity and sustainable development goals.

2.5 The household registration system and the legality of migration

Before 1990, migration streams, especially to the largest cities, were strictly controlled by the government through employment policies and the household registration system (*ho khau*). This system is a similar version of the Chinese model of *hokou* which is aimed at controlling population mobility, especially spontaneous influxes of rural residents. State jobs, work assignments and the accompanying family migrations they occasioned, became the main route to urban life. These controls of migration and population mobility were effective because they were connected to government subsidies and rations. Residents were only allowed to obtain basic necessities and essential goods according to their residential permits, especially in urban areas. In practice, this system did not abolish spontaneous migration. It just made it more expensive (Dang et al., 2002).

As rural to urban migration increasingly fuels the pace of urbanization, the fear that the rural population will flood the major cities of Viet Nam has resulted in a number of policies to restrict, both directly and indirectly, migration into the major cities. These measures are grounded in the system of household registration. Four different categories are used to classify the population as residents and non-residents of a particular geographical area. These categories are nationwide and are also used to determine access to public services in that locality:

- KT1 permanent registration – non-migrant with household registration;
- KT2 permanent registration – intradistrict mover with household registration;
- KT3 temporary registration – migrant, residing independently or with relatives, without household registration book, 6-12 months registration with extension;
- KT4 floating migrant, residing in guest house or temporary dwelling, without household registration book, 1-3 months or no registration.⁵

The system is not only applied in towns and cities but also the countryside. One can find KT3 and even KT4 migrants in rural settlement areas. They are legally and administratively different from the permanent residents who are classified as KT1 or KT2. Most of the KT3 and KT4 groups are spontaneous or undocumented migrants, although some of them were once those with permanent registration (KT1 or KT2). They may have lost their original papers of registration and returned to their home villages; they do not have valid paperwork to document themselves as registered residents. In other words, they become “migrants” in their home villages.

The aforementioned classification may make the work of authorities easier, but at the same time it has created barriers to the welfare and well-being of a broad section of the population. Without permanent registration, migrants are and will remain temporary, not permanent residents. They have no or only limited access to formal sector jobs, education, healthcare, housing, land use certificates, credit, business, or registration for their purchases of such assets as houses and

vehicles. Their costs to access social services are considerably higher; thus migrants often pay four to five times more for electricity and seven to eight times for water than the normal rates. Children of KT1 and KT2 residents were given priority at qualified government schools, whereas migrant children were either forced to apply for semi-public or private schools with higher fees. Alternatively, the migrant parents have to pay extra costs to have their children admitted to government schools. KT3 and KT4 migrants are often not eligible for social services provided under the Hunger Eradication and Poverty Reduction Programme, which includes low-interest loans, free healthcare and exemption from school fees. Because many of them live in informal, low-income settlements, they are often unable to gain access to secure land and housing tenure, or to electricity, water and sanitation infrastructure. The migrants' unprotected status leads to their vulnerability and social exclusion.

2.6 Migrant workers – the least protected

Given the temporary nature of their work and lack of a permanent registration status, migrant workers are not able to secure protection against hazards to their health and safety, or organize themselves for collective bargaining, to obtain fair wages, ask for compensation in case of injury or illness, or have any security of employment. In many cases, paid employees do not ask for a fair work contract. Many migrant workers are afraid of losing their job; others do not know how to negotiate to obtain a better contract. In many cases, migrant workers do not have any work contract with their employer, and they work mainly on probation or as short-term workers.⁶ Under verbal and informal contracts, they do not have regular workers' rights and only get paid for the amount of work they actually deliver. These "contracts" are invalid, and often outside domestic law and offer little protection for the workers. At peak times, although the regulated working hour is eight hours a day, five days per week, Saturdays and weekends are often considered as normal working days. Migrant workers often work excessive hours in conditions akin to forced labour. Overtime pay is seen as a compensation for this (MRSC, 2002).

Migrant workers are the least protected in the new labour markets they enter. They are often marginalized without health, social, occupational or accidental insurance. A monitoring report of the National Assembly's Committee for Social Affairs revealed the difficult working conditions, vulnerability and precarious status of young workers who moved to work in industrial parks and formal labour markets (COSA, 2003). The health hazards for these workers, especially women, are far-reaching. Migrants are aware of this but, given their economic needs, still agree to do hazardous work. However, without healthcare provisions, many are left to assume personal responsibility for their own poor health. Compared to men, migrant women are at a disadvantage because their educational levels and skills are often lower. Female migrants suffer most from family break-ups and adverse health consequences that may result from migration.

The above report also shows that employers feel no obligation to provide social and health insurance for migrant workers (COSA, 2003). Many businesses and companies, including the state sector, have hired unskilled and seasonal labourers to work without a contract. If discovered by state inspectors, they are able to pay a one-time penalty and continue with their violation of labour codes. These workers are also vulnerable to quick dismissal as labour laws and regulations are not applied or enforced to help them dispute such cases, and although some express the desire to find better paid and more desirable long-term jobs, they usually fail to achieve their goal.

3. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The current literature and policy discourse on internal migration pay too little attention to the full contribution of migration to economic development and poverty reduction. Indeed, development policies tend to ignore migration, or have the implicit or explicit aim to reduce migration. The lack of political will and understanding at different levels regarding migration have seriously hampered the formulation of effective policies and programmes to support migrants, or facilitate migration.

This paper is an attempt to further the discussion and inform development policy debates with an improved understanding of migration. Focusing on voluntary economic migration, the paper proposes that migration can serve both as an opportunity and a challenge for national development which aims at equitable, socially inclusive and sustainable patterns of growth (SRV, 2002). Although some of the recommendations are raised in previous studies (e.g. UNDP, 1998), they have not been used for government policy dialogue or do not enter effectively as a central ground in the formulation of development policies and plans. For this reason, it is necessary to reiterate and assess some key policy measures regarding internal migration and development.⁷

3.1 Mainstreaming migration in national poverty alleviation and development programmes

Migration is a missing link in current development policies. The economic role that migration plays in local and national development and its impact on poverty reduction needs to be recognized and made more explicit in the planning process. Given the nature of migration processes, the government needs to recognize and identify indirect measures that can help alleviate poverty in source areas. Put differently, migration has to be made to work for the poor. In this regard, the government needs to recognize that the high level of internal migration is a long-term feature of development in Viet Nam. Current policies that seek to control migration are likely to be counterproductive and should be avoided.

In Viet Nam, development strategies have not taken voluntary or spontaneous migration into consideration. Issued by different agencies and at different levels, these policies and strategies are often inconsistent and even in conflict with each other. They barely recognize the role which internal migration has played in contributing to the development of areas of origin and of destination, as well as to the well-being of individual migrants and their families. Increasing barriers to migration can limit the positive contribution to rural development. Greater efforts should be made by the government and international projects to ensure that the poverty reduction strategy includes migration and the needs of migrants and their families, particularly those who often suffer ill health, lack of social protection and other problems associated with low incomes, precarious working and living conditions and general vulnerability.

Appropriately, migration and population movement should also be included in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) introduced recently. However, none of the present MDGs discusses migration and its important implications. It is taken for granted that the population is immobile and that people are not on the move. In a similar manner, the government interministerial working group, the poverty task force at the national level, and poverty alleviation boards, will

need to strengthen the migration dimensions of the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS). The government needs to improve the investment climate and create opportunities for investment in the rural and agricultural sectors. Improved access to space, land, credit, market information and technology is needed for migrant entrepreneurs who channel their capital and savings into income and job-generation activities for the benefit of rural population.

3.2 Advocating internal migration and development impact through policy dialogue and public information

It is necessary for policy makers to realize that, because of the complexity and characteristics of the existing migration patterns, there will be no single and simple policy solution able to address all the migration issues. The response of many local authorities and ministries has been to act without a proper recognition of this complexity. The research findings have not convinced policy makers to take a different view on migration. In their view, migration may bring benefits to the individual migrant or the family left behind, but the social costs are perceived too high for policy makers to accept migration as a positive contribution to development.

There is a need to better understand and build a consensus regarding the meanings and implications of the migration process between sending and receiving localities. Non-governmental organizations and academic institutions could collaborate with the media to encourage policy dialogue and work towards an improved understanding of migration and its development impact.

It is necessary to recognize internal migration as an engine for urban development. Viet Nam's urban growth will be achieved mainly through a net gain of population through migration. Recognizing both the benefits and costs of migration, government agencies cannot ignore the increasing pressure on existing infrastructure and services in the largest cities, but should link this development to the wider context of national development strategies. A more balanced and equitable regional development through investment in infrastructure, development of alternative peri-urban centres and intermediate cities, and increasing non-farm employment opportunities can ease the pressure on large cities.

3.3 Accommodating labour migrants and improving their access to basic services

Evidence from other developing countries shows that people migrate regardless how difficult authorities make it for them if they perceive the benefits to be worthwhile. To reduce the costs of migration, the government should remove the current constraints placed on migration and consider policies that lead to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against migrant workers.

Providing social protection is a key to making migration work for the poor and other vulnerable groups. Labour laws and policies need to direct attention toward protecting migrant workers at the places of destination. It is necessary to ensure their access to social services and the protection of their basic rights. Public employers and private businesses would need to include migrant workers in their existing worker insurance schemes. Housing issues must be addressed by the government not only in major cities, but also in secondary cities and towns and rural areas

experiencing rapid urbanization. It is essential to ensure low-cost housing to migrant workers, particularly in the areas of industrial parks. Without adequate and safe housing, there is a serious risk that slums will develop and subsequently have a negative impact on migrants' health and well-being.

More equitable access to health services should be ensured, particularly from a gender perspective. Although migrants need to have access to all health services, the provision of adequate information and services on reproductive health, contraceptives, STIs and HIV/AIDS is an essential part of improving the well-being of female migrants and their families. This is especially important for low-income migrants in urban areas and for female and young migrants working in industrial zones.

3.4 Simplifying towards the abolition of the current system of household registration

Pre-departure information about destinations should be disseminated to migrants before they leave their areas of origin, especially for first-time migrants. It is necessary to provide migrants with clear procedures for obtaining a residence permit so they can avoid problems in finding accommodation, and avoid having to rely on guesthouse owners to obtain a residential permit.

It is necessary to ensure that migrants enjoy fair treatment at the places of destination, regardless of migrant status, and that they do not become impoverished because of discrimination and stereotyping. The continued linkage between household registration and access to government services has had negative consequences for migrants. Household registration is now ascribed with new "functions" which were not originally related to, and have little to do with, registration itself.

3.5 Collecting and improving the quality of migration data and its effective use

In general, current policy awareness and understanding of internal migration in Viet Nam lags considerably behind the reality. The design of effective policies requires and depends largely on up-to-date and comprehensive information on the current situation of migration and its contribution to national development. There is an urgent need for more transparent systems of data collection regarding migration and its development impact, and the use of such data to improve the formulation and evaluation of appropriate policies. Data should be widely shared and easily accessed by all stakeholders working in the area of migration and development, in order to build a composite picture of population movements, so as to enable effective policy analysis and review. Research findings and policy debates related to migration should be communicated to, and used by, policy makers. International donors and agencies, non-governmental organizations and civil society representatives should strengthen their support of such efforts for the collection, compilation and dissemination of comprehensive data on migration and facilitate high quality analysis of the issues concerned.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CCSC	Central Census Steering Committee
CPRGS	Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy
COSA	National Assembly's Committee for Social Affairs
DFID UK	Department for International Development
DS	Department of Statistics
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GSO	General Statistics Office
<i>Ho Khau</i>	Household Registration
HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City
ID	Identity Card
IER	Institute of Economic Research in Ho Chi Minh City
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IoS	Institute of Sociology
MARD	Ministry for Agriculture and Rural Development
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MRSC	Mobility Research and Support Centre
NEZs	New Economic Zones
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
RMMRU	Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit
SCUK	UK Save the Children Fund
SRV	Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
STDs	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VAPEC	Viet Nam Asia-Pacific Economic Center
VLSS	Viet Nam Living Standards Survey
VND	Viet Nam Dong (in 2004, 1 US\$ = VND 15,750 on average)
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)

APPENDIX

TABLE 1
INTERNAL MIGRATION BY GEOGRAPHIC REGION, VIET NAM: 1994-1999

Region of Residence in 1999	Total Population aged 5+	Migrants within a Region		Migrants between Regions		Total Interprovincial Migration		Inter-regional Migration (%)
		Numbers	%	Numbers	%	Numbers	%	
Red River Delta	13,579,500	125,904	0.93	131,262	0.97	257,166	1.89	51.04
North-east	9,796,818	66,451	0.68	65,125	0.66	131,576	1.34	49.5
North-west	1,965,217	1,825	0.09	23,418	1.19	25,243	1.28	92.77
North central Coast	8,942,617	23,530	0.26	40,061	0.45	63,591	0.71	63
South central Coast	5,846,321	45,601	0.78	65,872	1.13	111,473	1.91	59.09
Central highlands	2,624,361	9,268	0.35	239,205	9.12	248,473	9.47	96.27
South-east	11,480,881	204,858	1.78	716,746	6.24	921,604	8.03	77.77
Mekong River Delta	1,473,9413	186,246	1.26	56,035	0.38	242,281	1.64	23.13
Whole country	68,975,128	663,683	0.96	1,337,724	1.94	2,001,407	2.90	66.84

Note: Population aged 5 and over only.

Source: Population and Housing Census, 1999.

TABLE 2
TYPE OF INTERNAL MIGRATION BY GENDER, VIET NAM, 1994-1999

Type of Migration	Male		Female		Total	
	Numbers	%	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
Population aged 5+						
Non-migrant	31,614,357	93.84	32,878,954	93.18	64,493,311	93.50
Intraprovincial	1,075,499	3.19	1,404,911	3.98	2,480,410	3.60
Interprovincial	1,001,234	2.97	1,000,175	2.83	2,001,409	2.90
Total population	33,691,090	100.00	35,284,040	100.00	68,975,130	100.00
Migrants						
Rural-rural	711,745	35.3	897,279	38.5	1,609,024	37.0
Rural-urban	552,544	27.4	629,745	27.0	1,182,289	27.2
Urban-rural	218,859	10.8	203,092	8.7	421,951	9.7
Urban-urban	535,274	26.5	602,468	25.8	1,137,742	26.1
Total migrants	2,018,422	100.0	2,332,584	100.0	4,351,006	100.0

Note: Population aged 5 and over only.

Source: Population and Housing Census, 1999.

FIGURE 1
MIGRATION RATE OF INTERNAL MIGRATION STREAMS BY AGE, 1994-99

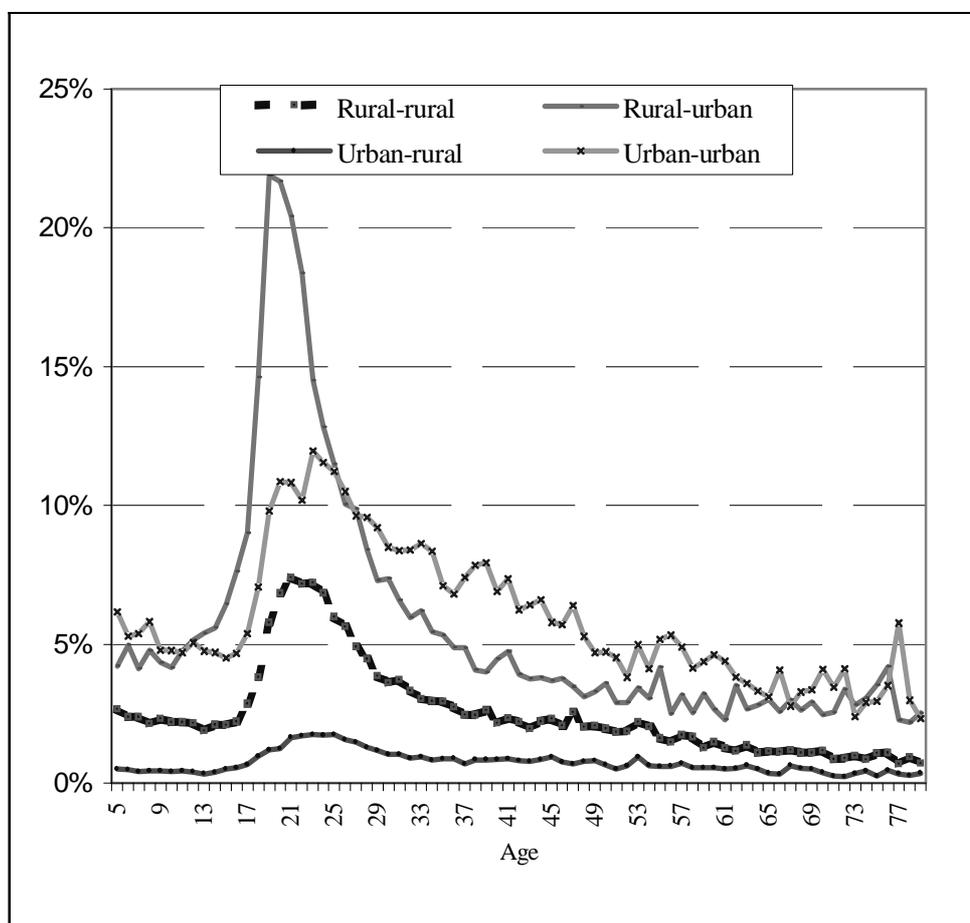
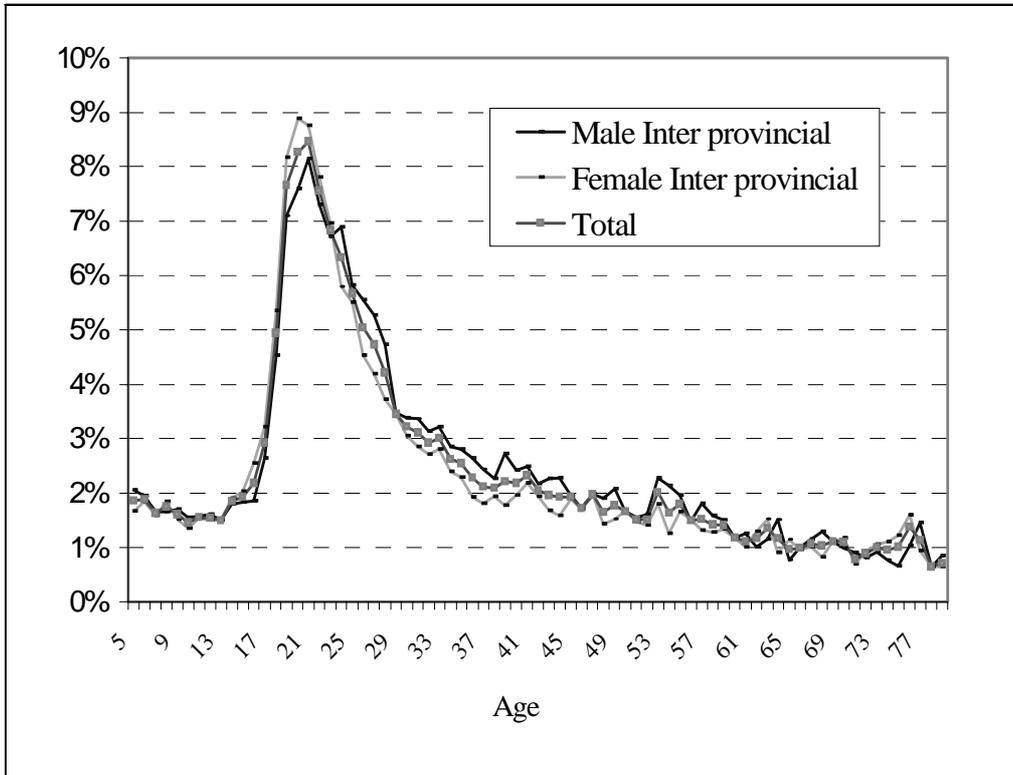


FIGURE 2
INTERPROVINCIAL MIGRATION RATE, BY AGE: 1994-99



ENDNOTES

1. In the south-east province of Binh Duong, it was reported that between 1990 and 1997, 24,442 spontaneous migrants had moved into the province looking for jobs (COSA, 1998).
2. Please see 2.6, the household registration system for a description of the KT classification system.
3. The Vietnamese “old” poverty line was expressed in rice-equivalent income; i.e. a “food poverty line”. By these criteria the government wants to eradicate hunger by 2010. The “new” Vietnamese poverty line is 150,000 VND/month/capita in urban areas, and 100,000 and 80,000 in rural low-land and rural remote areas, respectively. By this set of criteria, poverty in Viet Nam stood at 17 per cent at the beginning of 2000, and the government plans to reduce this to 5 per cent by 2010. The World Bank poverty line is based on expenditure derived from the VLSS data instead of income (see SRV, 2001); for 2002, it is estimated at about 29 per cent of the population.
4. The remittances from overseas migrant workers also have a positive influence on the national economy of Viet Nam. In 2004, official remittances from Vietnamese living abroad amounted to US\$ 3.8 billion. This does not include the amount of remittances, both in kind and cash, sent directly by migrants to their families.
5. Many KT4 migrants might be seen as having a de facto registration with the guest house owners, who should report to the local police. The local police should have some record of who is staying in their area and thus, in theory, the KT4 migrants can be counted. In practice, however, it appears that KT4 migrant numbers are only estimates and the actual numbers are likely to be much higher than the recorded figures.
6. In a joint-venture manufacturing enterprise in Bac Ninh, for example, migrant workers have been requested to deduct a health insurance fee from their salaries, without having any work contracts (Hoang, 2003).
7. Many of these recommendations can be addressed to the Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Viet Nam’s Committee for Population, Family and Children, etc. In parallel with line ministries, People’s Committees at different levels operate from a territorial perspective. Different government ministries, departments and People’s Committees are responsible for different aspects of population movement, although none of them is designated to be a focal agency for migration affairs. For this reason, where applicable, the term “Government” is used to commonly refer to these agency stakeholders.

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INTERNAL MIGRATION AND GENDER IN ASIA

This Policy Brief was prepared by IOM as a background document for the Workshop on Gender and Internal Migration

INTERNAL MIGRATION AND GENDER IN ASIA

The objective of this policy brief is to give a general understanding of gender-specific issues related to the subject of internal migration and its impact on development in Asia.

1. Definition of a gender-specific approach to internal migration.
2. Why is the gender-specific approach essential to internal migration and development?
3. Existing data and indicators in Asia.
4. Approaches and policies in Asia.
5. Research gaps.
6. Questions for discussion.

1. DEFINITION OF A GENDER-SPECIFIC APPROACH IN INTERNAL MIGRATION

- Gender analysis explores the differences between men and women so that policies, programmes and projects can identify and meet their particular needs in order to respond to gender-specific equity objectives. Gender is relational and concerns the interaction and power relations among men and women.
- Gender refers to the social roles and relations between people, analyses how such relative power is used and shared and institutionalized in family, community and state structures.
- Gender means socially constructed characteristics ascribed to men and women. Gender specificities change over time and are deeply influenced by the migration experience.
- Adopting a gender-specific analysis of internal migration allows to define the differences and similarities between the respective migration behaviours of men and women, as well as the impact of cultural, social, economic and political environments on gender specificities.
- The gender analysis at the individual level allows a better understanding of the motivations and constraints to migrate.
- The gender analysis at the collective level provides an insight into how internal migration and the departure of one or more persons of different sex affects the household and community.
- The gender investigation offers a better understanding of internal migratory flows: what motivates women and men to move, and what are the resulting migration trends.

2. WHY IS THE GENDER-SPECIFIC APPROACH ESSENTIAL TO INTERNAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT?

Gender differentiated driving factors motivating migration

Mobility is determined by cultural, social, economic and political factors. Human capital, existing networks, labour demand, wage differentials, land ownership, access to information, and more, are all elements that will impact on the decision to leave, and on the resulting migration experience. All these elements have gender specificities not only within the Asian context, but worldwide. In terms of motivations and constraints leading to migration, the gender characteristics will influence the decision or the obligation to move.

Differentiated contribution of internal migrants to development in home and host regions

There is growing evidence that men and women migrants have different attitudes towards the eventual return to their home regions or maintaining contact with their families. Differences among men and women behaviour were also apparent in terms of the size, frequency and regularity of financial remittances and types of investments that migrants make. Moreover, if men are the principal migrants, then women who have stayed at home become the main receivers of remittances and they tend to invest more in health, nutrition, education and the general well-being of the families.

Discrimination has been identified as a key barrier to the contribution to be made by women migrants to development

Inequalities women face as employees (access to skilled jobs) and entrepreneurs (access to credit) limit their potential contribution to development.

Gender differences in internal migration flows have a direct impact on the definition of development policies

Development policies can target very diverse areas of concern: access to employment, business creation, credit, networks, education, social security, health systems, housing, transportation, sanitation and more. The migration experience and potential contribution of the migrant to development are directly related to the access migrants have to the above-mentioned sectors. Men and women migrants will have differentiated access and behaviours; thus, development policies should target accordingly these groups.

Labour migration and gender-specific features

Internal migration is often driven by employment possibilities in another location. The growth of particular industrial and economic sectors will attract a labour force that, to a certain extent, will be female (services, textile, etc.) or male dominated (heavy industry, construction, etc.).

Impact of internal migration on changing gender roles

Whether men or women migrate, there will be an impact on the household organization and the well-being of the family. For those leaving, internal migration can result in either empowerment or, on the contrary, increased vulnerability and even victimization. Likewise, for those remaining the departure of men or women from the household will have a specific impact according to the migrant's status and role at home before leaving (main wage earner, young daughter, mother etc.). A number of studies analyse how migration affects gender roles and what changes it will entail. In regions such as southern China or the Philippines, where more women migrate, men have often assumed greater childcare responsibilities; however, surveys have shown that upon their return, women again take over the childcare or, in some instances, had to organize such services from abroad without the men actually taking on any additional workload or responsibilities.¹ In Bangladesh, migration did not cause a major change in gender roles within the family, and other women from within the extended family became involved in carrying out the respective tasks² previously assumed by the migrant.

3. EXISTING DATA AND INDICATORS

- Gender indicators are **quantitative and qualitative benchmarks** used for measuring or assessing the achievement of results.
- **Gender disaggregated data** means collecting information about men and women separately.
- **Individual level data:** quantitative data on who is migrating, and qualitative data about motivations and constraints.
- **Collective level data:** gathering knowledge on migration impacts on households, the role of social networks as a factor for migration.
- **Sectoral approaches:** on specific issues such as trafficking, incidence of disease, or employment, data will be more easily available by gender groups.

Despite the lack of data on female migration in Asia, many countries experience migration flows dominated by women to the extent that women may be said to have advanced from secondary to primary migrants. For instance Japan, the Philippines and Thailand have rural-urban flows that are female dominated, while in south Asia males dominate.

4. APPROACHES AND POLICIES

Gender specificities of internal migration in Asia

Women have always accounted for a significant share in migratory flows. But if previously they were often dependent on and secondary to male migrants, today, they are moving as primary migrants. It is not only the quantitative aspect of female migration, but also the qualitative dimension (e.g. how women move today, in what capacity and for what purpose) that underlies the term “feminization of migration”, itself based on the changing roles of women and men within the family and society, including greater access for women to education and the workforce. Women are not widely perceived as equal actors in migration, nor as of equal importance.³

Rural to urban migration in south Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh) is still mainly male dominated, though female participation is increasing.⁴ In Japan, the Philippines and Thailand women dominate migration flows, while only a slight female majority can be observed among the flows in the Republic of Korea and Indonesia. In eastern Asia women mostly migrate to urban locations without their families. In South Asia, the mobility of women is more constrained, but with the global relocation of light industries to areas where labour is cheap, opportunities for women in sectors perceived as female oriented are increasing.⁵

A number of different policy approaches are targeting the gender specificities of internal migration. They all tend to focus on a better understanding of the migration of women, both in a negative (exploitation, vulnerability) and positive dimension (empowerment, learning new skills, gaining independence).

Migration as a process of the empowerment of women

A study conducted in Bangladesh showed that upon return migrant women had improved their chances to find (better) employment at home as well, often better paid than before they migrated.⁶ Migration offers women the opportunity of self-realization, exposure to new social, cultural and professional environments and personal and economic independence.⁷ The migration of a female member of the family is not without its effect on the children and husband. The education, or better education of the children, for example, can be made possible through the resulting higher income. However, many girls have to take up household responsibilities in the absence of the mother and are not able to attend school. The effects of women migrating as primary actors can have a number of important impacts on the women themselves and on their households. Not least, by sending back remittances, women contribute to a great extent to the financial support of the family. It is, therefore, highly desirable and necessary for development policies to take into account the potential positive dimension of migration and to strive to maximize its benefits.

Programmes supporting vulnerable women migrants: anti-poverty, information, access to services and protection of rights

Poverty and the lack of opportunity are part of the causes and motivations to migrate; but they can also both trigger and hinder internal migration. Given the lower income of women, often

combined with less control over the family income, women face more difficulties to move than men.⁸ Women might also be restricted in their access to information before migrating and suffer gender discrimination; they are vulnerable to sexual exploitation during their stay abroad, and lack access to basic resources such as healthcare, clean water, sufficient food or land. In addition, gender-based labour markets tend to channel women into domestic, service and sex sectors, that are often unregulated and pay poorly.

Pre-recruitment awareness sessions and pre-departure orientation training are also key to preparing women migrants to face the new challenges. For example, “the power to chose”, a programme conducted by the IOM in the Philippines, supports women migrant workers to confront the new personal challenges linked to migration.

In April 2004, the Chinese authorities and the International Labour Organization (ILO) launched a project to combat trafficking in girls and young women for labour exploitation within China (CP-TING project). The project aims to develop cheap, fast and transparent labour migration channels especially geared towards those with low education and skill levels. It was set up in collaboration with the Chinese authorities through the All-China Women’s Federation, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and a range of other ministries and representatives from three “sending” provinces (Anhui, Henan and Hunan) and two “receiving” provinces (Jiangsu and Guangdong).

The UK development agency Action Aid assists sex workers who are internal migrants, and their children. Many women were trafficked and forced into the sex industry, and Action Aid is helping them and their children by offering them education and health services. The Edhi Foundation, an NGO in Pakistan, is one of the largest voluntary welfare organizations in Pakistan providing comprehensive cover for emergency services. It also runs shelters for indigent and homeless women and children. They have provided refuge to many women and children victims of trafficking.

Policies restricting female migration

In many countries, women generally face more and greater disadvantages prior to and during the migration process. In Bangladesh, for example, international migration by women generally was prevented between 1981 and 1988, and the migration by unskilled women was again restricted between 1997 and 1998.⁹ UNIFEM, for example, supports the lifting of restrictions on women migrating, and to ensure safe conditions for women to migrate and to strengthen their capacity to be able to recognize and protect themselves against potentially exploitative situations. There is little evidence about internal migration restrictive practices.

Policies facilitating gender-specific internal migration

It is more difficult to identify and define policies that aim at encouraging the internal migration of either men or women. Even when no restrictions are imposed on such movements, this does not necessarily reflect an official policy to actually refrain from doing so, nor one that encour-

ages migration as a means to promote the development potential of migration, particularly of women migrants.

Migration and development in host areas: services specific to women and men migrants

The objective of the UNESCO project “Together with Migrants” in China is to address the problems of urban poverty and the social and economic exclusion faced by the young, in particular young female, migrants. The project is designed to facilitate the integration of this target population into their respective urban societies in China and Mongolia by providing them with access to better living conditions, social services, recreational activities and vocational training. In Bangladesh the NGO *Nari Udyog Kendro* (NUK) addresses governance and gender issues in the development process and caters to the housing needs of the city’s low-income and migrant women workers and female students.

Migration and development in sending areas: community development programmes (supporting the family and the community)

The Kimidi Multisectoral Development Society (KMDS) in Orissa, India, a male-dominated migrant-sending region, assists women to mitigate the adverse impact of male outmigration. The ADB trains migrant women to help them to diversify their employment activities. Action Aid Bangladesh carries out various programmes on environment, education, development and gender equity. It also acknowledges urban slum settlements as magnets for economic migrants and seeks to help the poor to improve their freedom, security, and dignity. Action Aid Pakistan is carrying out a community development (*Lok Sangat*) programme through a comprehensive approach of micro finance, education, gender and sanitation projects.

Bringing together concerns about migration and gender equity objectives

BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee), an NGO in Bangladesh, pursues an economic development programme (EDP) to cover both rural and urban areas, and is active in promoting gender equity.

5. GAPS

- Gender awareness in the area of internal migration is still limited.
- Gender disaggregated data is lacking.
- The focus is rather on women studies instead of a general gender differentiated approach.
- Often the negative aspects of female migration are stressed, with insufficient attention to cultural changes induced by migration, and the increasing economic impact (access to credit, enterprise creation, female social networks, etc.) resulting from the migration of women and their role as providers through remittances sent to their families.

- There are still too few analyses of the needs, priorities and resources of internal migrants that also give sufficient regard to gender differences and inequality.
- There is only limited analysis of the local cultural, social and economic context that underlies gender differentiated migration behaviour.

6. QUESTIONS

- What gender-specific indicators and statistics can improve the available knowledge of internal migration and its contribution to development?
- What programmes and projects pay specific attention to gender differences of internal migrants? What are the lessons learnt?
- How can gender-specific development policies in host and home regions benefit migrants?
- What are the policies that can support equality and equity for migrants?
- How can employment opportunities and labour standards affect gender-specific migration?
- How can women achieve recognition as equal partners in migration and development?

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**INTERNAL MIGRATION OF WOMEN
AND DEVELOPMENT IN SRI LANKA**

Ms Swarnalathka Ukwatta
Department of Demography, University of Colombo
Sri Lanka

Ms Swarnalathka Ukwatta is a Lecturer at the Department of Demography, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

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INTERNAL MIGRATION OF WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT IN SRI LANKA

1. INTRODUCTION

Internal migration has played a significant role in redistributing the population in Sri Lanka. This redistribution took place mainly in two ways: first, through the development and expansion of towns both as commercial and administrative centres that attracted large numbers of people to urban areas. Second, village expansion through colonization or land development schemes which shifted people away from the densely populated districts of the country. In addition, migratory movements have occurred from the northern and eastern provinces of the country to other areas as a result of the civil disturbances that have prevailed since the 1980s. As the imbalance between human and natural resources and development activities can be either aggravated or mitigated by population redistribution through internal migration, the analysis of trends, causes and consequences of internal migration, characteristics of migrants and policy implications has become important in the field of population studies in Sri Lanka (Ukwatta, 1986: 52).

2. GENDER DIMENSION

Many countries have begun to formulate policies and implement programmes aimed primarily at improving the status and role of women in recognition of the importance of women's contribution to development. Despite some progress, women in many countries still do not enjoy equal status with men, and have only a limited role in national socio-economic development (United Nations, 1992: 14).

Compared to most of the Asia-Pacific countries, the status of women in Sri Lanka is generally acknowledged as being more advanced. Extensive socio-economic policy formulation and programme implementation in the country have so far resulted in higher literacy and educational levels, improved life expectancy and the wider participation by women in formal and informal economic activities. Sri Lanka continues to promote and sustain a policy environment conducive to fostering equality and empowerment of women. For a variety of reasons, this policy environment and the advance in the socio-economic status of women in Sri Lanka are believed to have given rise to **a tendency for women to migrate** in large numbers both **internally** and **internationally**. It is estimated that about 800,000 Sri Lankans have migrated for either economic or political reasons, or both, and are currently residing abroad (UNFPA, 2001: 33). According to the Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau, about 179,000 persons were out of the country in 1999 for employment-related reasons, of whom 65 per cent were women, a considerable increase over some 33 per cent in 1988. While this growing trend of female migration abroad can have positive effects for the family and the country, the impact can sometimes also be negative for the family and, in particular, the children. However, international migration now plays a major role in regard to both Sri Lanka's population and socio-economic development.

It was found that 12.4 per cent of the Sri Lanka-born population lived outside their district of birth in 1946. In 1953, this figure had risen to 14 per cent and, by 1963 it had reached 15.8 per cent. In 1971, the percentage of lifetime migrants stood at 15.2, indicating a 0.6 percentage point reduction (Abeysekera, 1981: 6). By 1981, it had dropped further to 13.5 per cent. Abeysekera (1981: 6) estimated that, in 1946, male migrants (14.1%) outnumbered female migrants (10.6%). By 1981, the percentage of male migrants had increased to 14.3 per cent, while migration of women had risen by only 2 per cent to 12.6. Thus, although in both 1946 and 1981 male migration exceeded female migration, that difference had narrowed over the period indicating the increasing trend of migratory movements of females within the country, with concomitant positive and adverse effects on their families.

3. SOURCES OF DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The Population Censuses conducted by the Department of Census and Statistics is the most common and reliable source of data on internal migration in Sri Lanka. Even though censuses have been conducted since 1946, detailed information on internal migration was collected only in the 1971 and 1981 censuses on a 10 per cent sample. Information on internal migration collected in the 2001 census is similar to the 1971 and 1981 censuses, with the difference that they covered the total population.

Because of the disturbances in the northern and eastern provinces of the country, no census was conducted after 1981 until 2001, resulting in a paucity of demographic data since 1981. Hence the Department of Census and Statistics conducted a general large-scale demographic survey in 1994, excluding eight districts of the northern and eastern provinces of the country. The 1994 demographic survey collected information on internal migration, which is comparable to the 1981 data set. Information on migration collected in the 2001 census has not yet been published, therefore the main sources of data for the present study are the 1981 Census of Population and Housing and the 1994 Demography Survey. Only 17 districts of the country have been taken into consideration in this paper, as the 1994 survey excluded the northern and eastern provinces of the country owing to the civil disturbances, and the analysis is based on the place of birth method.

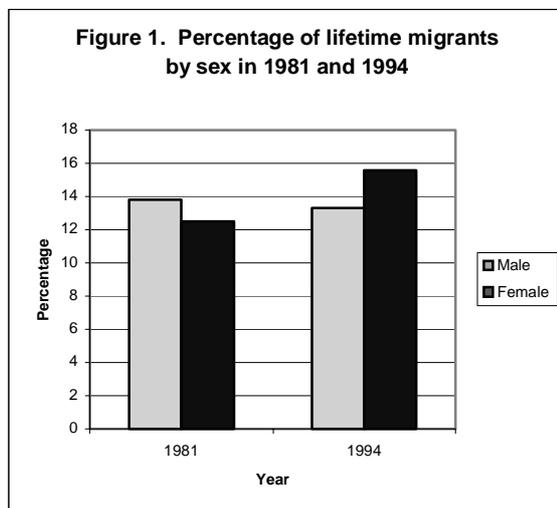
4. INTERNAL MIGRATION OF FEMALES

With the modernization and accompanying changes in the socio-economic conditions in Sri Lanka, female migrants were increasingly attracted to urban areas where textile and garment industries are located. Women are migrating within the country not only to find employment and to be with their families, but also for education, family formation, and also because of civil disturbances, among others.

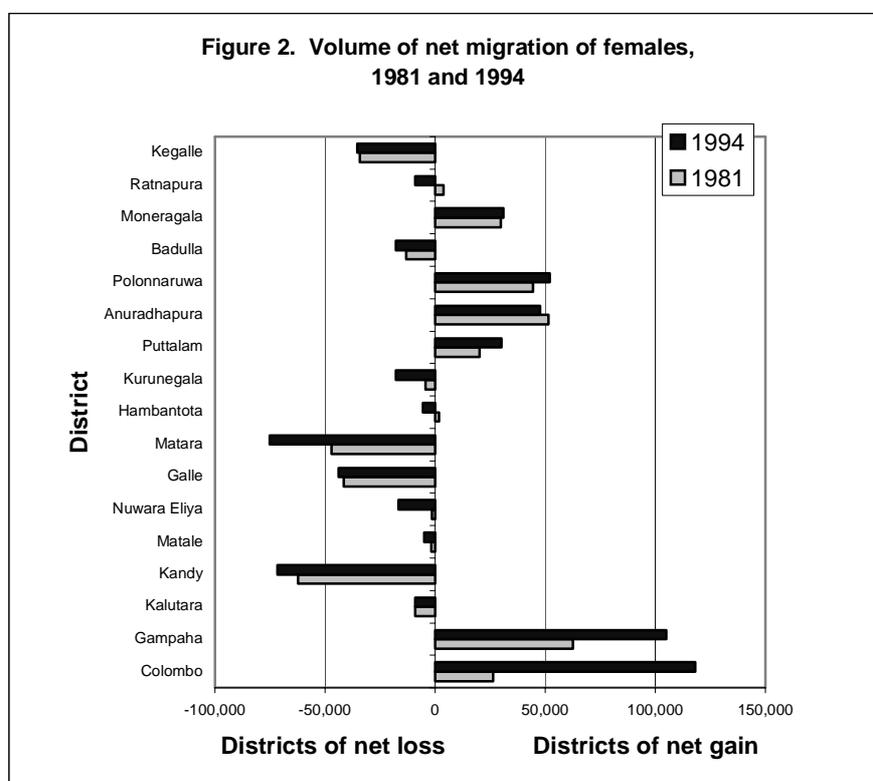
4.1 Patterns of female migration

According to the 1994 Demographic Survey, lifetime male migrants accounted for 13.3 per cent of the Sri Lanka-born male population of 7,326,678, while women lifetime migrants accounted

for 15.6 per cent of the Sri Lanka-born female population of 7,523,009 (Figure 1). In 1981, the respective numbers were 13.8 per cent and 12.5 per cent, respectively. This shows that internal migratory movements of males have fallen by 0.5 percentage points, while that of females increased by 3.1 percentage points during the period 1981 and 1994.



Not only the percentage of female migrants but also the in-migration rates of women in almost all the districts, outmigration rates of women in all districts and the volume of net migration of women in almost all the districts had increased during the period 1981 to 1994 (Figure 2).



According to Figure 2, in 1994 six districts, namely Colombo and Gampaha districts, which are located in the wet zone, and Puttalam, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Moneragala districts that are located in the dry zone, have been identified as popular destinations of female migrants. Except in Anuradhapura, the volume of female migration had increased steadily by 1994, with the largest increases registered in the districts of Colombo and Gampaha. The decline in Anuradhapura district is insignificant and low compared with the decline in male migration. Migration streams, characteristics of female migration and reasons for migration of the six popular destinations are discussed in the following sections using 1994 data.

4.2 Migration streams

Developed districts as centres of attraction

The two largest recipient districts of female migrants are Colombo and Gampaha, located in the wet zone. Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka where most of the industrial and service centres are located, is the centre of attraction. It is the most populous district in the country with high economic growth that is especially attractive for migrants. With the socio-economic development of the country, not only men but also women migrated to the district of Colombo as they have become more educated and more economically active. Nearly half (256,775, or 48.66%) of female migrants who moved to the district of Colombo originated from the south-western coastal districts of Kalutara, Galle and Matara and the adjoining district Gampaha, with the relative proportions of each district more or less equal. Migration flows to Colombo from the south-western coastal belt were already well established since 1946.

The district of Gampaha grew rapidly mainly as a result of the expansion of industrial and service sectors developed in the Free Trade Zone areas since the late 1970s, and had a stronger attraction for female migration. While female labour force participation had increased from 28.0 per cent to 32.48 per cent between 1992 and 1997, the unemployment rate had decreased. As identified in the 1994 Demographic Survey, it is the second-largest recipient of female migrants with a total of 188,202 in-migrants, the majority from Colombo district (32.66%) with another significant proportion (12.37%) from Kurunegala district. All other migration flows are very small compared with the migration flows from the districts of Colombo and Kurunegala.

According to Abeysekera (1981: 14), Puttalam, a maritime district, was one of the most developed areas of the country, having been exposed to Western influence since the early sixteenth century. Located in the north-western province, it had become one of the centres of attraction for female migrants in 1994. In the recent past, owing to the civil disturbances in the country, more women have migrated to the district of Puttalam. The population growth rate of 1.8 per cent between 1981 and 2001 in this district is significantly higher than the national rate and includes significantly more women than men.

Migration to rural areas related to agriculture policies

The eradication of malaria, population redistribution policies, improved infrastructure and the Mahaweli development programme fostered the movement of people to the dry zone districts of

the country. Furthermore, the government's investment in peasant agriculture, the close relationship between the availability of new land and rural development programmes attracted migration to the districts of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Moneragala. Despite a decrease in female migratory movements in the districts of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Moneragala, the overall magnitude of the migratory movements is still remarkable. The increased attraction to the north-central province (Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa districts) can possibly be attributed to the Mahaweli development programme, together with its sponsored settlement schemes in 1976. More families migrated to the province than to other districts of the country.

4.3 Characteristics of female migrants

Young women of working age

Female migratory movements in the six popular destinations are characterized by high labour migration and show a peak in the age groups of 25 to 34 years. Non-migrants are mostly concentrated in the younger age groups with a median age of 23 years.

Minority of women migrants are heads of households

In these districts only about a tenth of women migrants are heads of households, with the majority falling within the category of spouse. Households headed by women are more frequent in the districts of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. Similar to in the situation in the six popular destinations the majority of women migrants in Sri Lanka are currently married. The difference between those who never married and the married categories is highly significant for in-migrants, but less so for non-migrants in these districts. The dissolution of marriage is higher among in-migrants than non-migrants. More women who had never married migrated to the districts of Colombo and Gampaha.

Better-educated and employed women among migrants than among non migrants

In all six districts the majority of all women in-migrants and non-migrants are Sinhalese. The highest percentage of Tamil in-migrants and the second highest percentage of Moors are found in the Colombo district, while the Puttalam district has the highest percentage of Moors and the second highest percentage of Tamils. The general level of education of women migrants exceeds that of the non-migrant female population. Nearly half of the migrants had more than secondary education, with a higher percentage in the districts of Colombo and Gampaha. The share of economically active adolescent female migrants aged 10 years and above is generally low. The majority of female migrants are employed, with a higher percentage engaged in household work. In all the districts migrant women are more likely to be engaged in household work than non-migrant women, while non-migrant women are more likely to be students than in-migrant women. Thus, the labour force participation among women in-migrants is higher than that of non-migrants, and their unemployment rate is lower than for the non-migrants in all the districts.

Significant representation of women migrants in agriculture

In the country as a whole, the majority of the women migrants are engaged in agriculture, production and elementary occupations. This is also true for the six districts, though there are some variations between in-migrants and non-migrants. The number of female migrants engaged in managerial, professional and technical occupations is higher in the Colombo, Gampaha and Moneragala districts, while it is low in Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa districts. Female migrants are more likely to be engaged in agricultural occupations in Puttalam, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Moneragala districts. The number of women migrants active in production-related occupations is higher in the district of Colombo, followed by the district of Gampaha, which includes occupations related to the garment industry.

4.4 Determinants and consequences of female migration

Reasons for mobility

Why do some women in Sri Lanka decide to move and others do not? The answer to this question is not easy because of the complexity of the migration process and the paucity of data on the determinants of migration. In Sri Lanka the section “Reasons for migration” was included for the first time in the 1994 Demographic Survey to identify the factors leading to migration. One of the major limitations of such data is that only three categories had been specifically listed as reasons for migration: employment, to live in own house or because of civil disturbances. All the other possible and important reasons were included under the general category of “other” and, therefore, not possible to identify separately.

Female migration is determined by demographic, socio-economic and politico-cultural forces, and the consequences of migration have a bearing on the individual, the family and the society. For the individual, migration may bring prosperity, happiness and a well-organized life, or distress, mental illness and disruption of everyday life (Nurun Nabi and Krishnan, 1993: 110). Since the impact of migration on the demographic, economic and socio-cultural structure ultimately leads back to the individual, it is important to first investigate the consequences on society. However, the outcome of migration for women varied considerably according to the economic, socio-cultural and family contexts in which migration took place, and the consequences of migration could not be isolated from the determinants of migration.

Impact of migration is related to determinants of migration

The characteristics and motivations of migrants determine the consequences of their migration. More than 90 per cent of in-migrants in the six popular destinations were over 15 years of age (“labour force age groups”). One-third of the non-migrants were concentrated in the age group below 15 years. As a result, each district gained females in the labour force age groups. Because of migration the age structure of all districts changed. In the districts where the proportion of non-migrant children below 15 years of age is very high, the impact is more noticeable.

Women migrants influence gender roles in destination regions

What is the influence of these migrants on the activity status of women in the areas of destination? In the six popular destinations one-third of the women over 15 years of age are economically active, and about 30 per cent are employed. The employed category includes women who were employed both before and after migrating. For women migrants who became employed subsequent to migrating, migration had a more positive influence for them and their families than for those who had been employed before migration.

There may be adverse effects depending on the type of economic activity and the socio-cultural context of the areas of origin and of destination. Unemployment rates among migrants are lower than for non-migrants in each district. In the districts with the highest unemployment rates the level of educational attainment among migrants is also very low. Thus, an increase in the number of unemployed women with low educational qualifications may have a negative effect on the socio-economic development of the area. As the majority of the migrants in the six destination areas are over 15 years old and engaged in household work, it is difficult to determine the influence on the individual, the family or the area.

Potential adverse effects related to migration

Most employed women are engaged in production activities, especially in the district of Gampaha, followed by Colombo district. The majority work in the garment industry and about 30 per cent of them had never married. It may be assumed that these women and their families will benefit economically, while they are so engaged. But this is less certain once they return to their area of origin, and it is possible, depending on the context, that negative effects may actually predominate.

Among the adverse effects, reproductive health problems are prominent. The women are often less well educated and, as pointed out by De Silva (2000: 1-31), may more easily engage in premarital sex and risk behaviour, which in turn leads to a higher incidence of abortions and of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). This is particularly so among women who migrated to work in the Free Trade Zones. Sexual violence against working girls, in particular factory girls, is also increasing rapidly. This situation results in a majority of these girls remaining unmarried, or becoming single mothers, with adverse effects on them and their families, for whom this represents an unexpected social and economic burden, as well as for society as a whole. Women who migrate as students stand to gain more in the future. While the migration of an unmarried daughter will only have a minor effect on a family's daily routine, the long-term departure of a parent or spouse has more serious consequences. Apart from the emotional strain caused by the separation, domestic tasks have to be reassigned, especially if the migrant is the mother of young children. In a nuclear family, finding someone to take care of the children left behind is likely to be more difficult than in the context of an extended family, where other adult women may assume the tasks of the absent mother.

5. WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

Improvements in the socio-economic status of women influence their internal and international mobility, while also **fostering the development of the country**. Thus, there is an interrelationship between the improvement of women's socio-economic status, their internal mobility and the general development in Sri Lanka.

In the period between 1871 and 2001, the share of women in the total population has increased steadily from 46.7 per cent to 50.5 per cent, respectively. Originally, men outnumbered women, but the gap has narrowed over the years. As a result, the sex ratio between men and women has also decreased from 114.3 in 1871 to 97.9 in 2001. Between 1920 and 1952, life expectancy at birth for men exceeded that of women by about two years. Between 1962 and 1964, female life expectancy at birth exceeded that of males by 0.4 years for the first time, and increased to 4.4 years between 1980 and 1982. It was estimated that by 2000 the life expectancy of men and women would increase to 71.4 and 76.1 years, respectively. This demographic development shows the decrease in the gender imbalance and indicates that greater attention should be paid to the improvement of the status of women and their greater participation in the development process.

The literacy rate has always been higher for men than for women. However, the growth rate in literacy levels has been much greater and more dramatic for women. In 1881, the literacy rate among women stood at 3.1 per cent and for men at 29.8 per cent, a gap of 26.7 per cent. By 1946, the literacy rate for women had increased to 43.8 per cent and to 70.1 per cent for men, with the gap between women and men remaining more or less stable at 26.3 per cent. By 1994, the literacy rate for women had reached 87.9 per cent and 92.5 per cent for men, significantly reducing the gap to 4.6 percentage points. The introduction of free education, the expansion of the school system and other facilities provided by the government irrespective of sex has contributed largely to the narrowing of the gender gap in literacy levels. Accompanying the sharp increases in literacy levels for women, participation rates in higher education from G.C.E. (Ordinary Level) and above have increased for both men and women over time, while in terms of achievements, women have surpassed men.

In Sri Lanka, women have joined the labour force at a faster rate than men during the past two decades. The labour force participation rate of women (number in the labour force relative to 100 population, during ten years and above) has increased from about 23 per cent in 1981 to around 36 per cent in the 1990s. While women's participation in agriculture has declined in the recent past, women's outmigration as housemaids and to work in the Free Trade Zone is increasing. As a result of occupational sex segregation in the country, the majority of women are confined to low-income, time-consuming and labour-intensive activities mainly in the service sector, the garment industry and the formal sector.

Women's participation in manufacturing industries has increased considerably in recent years. They have been employed in increasing numbers in export-oriented modern industries, such as the garment, lapidary and electronic industries because of the increasing employment opportunities provided by these, and the degree of economic independence they provide. In line with the increasing employment opportunities for women, the government has taken steps to strengthen

the rights and privileges of working women in order to prevent possible exploitation and harassment at the workplace.

Notwithstanding the fact that a number of women have demonstrated their capabilities in the political arena and gained prominence, women's political participation in general is very low and reflects the prevailing gender inequality in the society at large. Women continue to be underrepresented in the decision-making process, and this remains one of the major disadvantages for women, as well emphasized at the 1994 Cairo Conference. Participation at higher leadership and managerial levels is minimal in Sri Lanka, even though women are entering the labour force at a faster rate than men. Together with their achievements in terms of educational success, women were able to assume some prestigious positions at decision-making levels in the government and private sector. However, in a male dominated governmental and policy-making structure, women must first break down the existing mental and social barriers in order to achieve their potential.

Though the government has done much to enhance the role and status of women, much remains to be done. Sri Lanka's population and reproductive health policy of 1998 included the goal of "achieving gender equality" and developed various strategies to achieve this. It is increasingly recognized that improving women's demographic and socio-economic status and facilitating and increasing their mobility will ultimately benefit the development process of the country as such.

6. CONCLUSION

The socio-economic status of women in Sri Lanka is improving and female migration is on the increase. Inadequacy of data is the major limitation associated with the analysis of determinants and consequences of female migration in Sri Lanka. Therefore, it is not possible to analyse the reasons for migration and the consequences of migration in any detail. However, available information does provide an insight into the improvement of the socio-economic status of women and their internal migration patterns in relation to the overall development process in Sri Lanka.

It was found that the study of female migration has been neglected in Sri Lanka, even though women constitute a significantly larger proportion than men in internal migration. More research is needed to study the interrelationship between the status of women, the patterns and characteristics of internal migration by women and the general socio-economic development of the country. It is hoped that by identifying the popular destinations of female migration in this study, it will be possible to build on this initial approach to conduct further and in-depth research and analysis on the migration of women in Sri Lanka and its overall impact on the country's society and economy.

It was suggested that programmes aimed at providing women with viable income-generating activities in rural areas, such as small enterprises and other non-agricultural activities, were urgently required. Agricultural extension services directed specifically to the needs of women and increased access to both formal education and vocational training for women are also necessary and desirable goals.

Many basic features of female migration patterns will change over the coming years. Alongside a decline in the fertility rate, a decline in the growth rate of labour market entrants is also apparent. Unemployed women may be able to take advantage of this opportunity to become economically active. More direct policy measures, such as raising the level of education for women, securing equal access to employment and equal pay for equal work, and ensuring the equality of rights in respect of property rights and ownership, marriage and divorce are also acknowledged as effective and lasting means to enhance the status of women. Policies to improve women's access to employment and other resources would undoubtedly have important implications for female migration.

So far, both population research and policy makers have focused mainly on the interrelationship between demographic changes and the changing status of women. Consideration of the migration by women in this context has received less attention. This is regrettable because of the large numbers of women involved in internal migration, and the obvious interrelationship between internal migration of women and socio-economic development.

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INTERNAL MIGRATION, HEALTH AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

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INTERNAL MIGRATION, HEALTH AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

The objective of this policy brief is to give a general understanding of health and migration issues related to the subject of internal migration and its impact on development in Asia. It is not meant to be a definitive review but to stimulate debate during this conference. The policy brief will present the issues related to migration and health through a summary background of development and migration, the environment of vulnerability for migrants and the associated health concerns, programme responses and gaps, and questions for consideration.

BACKGROUND

Over the past two decades, economic growth throughout Asia has continued to rise, in many countries over 7 and 8 per cent annually, and the process of urbanization continues to draw rural, agrarian residents into expanding and modernizing urban areas. Expanding populations, and growing demand on facilities, requires an increasing supply of unskilled and semi-skilled workers, such as construction workers, street cleaners, factories workers, housekeepers, and utility workers. While some migrant workers may be professional and skilled, the majority are labourers.¹ This flow of rural to urban migration is increasing throughout Asia due to large families living in poverty, poor education opportunities, potential economic opportunities in urban areas, lack of alternatives, and debt. Population mobility is generally not limited to a one-way movement from rural origin to urban destination, but is a complex system of multiple movements that creates an intricate network of contacts between origins and destinations that serves as a conduit for remittances, goods, and ideas.² These large flows of internal migrants continue to place pressure on governments to ensure the safety, health, and social protection of migrant workers, including efficient labour markets, employment and work security, and protection against accidents and work-related illnesses.

ENVIRONMENT OF VULNERABILITY AND MIGRANT HEALTH CONCERNS

Mobile populations can be instrumental in the initial spread of disease and infection, while the environment of other migrants can mean they are at higher risk of infection when disease is in evidence. In the development of policy, and the provision of information and services, migrants are an often ignored segment of the population. Migrants are particularly vulnerable to a host of public health issues at their workplace and residence, and due to the environment they live in. These include their living conditions, access to healthcare and social services, inclusion into public health programmes, and the particular conditions of irregular and labour migration.

MIGRANT EMPLOYMENT, LIVING CONDITIONS AND HEALTH RISKS

Work-related health concerns are largely due to the work migrants are able to find and the conditions of labour. Many construction sites, mines, factories, and enterprises where migrants work are not closely regulated and do not invest heavily in safety and maintenance. Migrants are involved in accidents and often exposed to hazards and chemicals, as well as required to work frequent shifts of overtime. In some settings migrants are targeted for abuse and sexual harassment by positions of authority in enterprises and factories.

Migrants' living conditions affect their health. Many countries provide little or no assistance for migrant housing, forcing millions of migrants into slums, shanty towns, and overcrowded temporary shelters. Living quarters for migrants tend to be poorly ventilated and overcrowded, and food and water supplies are inadequate and unclean. In Bangladesh, more than half of poor migrants live in conditions where there is little protection against weather and the elements, and where there is almost no provision of safe drinking water or hygienic sanitation.³ In some countries migrants lack residency registration papers, preventing them from housing and access to social services.

MIGRANT VULNERABILITY AND RISK

The social policy and legal environment further exposes migrants who often live and work with poor access to social services, and at the same time with various levels of stigma and discrimination. Migrants are generally provided less information about services and health-seeking behaviour, which promotes self-medicating at pharmacies and delaying visits to doctors. Many migrant workers lack registration and insurance with the government, which then denies them access to the public health system. Others are reluctant to use government services as they are not conveniently located, not open at hours when migrants can access services, unaffordable, and can be judgemental and discriminatory against migrants. Additionally, mobile populations involved in activities, which are against the law, such as sex work and drug use, are even more reluctant to be identified by authorities.

Migrants are frequently at greater risk when away from home. Away from family, societal norms, and community expectations, migrants are exposed to peer pressure, and greater access to the sex industry and drugs, at a time when they may have increased income and control over the use of their money. Because of less knowledge of risks and protection, migrants are at greater risk to a variety of infections and illnesses including TB, STIs, HIV, parasites, and malaria. In many countries, studies of migrant behaviour show higher drug use and less consistent condom use. Rape of migrant workers is poorly researched but has been documented, especially in work settings with many women migrant workers.

A recent research study by UNDP examined migration and HIV vulnerability in seven South and East Asian countries, concluding that a significant proportion of the migrant population belongs to the most active age for social, economic, and sexual interaction and activities. The lack of information, knowledge, and supportive policies makes them particularly vulnerable to HIV.⁴ An FHI-funded study in Nepal found among international migrants, 3.7 per cent had HIV, 3 per

cent of internal migrants had HIV and 0.7 per cent of non-migrants were HIV positive.⁵ Migrant women can be particularly affected: in Indonesia, over 60 per cent of people testing positive were women, most of whom had been working as domestic workers and sex workers, and in the Philippines, the National AIDS Council estimates that 32 per cent of Filipinos living with HIV had been overseas workers. Similarly, a study in China found the number of stillbirths among migrants was twice that of permanent urban residents.⁶

ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN

Women, being subject to low wages, excessive working hours, and risky working environments, also suffer from the threat of sexual harassment and exploitation by employers.⁷ A study conducted in Bangladesh showed that one-fifth of female garment workers suffer from sexually-transmitted infections and the threat of harassment and exploitation increased the migrant women's vulnerability to HIV.⁸ The health implications for trafficked women can be equally devastating, especially for those trafficked for sexual exploitation, which can also include rape, beatings, torture, and sexual abuse. Conflict may also affect exposure to HIV infection, with disruption of traditional sexual norms through population displacement, and the creation of circumstances of severe deprivation, where women and girls are forced to exchange sex for money, food and protection. The presence of large numbers of armed men in uniform often means that a sex industry develops, increasing HIV risk for both the army and sex workers.

PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS AND MENTAL HEALTH

In addition to the considerable pressure to earn enough money to remit home, migrants are subjected to harassment by local residents and police, constant competition for jobs, anxiety from unfamiliar surroundings, and loneliness. Conditions such as the motives for migrating, the duration of stay, language and cultural barriers, legal status, family situations, and their predisposition to psychological problems represent variables which may lead to mental health problems.⁹ Mental health has long been neglected as a serious medical concern, with WHO estimating most countries allocating less than 1 per cent of their total health budget to mental health, if any at all. Depression is a leading cause of disability, and migrants and refugees are disproportionately affected.¹⁰

RESPONSES AND PROGRAMME GAPS

The UN General Assembly Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS in 2001 stated that "By 2005, (countries should) develop and begin to implement national, regional and international strategies that facilitate access to HIV/AIDS prevention programs for migrants and mobile workers, including the provision of information on health and social services."¹¹

Throughout Asia, governments have utilized a variety of approaches addressing issues related to development, migration and health. These have ranged from establishing policy, which limits

the type and amount of internal migration, to laws which support internal migration and ensure the provision of social services. Employment and labour laws have been drafted to support migrants and to ensure workplace safety. National health programmes on HIV, TB, STIs, and reproductive health have been initiated and expanded to nationwide levels. Various countries are beginning to discuss insurance plans that will include migrants and mobile populations, as an effort to improve migrant utilization of healthcare services. Non-government organizations have implemented activities with migrants and mobile populations, demonstrating capacity to reach inaccessible populations.

PROGRAMME EXAMPLES

- India's National AIDS Control Programme raised awareness of HIV, established state-level structures to implement these programmes, improved blood safety measures, and targeted the most vulnerable persons based on cooperation with NGOs and community-based organizations.¹²
- In the Philippines and Pakistan, IOM assisted in the development of audio-visual training and health-awareness material for pre-departure orientation of labour migrants, including the provision of information on occupational standards and working conditions in destination countries and regions.
- STI/HIV Prevention Education and Service among Low-Income Migrant Women in Kunming: This project is a collaborative venture between the UK Government and the Yunnan Province and aims at empowering migrant women by actively participating in project activities, such as counselling, training and awareness raising in regards to health issues.¹³

GAPS IN MIGRANT HEALTH PROGRAMMES

Despite a rise in donor funding of HIV initiatives, total funding remains inadequate to combat the epidemic. Resources are rarely being directed at mobile and displaced populations and their needs are not addressed in national strategies and action frameworks. As a result, national programmes have expanded their service areas, but efforts to reach remote, rural communities and hard-to-reach populations like internal migrants, sex workers, and drug users, have not been successful. HIV in the context of migration, for example, remains seriously under-researched and unaddressed by policy makers, though the link between the disease and population mobility remains one of the most important challenges to governments, donors, and humanitarian and development agencies. Successful NGO activities have reached some populations effectively, but have had difficulty expanding their projects beyond the small-scale, pilot level. Self-help and private initiatives have begun to support people living with HIV, but in most countries, migrants have not formed groups to increase their voice or influence.

EFFECTS OF STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION ON MIGRANT HEALTH PROGRAMMES

Programmes are often ineffective due to stigma and discrimination against migrants and the double stigma against migrants with HIV. Although community-based organizations are beginning to provide services, such as voluntary counselling and testing for migrant workers, community stigmatization and fear of losing employment, keeps interest in the programmes low. Stigmatization of migrant workers results with governments not paying sufficient attention to their health needs. Migrant workers are blamed for placing an undue strain on public resources, increases in crime, and spreading disease. This stigma works as a constraint to identifying people who need prevention care and treatment services, and their participation in programmes.

INVESTING IN MIGRANT HEALTH

Migrants are a considerable source of labour and income in Asia, and have made major contributions to development and progress. The cost effectiveness for governments to invest in migrant health has become evident. Improving the health status of the labour force contributes to economic growth and yet economic migrants remain some of the most vulnerable members of the workforce. Despite their contribution, migrants continue to be a largely under-represented group at the low end of the income and status scale, employed in work that urban residents shun, and frequently without access to healthcare or social services. Political will and government response is visible and in many areas effective, but both government and NGO projects have not met the needs of migrant and mobile populations, and in many areas their public health status has worsened. With millions of migrants and mobile populations seeking new opportunities daily, their health status affects their own productivity and ability to continue to contribute to national growth, and their families in poor, rural communities. It also affects the health of their colleagues, partners, spouses, and families, as well as the public as a whole. The right to health encompasses physical, mental and social health, and implies the right to access health services and practices for all, including migrant and mobile populations.

Policy questions for discussion:

- How can access to healthcare and social services be improved and ensured for migrants? Is there a role for the private sector to support health and social services to migrants?
- Can stigma and discrimination against migrants be reduced? How can the services and contributions of migrants be valued?
- Does the legality of migration or residence increase the vulnerability of migrants? How can governments reduce vulnerability?
- How can government policies and services support safe and healthy migration?

APPENDIX

MIGRATION AND HEALTH POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Health and HIV programmes, especially national-level, government programmes, need to take a holistic approach by addressing the well-being of both migrants and communities at source, transit, destination and return regions, contextualizing migration health within the broader policy field of development, trade, security integration, peace and human rights. Risks due to poverty can be reduced by eliminating barriers to access employment, decent living conditions, and promoting equitable education.

Direct government involvement and leadership are needed to improve the health status of migrants. At the national level, government support is needed in developing policies that support migrant contributions and improve access to quality social services. Migration-related policies need to be incorporated into national strategies to reduce the spread of disease. Lower-level governments, such as provinces, states, districts and counties, are essential in ensuring that policies are implemented and that accurate information is collected and used by policy makers. Programme priorities should focus on populations that are hard to reach, such as migrants and mobile populations, and rural, remote communities. Stronger partnerships between governments, both nationally and regionally, need to be forged.

In the development and management of health-related programmes involving stigmatized populations, such as migrants and people living with HIV, representatives from these populations need to be directly involved in planning and management. Involving migrant communities in the provision of healthcare services will help assure appropriate and relevant services and will assist in promoting non-discrimination towards migrants. Control-oriented policies, such as barring access to migrants and HIV-infected people, are ineffective and undermine public health efforts at prevention and care, by driving people underground where they avoid accessing public services.

Prevention, care, and treatment programmes for migrants should be based on migrant-specific research to meet the needs of migrants. Policies and programmes should be established on evidence-based practices and on rigorous, comprehensive research that involves gathering epidemiological data that takes account of migration, analysing social and economic factors, using qualitative methods, and undertaking comprehensive reviews.

Healthcare and social services for migrants need improved quality and access, placing a strong priority on prevention and high-quality non-judgemental curative services. Preventative programmes need to reach migrants with appropriate and relevant information to prevent reproductive tract infections and STIs, unplanned pregnancies, TB, HPV, and HIV, as well as hepatitis B, and malaria. Prevention efforts should focus on mobile workers, migrants and refugees, as well as the affected communities of origin, transit and destination. Proven models of migrant-relevant behaviour change and outreach should be used rather than information delivery and dissemination campaigns.

Treatment and curative services also need to be appropriate and convenient to migrants, offering high-quality, affordable, and non-judgmental services. Treatment services for migrants need to

recognize the mobility of migrants, especially for such treatment as DOTS for TB and anti-retroviral treatment for HIV.

Healthcare services in rural areas should be strengthened and standardized with an emphasis on safe migration to ensure that migrants departing from isolated, remote villages are informed on prevention and protection methods. Improved healthcare services will also help prevent migration due to excessive health costs.

Policy development should include migrant-specific issues such as access to employment, insurance, residency, workplace safety, education, and labour regulations. Private-public partnerships should be encouraged with incentives to the private sector to ensure a safe and protective environment. The vulnerability of women can be particularly reduced by providing appropriate and relevant services, such as loans, reduced school fees, day-care and crèche facilities, and support with obtaining birth certificates.

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**CASE STUDY:
HIV/AIDS IN SOUTH AND NORTH-EAST ASIA**

**Dr Robyn Iredale, Dr Zhenzhen Zheng,
Dr Qiang Ren, and Dr Swati Ghosh,
and with substantial input from
David Trees, IOM Viet Nam**

Dr Robyn IREDALE, Research School of the Social Sciences, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.
Dr ZHENG Zhenzhen, Institute of Population and Labor Economics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, China.
Dr REN Qiang, Institute of Population Research, Peking University, Beijing, China.
Dr Swati GHOSH, Rabindra Bharati University, Calcutta, India.

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CASE STUDY: HIV/AIDS IN SOUTH AND NORTH-EAST ASIA

1. BACKGROUND

Economic growth in Asia, while varied by country, has been largely characterized by rapid development with many countries experiencing a long trend of annual GDP growth over 7 per cent. From transitioning centrally planned economies, to opening insular economies, throughout Asia countries are changing rapidly.

These economic changes are resulting in changing societal norms and expectations. Increasing access to goods and services has created greater demand and pressure for more household and luxury items. As the need for more increases, more people are looking outside their own community to improve their quality of life. Mobility and migration are increasing considerably.

Migrant populations entering communities in search of employment are a considerable source of low-cost, unskilled, and semi-skilled labour. As urban populations progress into higher skilled jobs and the service sector, the lesser skilled internal migrants fill openings in the labour market. This process allows the growing urban areas to further develop with greater professional and service-oriented employment, a booming construction industry and high levels of options in unskilled employment, such as street cleaning and garbage collection.

Although migration is closely associated with improving economic conditions, and improving standards of living, for many it also results in inadequate living conditions, poor hygiene and sanitation, lack of access to social services, discrimination, and increased risky behaviour.

2. HEALTH AND MIGRATION

2.1 Living and working conditions in the destination area

Migrant workers are usually paid less than their urban counterparts and enjoy fewer benefits. Internal migrants often experience a standard of living far below that of the rest of the urban population, and have poorer access to many social welfare benefits and social-mobility opportunities. They usually take marginal jobs that are characterized by long hours, poor working conditions, low and unstable pay, and no benefits. Internal migrants and local urban residents often participate in two completely different labour markets. This is exacerbated in countries with policies regulating migration through residency registration, preventing the majority of migrants from gaining access to better accommodation, jobs and services.

2.2 Health risks

Health risks vary greatly among different migrants. The health risks affecting migrants can be classified as risks at their workplaces, and risks outside of work in daily life. The main health risks outside of the workplace are due to:

1. Obstacles for migrants to access urban health services. Migrants are often reluctant to use health services for reasons of affordability, convenience, and confidentiality. Additionally, migrants often find services discriminatory and judgmental. Their health-seeking behaviour places them at risk as they avoid or delay treatment due to the quality and conditions of services, and lack of information about available services. Avoiding government services, migrants often choose to treat health problems at private doctors and pharmacies, where proper diagnosis and quality of treatment is not ensured.
2. Poor hygiene in living conditions. Internal migrants often live in cramped quarters with poor ventilation and inadequate water supply. This can result in exposure to infectious disease such as tuberculosis, bacterial infections, and parasite infections.
3. Unprotected sexual activity. Many rural, unmarried youth have little knowledge of sexual and reproductive health, or concrete knowledge about contraception. As a result, relationships with sex workers and girlfriends are often unprotected and many countries in Asia are experiencing increasing unplanned pregnancies and high abortion rates, as well as increasing STI and HIV rates.

2.3 Vulnerability to HIV/AIDS

HIV is a major public health threat in Asia. While the prevalence rates have not reached the levels of sub-Saharan Africa, the populations in Asia are so large that the lower prevalence rates still translate into millions of affected people. HIV was identified in Asia later than Africa, but was clearly well established in South and North-East Asia in the 1980s. By the 1990s the epidemic was progressing rapidly in several Asian countries and starting among concentrated populations in others. Whereas countries such as Cambodia, India, Myanmar and Thailand have experienced generalized epidemics with largely heterosexual transmission, China and Viet Nam are still considered at an early phase of the epidemic, largely concentrated among populations of drug users and sex workers.

In recent decades, Asia has experienced an increase in the number of both internal and international migrants. Cross-border flows have grown substantially, and flows within countries have seen even greater increases. Most of these movements consist of people seeking better livelihoods for themselves and families. Others are forced to migrate because of the prevailing political and other conditions in their home countries.

In most Asian countries, internal migrants are young and single looking for day labour in construction or factory work. Large factories and hotels often provide regulated dormitories for unmarried employees, and day labourers often rent beds in shared quarters. Away from the societal

restrictions and their families, often alone, and influenced by peers, many migrants are faced with decisions which could place them at higher risk of HIV, such as visiting sex workers and using drugs. Vulnerability to HIV is heightened by living in isolation from information on HIV transmission and prevention, lack of quality services and discrimination. Additionally, migrants who are sex workers or drug users further isolate themselves from government services to avoid police and arrest.

Alongside this increased mobility, there has been a massive change in international communication mechanisms and media. As a result, there have been changes in many cultural norms, and traditional constraints on sexual activity have diminished. Despite increasing sexual activity, the sensitivity about sex has not changed and information about sex, STIs, and HIV remains limited. Throughout much of Asia there is a general reluctance to discuss topics related to reproductive health, including HIV. Parents often do not educate children on sex, and sex education is included in school curricula only as a biology topic. Some countries acknowledge that the spread of HIV is largely attributable to intravenous drug use but then do not address sexual transmission in HIV education. Male-to-male sex, and unprotected sex with sex workers, are means of infection throughout Asia, and reflect the current information needs in addition to drug use. Spouses and sex partners of migrants may also be placed at risk of HIV as they are often unaware of health and HIV risks, while having a higher probability of being affected if their spouse or partner has been having unprotected sex or sharing syringes. There is also a common belief among rural women that if they remain loyal to their partners, they are safe from HIV infection, making them even at greater risk of being infected by their returning husbands.

Little is known about the vulnerabilities of migrant workers to HIV or the prevalence of HIV among migrant populations. HIV surveillance rarely includes migrants and, when there are prevalence studies, the risk of stigmatization is high. A sensitive approach that identifies migrant workers' vulnerabilities, rather than their role in the spread of the epidemic, remain rare.

In the early 1990s the UNDP South-East Asia HIV and Development Project, based in Bangkok, began to focus on the impact of mobility on migrants' vulnerability to HIV. In 2003, REACH Beyond Borders, UNDP's Regional HIV and Development Programme, which covers 13 countries in the South and North-East Asian region, began to address similar issues. The REACH programme addresses the development and trans-border challenges of HIV/AIDS in the region, and supports integrated and rights-based responses that promote gender equality, sustainable livelihoods and community participation.

3. COUNTRY OVERVIEWS

As a means to better understand the impact of health on migration, and vice versa, a research project commissioned by UNDP was conducted in 2003 by the Asia Pacific Migration Research Network (APMRN) – a network of migration researchers operating since 1995 in the Asia-Pacific region. The APMRN includes 16 countries/economies, and five of these (India, Bangladesh, South Korea, Sri Lanka, China) were included in this project as well as Mongolia and North Korea, which are not in the network.¹

The strongest point to emerge from these seven country reports is a serious lack of information throughout South and North-East Asia, both on patterns of spatial mobility and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS. When these two elements are combined we find a dearth of information on:

- The vulnerability of people who have moved;
- The incidence of infection among movers, and
- The risks associated with this movement for non-moving family members and others.

3.1 China

China attributes its 1 million estimated cases of HIV infection largely to intravenous drug use. Whether this reflects the real situation is uncertain. Information and research on internal mobility has tended to focus on the scale and characteristics of labour migration, to the neglect of the social and economic conditions facing the “floating population”. Many of the latter are in very vulnerable categories as they are young, single, marginalized and away from traditional controls. They often live in conditions that are less than satisfactory and are outside of the reach of many service providers. Underground commercial sex workers and casual sexual encounters have all increased in the last couple of decades but there has been an unwillingness to develop programmes to protect people engaging in casual sexual encounters.

In addition, China has not adequately addressed the health issue of cross-border mobility, especially in the north, some areas could become “hot spots” in terms of setting up conditions that may lead to the spread of HIV/AIDS with the emergence of an underground sex industry.

3.2 India

Although experiencing an HIV epidemic that is still relatively in the early stages, India already has over 4 million people living with HIV. The epidemic is further complicated by the scale and changing dynamics of the Indian economy and development, and the range of migrants, both internal and international. This calls for a multi-faceted response. According to Ghosh (2003), India’s efforts to curtail the spread of the virus have relied largely on scare tactics, which have resulted in stigma about the virus and discrimination against people living with HIV. This stigmatization has been a major factor in the isolation of affected individuals from their families, medical services, and society in general.

Such an approach is not unique to India and has, in fact, been the response of many countries around the world. It has been determined, however, that this response generally only results in stigma and discrimination, and not reduced transmission of HIV. Effective measures rely on major leadership involvement ensuring access to appropriate information and services and involvement of people living with HIV in policy development and implementation.

The role of the state intervening within the private intimate sphere, while protecting and ensuring human rights of all the stakeholders, requires questions about sexuality to be addressed in a more sensitive and concerned approach and not deal with these issues in an ad hoc and piecemeal fashion. The challenge is to develop an environment without constricting creativity, diver-

sity and individual freedom and well-being of individuals. Interweaving these societal, ethical and political issues at large, together with planned implementation programmes can bring about effective changes for making the immense investment of capital and human resource meaningful (Ghosh, 2003).

3.3 Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has begun to face the HIV epidemic. According to UNAIDS, Sri Lanka, with a population of 19 million, continues to have a relatively small number of people with HIV with approximately 4,800 adults and children estimated at the end of 2002. Since 1986, only 415 cases have been officially reported, with underreporting thought to be due to limited availability of counselling and testing, and a fear of stigma and discrimination after being identified as HIV positive. The HIV infection rate among adults between the ages of 15 and 49 is estimated by UNAIDS to be less than 0.1 per cent. Sri Lanka has also begun to show that a proportion of labour migrants returning from the Middle East, in particular, have contracted the HIV virus. The predominance of women in this group represents the greater percentage of migrants who are women, but also the exploitation and abuse that some women are subject to in their work abroad. It is being increasingly documented that the environment associated with some overseas employment increases the vulnerability of Sri Lankan migrants.

3.4 Bangladesh

Bangladesh has also started to recognize the increasing risk and vulnerability to HIV. With a population of 136 million, Bangladesh had about 13,000 adults and children living with HIV infection at the end of 2002, according to UNAIDS estimates. Only 363 cases have actually been reported because of the country's limited voluntary testing and counselling capacity and associated social stigma and discrimination. Of particular great concern to Bangladesh are the conditions that Bangladeshis face when they cross into India, and elsewhere, seeking employment and means for income generation. Despite limited information, it has become apparent that women who enter the sex industry in Indian cities live in an environment of considerable vulnerability and risk. The trafficking of women and children from or through Bangladesh is also of major concern, as many of them end up in situations where they are vulnerable to HIV infection.

3.5 Mongolia

Currently infection rates for HIV/AIDS/STDs in Mongolia are not known. Only three people with HIV had been reported in Mongolia as of July 2001. In 2003, the estimates were that there were fewer than 500 people with HIV. A number of factors which increase vulnerability to HIV are present in Mongolia, including increasing STI rates, increasing numbers of sex workers, stimulant use, rising numbers of street children and increased international and internal mobility, combined with poor STI care and low levels of condom use. Little information is available on potential sub-populations at risk of contracting HIV, and there are few projects/programmes on HIV awareness and intervention.

3.6 Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The North Korean situation is probably among one of the most delicate in the region. As with most sectors and issues, the information available on HIV is very sparse. Some estimates show that by the year 2000, there were less than 100 known people living with HIV in the country. The political and economic context means that internal mobility is starting to increase at a time when the health system is failing and awareness about HIV/AIDS seems to be minimal. The growth in itinerant travel, the uncertainties of transport systems, and the absence of accommodation options are expected to result in an increased risk of HIV transmission.

3.7 Republic of Korea

There has been a rapid increase of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) since 2000. The total number of PLWHA found in Korea by June 2003 was 2,258: 2,010 (89%) males and 248 (11%) females. AIDS specialists, however, estimate that the real number could be six or seven times higher than the government statistics. For foreigners, according to an unpublished government document, 260 HIV-positive people have been found so far and 20 of them are now under the protection of the government.

South Korea has a significant labour immigration programme, though it was previously called a trainee programme. Contract labourers tend to be male, without families, and many of them arrive as irregulars. At the same time, South Korea has a significant commercial sex industry and this, together with the presence of many male migrant workers who are alone, has led to the immigration of women from Russia, the Philippines and China to work in the sex industry. The role of trafficking in these movements is very evident.

4. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE SEVEN-COUNTRY STUDY

All reports from South Asia stressed an increased awareness about the need for comprehensive national programmes and policies to address an impending HIV/AIDS epidemic, but also indicated the general lack of such programmes. On the other hand, in North-East Asia there is much less awareness about an impending HIV/AIDS epidemic and the need for comprehensive programmes to circumvent such an epidemic is barely acknowledged.

The following points need to be highlighted in relation to HIV/AIDS and migrants:

- Some mobility is contracted or “formal”, while much of it is informal or “irregular” and outside of any state or other control.
- The type of population mobility, the context in which it occurs and the behaviour of the mobile populations influences the risk of HIV infection.
- Groups with a higher risk of HIV infection have already been identified in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, but China, Mongolia, and North Korea and South Korea also need to focus on such vulnerable groups.

- Refugees and highly mobile groups, such as traders and truck drivers, have received inadequate attention from researchers.
- Little research seems to have been undertaken into sexual behaviour using the Behavioural Sentinel Surveillance, or qualitative methodologies.
- Geographic locations that are potential “hot spots” for the contraction of HIV/AIDS have emerged or are emerging, and need to be mapped and investigated, using the Early Warning and Rapid Response System (EWRRS) developed in South-East Asia (du Guerny and Hsu, 2002).
- National capacity for preventing or alleviating an HIV/AIDS epidemic is very varied and some states are totally unprepared or unwilling to confront this possibility.
- More interstate activity is still needed to address the spread of HIV/AIDS in South Asia as well as North-East Asia.

5. OVERRIDING PRINCIPLES THAT NEED TO BE ADHERED TO IN POLICY/PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

According to the United Nations, the following principles/lessons need to be adhered to:

- It is unrealistic to focus on stopping population movements and the focus must be on reducing behaviour that exposes the migrant to HIV infection.
- Policies of denial, stigmatization, and isolation will not yield results.
- Gender sensitivity must be an integral component of all policies and programmes and sex workers must not be discriminated against – their clients are equally part of the situation.
- The human rights of all migrants should be protected at all times, including those of irregular migrants.
- Multi-sector national responses involving central and local governments, NGOs and IOs, especially at the local level, are required.
- Multilateral, collaborative responses are needed on many aspects of mobility and the spread of HIV/AIDS.

6. HEALTH AND SOCIAL PROTECTION/CHINA CASE STUDY

6.1 China HIV Case Study

The reported number of cases has been increasing in recent years and it is likely that the epidemic has already started to spread from the initial concentrated populations of drug users and sex workers. According to the Ministry of Health (www.chain.net.cn), by the end of 2002 the reported number of HIV-positive cases nationwide was 40,560. However, due to the limited coverage of any surveillance system, it was estimated that about 1 million were actually infected. Up to the end of 2002, 2,639 AIDS patients and a total of 1,047 deaths caused by AIDS had been recorded. In a news release on 6 November 2003, the official estimates referred to 840,000 people who were HIV positive, and about 80,000 AIDS patients (www.chain.net.cn).

There are four primary characteristics of the HIV epidemic in China:

1. HIV is largely found in rural areas;
2. Intravenous drug use is purportedly the major cause of infection;
3. Among people with HIV, 75 per cent are men;
4. More than 80 per cent of cases are among people between 20 to 39 years of age.

According to the statistics, the major causes of HIV infection are intravenous drug use (68%), blood donation through contaminated instruments (9.75%), heterosexual/homosexual contact (7.25%), blood transfusion (1.5%), and mother-baby transmission (0.25%). HIV infection among drug users was reported in one province before 1995, but was found in all 31 provinces/autonomous regions/municipalities by 2002. There is an increasing trend of drug use in China. According to experts, the risk of infection through blood donations has largely been controlled and the probability of further spread is very small. Meanwhile, infection among sex workers has increased drastically in the last few years and will become a major threat in the future. The HIV epidemic now includes the homosexual as well as the heterosexual population, indicating that it has already spread to the general population.

The above characteristics of the HIV epidemic focus attention on one population in particular – irregular internal migrants, or the “floating population”. Estimates of this migrant population range around 150 million. They are mostly from rural areas and are young, usually travel without their families, and two-thirds of them are men. They are a group of people who are often excluded by the community at their destination and are often treated as “outsiders”. While highly mobile, migrants tend to maintain a close relationship with their home villages. They usually return home on several occasions a year including Chinese New Year and busy farming seasons. Most of them do not see the city as their home, partly because of the household registration system and partly because of the current land distribution regulation.

China’s vast “floating population” endures a standard of living far below that of the rest of the urban sector, and are denied access to many social welfare benefits and social-mobility opportunities. They usually take marginal jobs that are characterized by long hours, poor working conditions, low and unstable pay, and no benefits. Even in large cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, a frequently reported problem in the workplace is overtime work. In addition, there are reports regarding poor working conditions in some industries, such as in footwear manufacturing, that greatly harm young workers’ health. During the SARS crisis, the Beijing Government required a construction company to improve the living conditions of workers (mostly dozens of young men living in a room with poor ventilation), as several SARS cases were found among workers working on the same construction site.

Migrants also often lack knowledge and information about health services that are available (Zheng, 2002). An investigation among migrant women in the Beijing urban area showed that when they needed to see a doctor, most preferred to go to small community hospitals instead of large urban hospitals.

The underground sex industry is booming in China but sex workers have no access to health protection as their job is illegal. Their vulnerability to STI/HIV infection has become a major

issue in prevention activity. Vulnerable, poorly educated girls from rural areas make up a large proportion of sex workers. The average age of this group is decreasing (www.chain.net.cn). It is not only women who work as sex workers who are of concern. A study by Sun, et al. (2002) in Heilongjinag found that out of 393 women migrant workers in the service sector of several cities, 59.8 per cent had multiple sex partners and only 34.4 per cent used condoms.

Spouses or sex partners of migrants are particularly at risk as their partners may have been involved in high-risk sexual activities while away from home but they are unaware of this. For example, Liu found that many rural women who suffered STIs, were infected by their husbands who returned from migration trips (Liu, 2004).

HIV infection prevention among migrants – a review of existing programmes, policies and interventions in China

HIV prevention services for migrants, such as labourers and business travellers in cities, as well as for spouses and family members, can usually be classified into three types: services provided by the government, by non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. Services from the private sector have been limited and unregulated with many not meeting quality standards or operating with a licence. Migrants and mobile populations continue to primarily use private clinics and doctors, however, as there are few services designed for migrants and government services are often judgmental and inconvenient. There is also a lack of reliable information and comprehensive knowledge about drug use or homosexual practices among male migrants, as well as on the services available to them. A summary of existing HIV services for migrants follows:

a) **Government Services.** Government services are mainly provided by hospitals and clinics under the Ministry of Health (MOH), and are responsible for diagnosis and treatment. Preventative services, including health education, are mainly provided by a preventive medicine network, run by the Chinese Centre of Disease Control and Prevention (China CDC). Although the network covers almost the whole nation, the level of service provision differs amongst different geographical areas. Since the late 1990s, some family planning service facilities run by the National Population and Family Planning Commission (NPFPC) have extended their services to cover HIV prevention education and counselling. The current ongoing nationwide reproductive health and family planning campaign includes HIV prevention as a main component. The services offered by the government sector is considered limited when reaching particularly vulnerable groups, such as sex workers, drug users, and migrants.

b) **Non-governmental organizations.** The number of local non-governmental organizations has increased rapidly in recent years, but most of them are still in the early stages of development. Projects on mobility have included peer education among young students about HIV prevention, carrying out HIV prevention education with young migrants through their family members, life skills training and education, the development of communications materials and services, improved maternal and child health services, and condom promotion. Projects have been implemented in such provinces as Yunnan, Guangxi, Guangdong, and Fujian.

c) **International Organizations.** A growing number of international and foreign organizations are working on HIV prevention programmes, including UN agencies, bilateral organizations, and international non-governmental organizations, largely collaborating with health departments at the provincial or state levels. Many of these programmes are located in the west and south of the country. Although numerous projects on HIV prevention have been carried out in a variety of locations, most of the services available are pilot projects and they have not been institutionalized. As most projects started in the early 2000s, it is still too early to assess the sustainability of the services.

Relevant policies

The Chinese Government recently made a firm commitment to slow the HIV epidemic (www.chain.net.cn) and improve treatment by:

- Providing free treatment to AIDS patients from rural areas, and urban residents who have economic difficulties;
- Increasing the coverage and participation in education;
- Strengthening law enforcement in the fight against drug use and people smuggling, prostitution and illegal blood collection.

The government has issued a number of documents about HIV/AIDS prevention and control, and there are laws and local regulations concerning the prevention and control of infectious diseases among the population and at the borders. In 2000, the central government initiated a nationwide campaign, mainly through the mass media, to publicize knowledge about the prevention of HIV infection. Official reports about HIV have become more frequent and outspoken, but few local governments directly address the HIV issue.

Another policy-related issue is health insurance, which is in the process of reform. Insurance covers only a limited population in urban areas – residents with regular, paid jobs. The annual clinical and treatment cost of HIV/AIDS is as much as six times the average income of urban residents (www.chain.net.cn) and well beyond the financial reach of migrants from rural areas. During the SARS crisis in 2003, for example, some rural migrants ran away from urban hospitals for fear of not being able to afford the treatment of SARS. As a consequence, the Beijing Government promised to cover the costs of SARS treatment for migrant workers. Lowering health insurance premiums for individual clients has been discussed, but is not expected to change soon.

Most large cities have residency registration policies and management systems for migrants, but the enforcement of such registration varies according to employment status and jobs. Migrants without regular jobs or those working illegally tend not to register and prefer not to draw attention to themselves by using government services. These migrants, therefore, remain beyond the reach of social support, including preventative health services and HIV surveillance. There are no specific regulations concerning migrants, except to monitor high-risk populations, including returning migrants from overseas.

Capacity to provide services

The health and medical system in China has emphasized diagnosis and treatment, and has placed less attention on prophylactic care. The capacity of the health system to reach isolated, rural, and marginalized populations has not been well developed. These disadvantages were raised during the SARS crisis and changes have been introduced at the central level to strengthen disease control and prevention.

There are HIV/AIDS hotlines and online counselling services available in cities, and related websites. Since most counties, even counties in remote border areas, have access to the internet, this service could cover a variety of populations and a large geographic region.

A joint force is gradually forming between government, non-governmental organizations, and international agencies, as well as some private services. Non-governmental organizations have proven to be flexible and able to reach out to remote groups, and through pilot projects have successfully implemented relevant initiatives particularly among vulnerable populations. Migrant HIV/AIDS prevention education has included the promotion of condom use from train stations, 100 per cent condom use programmes with sex workers and safe-sex education among long-distance truck drivers. Projects do, however, remain largely as pilot projects and have yet to be expanded to countrywide level. Two examples, which demonstrate effective programming and collaboration between agencies, are in Yunnan and Heilongjiang.

The Yunnan experience

Several migrant-related projects and programmes have been implemented in Yunnan province. These include:

- **China-UK AIDS Prevention Programme.** This five-year programme is jointly supported by the governments of China and United Kingdom and managed by ten ministries and two international organizations. The programme office is located within the China CDC and targets the vulnerable populations in Yunnan and Sichuan. The aims of the programme are threefold: (1) to strengthen the ability of the public sector to develop a more effective strategy to control HIV and STIs; (2) to improve the access by vulnerable groups to public and private information and services, to protect them against HIV infection and (3) to explore a care model for AIDS patients.
- **STI and HIV prevention education and service among low-income migrant women in Kunming.** A collaboration between the UK and Yunnan Province, this project is aimed at low-income migrant women, mainly from rural areas and with unstable jobs in the city. The intervention strategies are: (1) participatory, with emphasis on the empowerment of migrant women through a better understanding of their needs and wants and including them in the project process; (2) community-based, to make services, such as counselling, training, and communications materials and activities, more accessible. The project works to improve knowledge and health awareness, and to foster change in attitudes and behaviours towards health among the migrant women.

- Condom Marketing Project. This project is targeted at condom retailers. It is funded and managed by the Futures Group with support by the NGO Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH). It is implemented by the Yunnan Health and Development Research Association. This project aims to improve the ability of traditional condom retailers to communicate and educate their customers about the issue of AIDS prevention, and to expand the retail of condoms to non-traditional outlets, improving the accessibility of condoms, especially for migrants.
- Participatory activity among cross-border youth and children. This is a project carried out by Save the Children (UK) in border areas of China, Myanmar and Thailand. It is a community-based, participatory activity that involves cross-border migratory youth and children to reduce their vulnerability.

The experience of Yunnan demonstrates that collaborative efforts on HIV prevention, involving government departments, NGOs and international organizations, can achieve positive results.

Exploratory research in Heilongjiang

A research team from the Department of Epidemiology, School of Public Health of Harbin Medical University, carried out an investigation among migrant workers in the service sectors in Harbin, Suihua, Mudanjiang, Daqing and Heihe. The results of a questionnaire survey of 393 women indicated that migrant women lacked adequate knowledge on HIV transmission and prevention and that they did not use condoms consistently. The research team also interviewed more than 100 Russian women to gauge their knowledge on HIV/AIDS prevention. It was determined that the Russian women were better informed on the issue than the Chinese migrant women, but there were still information needs. The team distributed education material among women workers in the service sector and also developed behaviour-change communications material in Russian to distribute to the Russian women working in the service and tourism sectors.

The department has a certified HIV-testing laboratory that is open to the public. Professors of the department have participated in a training project supported by the China Medical Board, together with six of the most prestigious medical universities in China. They have developed a curriculum for medical school student training in HIV/AIDS. Textbooks were developed and drafted for middle school, senior high school and college students on sexual health education.

6.2 Conclusions from the China Case Study

Overall, the lack of information, knowledge and supportive policies makes young, migrant populations vulnerable to HIV. Specific projects or programmes targeting migrants are few and there has not been research to understand the size, status and potential risk of HIV infection among migrants, especially those working in “illegal” jobs. The needs and preferences of different populations of migrants are not clear and the appropriate services able to meet their needs are not yet available. Based on an overview of HIV programmes and activities with migrants in China, a series of recommendations were drafted related to research and projects with migrants.

6.3 Recommendations for further research in China to guide policy development

- **Available local organizations and resources need to be identified.** There is a need for community-based research to identify and mobilize local NGOs and other resources.
- **Knowledge about cross-border activity is extremely poor at the macro and micro level and needs to be improved.** Cross-border mobility not only affects the economies in the origin and destination areas, but also the individuals' life, development and health, as well as the population with which they come into contact. There is an urgent need to implement collaborative and systematic research on the cross-border mobile populations of China.
- **Further exploratory studies and a mapping of areas characterized by a concentration of migrants and commercial sex workers need to be undertaken.** Background/baseline information needs to be collected in potential "hot spots", such as major ports, sending and receiving areas of cross-border migrants.

6.4 Recommendations for programmes in China

- **Intervention programmes should not only focus on high-risk sub-populations of migrants.** Migrants are often difficult to identify and their situation may be socially, morally or politically sensitive. They should be the focus of some programmes, but it is also necessary to work with larger groups of migrants, such as all workers in the service sector, instead of only with sex workers.
- **Interventions involving internal migrants should tackle source, transit and destination areas.** Interventions on HIV/AIDS prevention should take place in sending, transit and receiving areas due to the cyclical nature of much of migration movements in China. In that way, a large proportion of migrants and their families could be covered.
- **Evaluation needs to be built into every programme.** Since mobile populations move frequently, the impact evaluation of a programme could be very difficult. Therefore, a process and outcome evaluation should be considered at the beginning of the programme design.
- **Local governments should be encouraged to become more active in HIV/AIDS prevention and care.** Local governments should be encouraged to introduce favourable public policies aimed at HIV/AIDS prevention among migrants. Local government cooperation and commitment to create a better policy climate is crucial to the success of the programme.
- **The role of non-governmental organizations should be enhanced.** The role of non-governmental organizations should be further strengthened in HIV/AIDS prevention activities as their particular expertise and roles can complement government functions and reach people who are difficult to cover through governmental efforts.
- **Local programmes designed to suit the needs of the many different areas are needed.** Programme designs that take account of particular local conditions are needed. In a vastly

diversified country like China, traditions, cultures and beliefs among local peoples differ greatly from one region to another, and each intervention needs to be carefully developed to suit the particular socio-cultural environment.

- **Ensure private sector involvement in future programmes.** In locations where public resources are limited and the target populations are difficult to reach, there is a need to try to bring in private providers of prevention and treatment programmes.
- **Programmes must be gender sensitive.** Gender equality and women's empowerment should be watched throughout the process, including the design, implementation and evaluation of the programme, since women are often treated as a problem (such as sex workers) rather than as partners/participants.
- **Learn from the experiences of southern China in multi-sector project management.** Successful project management can be learned from other successful programmes. Multi-sector cooperation is strongly recommended to make interventions more effective. The Yunnan experience shows a successful collaborative work pattern between the government, civil society, community and international organizations. Public security and the customs services will play a role in working among one-day visitors and overnight border crossers.

7. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

From the country summaries and the China case study, it is apparent that a rapid, comprehensive, national-level response to HIV is required. Governments and international organizations must take the lead and strong political will is necessary. Caldwell's (2000) four key elements must be present: reduce transmission where it is at its highest levels; continue education programmes; provide free or cheap means of avoiding HIV infection, and expand treatment.

Migrants are not the cause of the impending HIV/AIDS crisis. They contract the virus because they find themselves in vulnerable and exploited contexts. Unless Asian countries come to terms with the current situation they will face a much larger crisis than Africa, due to the sheer numbers of people affected. Not only will the health costs be exorbitant, but the loss in productivity, as well as the human and social costs, will be an enormous drain on the societies involved. In terms of development this could undermine any gains made through trade and economic development.

ENDNOTES

1. The following individuals provided crucial assistance in terms of preparing individual country reports. This involved collecting data and written materials, conducting interviews, and generally showing a great deal of initiative when working in such a difficult area.
 - India (Dr Swati Ghosh)
 - Bangladesh (Professor Tasneem Siddiqui)
 - Sri Lanka (Professor Joe Weeramunda)
 - China and Mongolia (Dr Zheng Zhenzhen and Dr Ren Qiang)
 - North Korea (Professor Sung Ho Ko)
 - South Korea (Professor Jungwhan Lee)

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**HELPING MIGRATION
TO IMPROVE LIVELIHOODS IN CHINA:
VOCATIONAL TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT OF
SMALL BUSINESSES AND AGRIBUSINESSES
AND SUPPORT FOR THOSE LEFT BEHIND**

**Rachel Murphy
Institute for Chinese Studies,
University of Oxford, United Kingdom**

Rachel Murphy is a Research fellow in Contemporary Chinese Studies at the Institute for Chinese Studies, University of Oxford, United Kingdom.

HELPING MIGRATION TO IMPROVE LIVELIHOODS IN CHINA: VOCATIONAL TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL BUSINESSES AND AGRIBUSINESSES AND SUPPORT FOR THOSE LEFT BEHIND

Since the early 1980s the Chinese Government has shifted from limiting to controlling to actively encouraging migration. This is because the flow of migrant workers into urban construction projects is important. It is also because shifting individuals from subsistence/petty commodity farming to off-farm work is the quickest way to raising their incomes. For example, between 1997 and 2000 the average annual income from agricultural production decreased from 1092 yuan to 600 yuan per capita. Meanwhile the average annual income from rural migrants working in the cities increased from 512 yuan to 700 yuan per capita (Zhang, 2002). In 2003 some 113.9 million rural people migrated to the cities, accounting for 23.2 per cent of total rural labourers (*China Daily*, 16 May 2004).

While facilitating outmigration, the Chinese Government continued to search for ways to improve livelihoods in rural areas, for instance through local off-farm employment. In 2003 rural enterprises in China contributed 31.4 per cent of the country's GDP and employed 136 million people or 27.8 per cent of all rural labourers (*China Daily*, 26 April 2004). The remaining rural labourers, over 350 million, continued to rely on farming (Zhang, 2003). The current policy approach is to transfer some of these rural labourers to off-farm work and to involve others in specialized agriculture and agribusinesses because they generate higher incomes than grain production. Policy approaches aimed at improving the livelihoods of rural populations have included the channelling of benefits generated by outmigration and the resulting return flows of information, skills and money towards the development of off-farm industries and specialized agriculture.

This discussion draws on secondary literature, Chinese media and government reports, Chinese case studies and my own fieldwork conducted in rural Jiangxi (in 1997, 2000 and 2004) to identify four key areas where interventions address the livelihood opportunities and challenges presented by labour migration: (1) equipping both potential and actual migrants with the general education and specialist skills that will help them find work and defend their interests in urban labour markets; (2) accelerating urbanization and increasing opportunities for the transfer of rural labour to urban employment through the construction and expansion of towns, county seats and small cities; (3) increasing earning opportunities in the countryside by linking town construction and industrial expansion with the development of commercial farming and value-added agricultural processing enterprises, this being especially important following China's accession to the WTO; (4) measures to help the "left-behinds" who face various kinds of livelihood hardships following the migration of family and community members – here I limit the discussion to the elderly left-behinds. The first three of these policy areas are uppermost in the minds of Chi-

nese planners and form the primary focus of the Information Office of the State Council’s white paper, *China’s Employment Situation and Policies* (2004), while the last, the “left-behinds”, is a topic that receives little attention in either policy documents or development agency interventions.

1. EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR RURAL PEOPLE AND RURAL LABOUR MIGRANTS

The disadvantage that rural people face in finding decent jobs in urban settings is symptomatic of their wider disadvantage in terms of education and other forms of investment as a result of systemic urban bias. As Table 1 shows, investment in education per student was much lower in rural than in urban areas. While in rural areas parents have to pay for school buildings and teachers’ wages, in the cities this is taken care of by the municipal governments. The difference in the financial burden is such that rural parents contribute 60 per cent of the costs of compulsory education, whereas urbanites contribute only 13 per cent despite enjoying incomes that are five times higher (Wang, et al., 2003). Although urban parents feel burdened by their efforts to keep up with rising levels of necessary support in the form of special tuition lessons and equipment (Milwertz, 1998; Fong, 2004), their burden differs from that of rural parents who struggle just to afford the fees for basic education. While there are plans for all rural children to have access to free education by 2007, the legacy of unequal investment persists: according to statistics for 2001 the average education term of rural residents is seven years compared with ten years for urban residents (*China Daily*, 2 October 2003). The Chinese Government is now prioritizing the provisioning of general education and special skills training for rural youth to address the lag resulting from previous educational investment policies.

2002 PER CAPITA INVESTMENT IN RURAL AND URBAN STUDENTS (YUAN)

	Rural	Urban	National Average
Total investment per primary student	519.16	841.11	625.45
Total investment per junior high student	861.64	1423.85	1102.5

Source: adapted from Lu Yarong, 2003.

The educational opportunities for rural youth are highly valued by rural parents. This is because, contrary to stereotype ideas that rural populations are unwilling to invest in their children’s education, rural parents are, in fact, most willing to invest in their children’s education so long as they can perceive benefits (Yan, et al., 2003; Bai, 2003). Although returns on education are low in the rural economy, the vast majority of parents want their children to become anything but farmers (Bai, 2003). The unpopularity of farming leaves two remaining options – attend university or work in the cities (Chong, et al., 2003). The first of these options, going to university, requires attending senior high school. But high school is, on the whole, beyond the reach of most rural students. Poorer educational quality in the villages and townships makes it difficult for these students to make the grade for entry to the key point senior high schools located in the county seats. Yet, unless a student is at a key point school there is very little chance of over-

coming the systemic inequalities requiring students from interior provinces and rural areas to have more points in the national exams to gain university entrance. The downside to the focus on senior high schools as a path to university is that, if students are seen as unlikely to pass the entrance exams, then even good grades are not enough to prevent their being withdrawn before graduating from junior high.

In 2000 many rural parents and students in a Jiangxi county stated that vocational schools, especially those at county level, were not as reputable as senior high schools. They complained that university entrance was impossible from these schools, that their educational quality was low and job prospects for graduates poor. Even so, increasing economic diversification and rural-urban migration have caused some farmers to acknowledge that there may be more routes in life besides a narrow road to university and a wide road back to the village. Migrants returning temporarily to their villages have been particularly important conduits for popularizing this perspective. Some explain to their fellow villagers that factories that offer higher wages commonly recruit on the basis of tests for basic maths and reading comprehension as well as the ability to read some English. Other migrants tell stories of friends who have learned welding or book-keeping and then gone on to earn good money. Increasingly, villagers' own observations have led them to concur with the official publicity that it is individuals themselves who are responsible for learning the skills necessary for a good life. This is reflected in the view of many parents that the best gift they can give to their child is a technical skill, especially now that even university graduates no longer benefit from job allocations or certain employment.

Since the late 1990s and in response to these shifts in rural perceptions about education and employment, vocational schools in county seats have been phasing out their agricultural skills classes and designing new courses that aim to equip the students for urban labour markets. This has included courses in electronics, computers, clothes design/tailoring and driving, as well as courses to teach students about urban life skills, legal obligations and responsibilities and basic literacy and numeracy, and English vocabulary.

By the time I returned to Jiangxi province in 2004, a veritable explosion in vocational education had clearly occurred. Several large city-based vocational schools had sprung up. The expansion in vocational training was due to a combination of growing market demand, encouragement by the national and provincial government and a concerted state effort to raise the standard of vocational education so that graduates really do leave with employable skills.

One example is the Blue Sky Vocational School based in Nanchang city, Jiangxi Province. In 2002 it had 8,000 students. By 2004 the school had relocated to a new larger campus because the student body had increased to 30,000, and further expansion was planned. Of the student body 60 per cent were from the Jiangxi countryside and 40 per cent from the cities and from other provinces (interview, Jiangxi Provincial Government Secretary for Education and visit to the school, August 2004). Founded by a Jiangxi native who is also a member of the National People's Congress, the school is one of two large-scale *minban* (people-run, i.e. private) vocational schools in the province.

The growing popularity of the vocational schools is changing the point at which an individual's migration begins. Rather than commencing when the individual goes to the city, the migration decision increasingly begins before the individual enters an educational institution. Indeed, these

large city-based schools advertise regularly on county television stations and their promises of job placements for all graduates make them particularly attractive to rural youth and their parents. According to researchers at the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture, of the 90.1 million rural labourers who migrated during the first half of 2003, nearly 20 per cent had received training in a skill or a technical specialty, and this percentage is likely to increase (*China Daily*, 1 August 2003).

Although there has been a huge nationwide expansion in vocational schools and colleges, and demand is growing among the rural population, there are still many rural individuals who are unable to benefit from these opportunities. In response to the fact that many people want vocational education, but either cannot afford it or do not have the necessary access, in 2003 the Chinese Government launched a plan to provide free or subsidized training for rural people who were either preparing to migrate or already in the cities. This plan is being financed by funds allocated at the central and local government levels; in 2004 the central government allocated 300 million yuan (US\$ 36.1 million) to this project (*China Daily*, 9 March 2004). Under the plan, over seven years, an estimated 70 million migrant workers will receive training or additional professional training. The aim is to enable rural people to obtain the skills necessary to secure good urban jobs through either employment or self-employment. Priority subjects include housekeeping, restaurant and hotel services, healthcare, construction and manufacturing. Training in basic legal knowledge regarding living in an urban setting, and the skills necessary to find a job is also foreseen. Pilot programmes run so far at the county level permit farmers to choose their subjects freely and include job introduction services. The aim of the training initiative is to enable migrants to improve their own well-being and to enhance the living conditions of the rural household through remittances, on the basis that “the migration of one person frees the household from poverty”.

While this training initiative is laudable, its implementation, especially in rural areas, has experienced some difficulties. One problem is that in some localities the funds allocated for training have been diverted to alleviate county governments’ fiscal shortages: particularly in the wake of the “tax-for-fee” reforms, funds have sometimes been used to finance cadres’ wages. Another problem is that some training courses operate in a formalistic manner without sufficient concern for the actual needs of the participants.

In addition to general education and skills training, the government has also been involved in informing potential and actual migrants about their legal rights and responsibilities vis-à-vis their employers. Many county governments run programmes concerning the legal obligations of migrants on local television at the Spring Festival, and dispatch public security personnel to destination areas where migrants from their localities are more concentrated. This arguably helps to create a more docile and subservient labour force. But, migrants also learn about their rights. Junior high schools students learn about the contents of the 1995 Labour Law in their civics classes: many 15- and 16-year olds whom I spoke with in rural Jiangxi in 2004 knew the content of the law and the same was true for migrant workers with whom I shared long-distance bus trips. In recent years there has also been a proliferation of investigative television journalism programmes dedicated to uncovering cases of migrant worker abuses. One such series, popular in 2004, was “Defending Migrant Workers”. Owing to such information, migrant workers are much more aware of their rights and the proper treatment and working conditions to be offered by employers. At the same time, the employers’ own desire to attract a stable, well-trained and

loyal workforce is also leading some of them to improve living and working conditions. According to Wang Guanyu, director of the Guangdong Labour and Employment Service and Administration Centre, some employers in Guangdong are currently responding to labour shortages (an estimated 1-2 million), caused in part through the rejection by rural people of the poor working conditions, by increasing wages and upgrading dormitories (cited in *Taipei Times*, 5 February 2005: 9). However, far more remains to be done to enhance the rights and conditions of workers in China's factories (Harney, 2005).

Summary: Increasing general education and skills training is an important contribution towards enabling rural people to secure urban jobs with better pay and conditions. This is a positive trend which is being reinforced by Chinese Government efforts to, (1) increase investment in basic rural education; (2) expand vocational training, and (3) enforce legal requirements that employers pay minimum wages and provide humane working conditions.

2. COUNTY SEAT AND SMALL CITY EXPANSION

China's policy to develop and expand towns, county seats and small cities pursues two different but compatible development objectives. The first involves expanding urban settlements so that more rural people can transfer permanently out of the villages and off the land into towns and into factories and commerce. It is forecasted that the level of urbanization in China will reach 55 to 60 per cent by 2020, and that small cities will assist in this. A second objective of town and city construction, which aims at towns and county seats more than at larger cities, seeks to increase the opportunities for rural households to diversify their livelihoods within their rural settings. Diversifying livelihoods means that households need no longer rely solely on agriculture but can minimize their risk and raise their returns to available labour by incorporating off-farm income sources into the household budget. The approach of rural livelihood diversification is based on the realization that neither in the short nor the medium term is it feasible to transform China into a fully urban society, and that many rural people will need to rely on both the land and the off-farm sector for their livelihood security for an indefinite period.

At this point it is worth noting that the form and scale of towns and county seats differ considerably across China. For example, a town in an interior province may consist of only one or two streets with a market square, stalls, shops and administrative offices, while a town on the coast may be a booming commercial and manufacturing centre. These settlements therefore vary in terms of their capacity to offer opportunities for permanent urban settlement or for rural livelihood diversification.

A state policy devised in the 1990s and reiterated in the Tenth Five-Year Plan (2001-2005) encourages individuals to relocate from villages and petty subsistence farming to an urban environment and into off-farm employment. Beginning in the early 1990s some governments in towns and small cities relaxed the household registration system by allowing rural migrants who had employment and accommodation, to pay an "urban construction fee" and become a permanent urban resident. Over time, these fees became less expensive and were subsequently routinely waived. Plans are currently underway in 80 per cent of China's approximately 660 cities to remove the household residence restrictions that prevent migrants from claiming access to af-

fordable municipal social services (*China Daily*, 6 January 2004). Existing towns and small cities are also being expanded and up to 10,000 new ones are planned. According to Chinese planners, transforming farmers into urban workers is desirable not only because it is one of the quickest ways to improve individual incomes, but also because moving people permanently out of agriculture will enable the eventual creation of larger mechanized farms in the countryside.

The programme to expand small cities has been criticized by some Chinese planners who fear that it might result in an environmentally damaging building craze. They point to instances of local leaders who are keen to push ahead because of the kudos of “modernizing” their localities – regardless of the ability of the local economy and population to support the development. Indeed, I encountered several remote townships where leaders had cleared land for “returnee enterprise investment zones” that were too isolated from transport connections and too divorced from any local economic activity to result in a viable outcome. Some local leaders have also been keen to push ahead with urban expansion because the upgrading from the status of a county seat to a city yields financial benefits and greater control over locally generated revenue.

Although there is the danger of waste and environmental damage resulting from the construction and/or expansion of cities without due regard for local conditions, it is nevertheless the case that smaller cities and county seats have been playing an important role in providing employment opportunities for rural people and that there is still scope for expanding this role in the future. Building new towns and cities creates jobs in construction. It also creates jobs in the service sector: in China, the service sector accounts for less than 30 per cent of GDP, whereas in developed countries it is more than 60 per cent – a difference which according to Chinese planners indicates that the service sector will be able to absorb more labourers (Liu, et al., 2004: 292). A final indication of the importance of small cities in providing jobs is that around 50 per cent of China’s floating population has migrated **within** provincial boundaries, often to small and medium-sized cities (*China Daily*, 15 May 2004).

The second important objective pursued by town and city construction is to increase the opportunities for rural households to diversify their livelihoods locally through off-farm employment. Studies the world over, including in China, show that it is access to off-farm income rather than the size of land allocations that is the main determinant of wealth inequalities in villages. Studies conducted in various developing countries also find that small cities, market towns and rural enterprises are important focal points for increasing the off-farm livelihood options of the rural poor (Ellis, 1998), and that outmigration is highest from regions with few locally available options (Connell, et al., 1979: 47; Croll and Huang, 2000: 128-149; Hare, 2002; de Haan, 1999). In China, large numbers of rural households have family members who commute to nearby county seats and small cities for casual trade and piece-rate work. But, given that the economic future of these enterprises is uncertain and that their longer-term survival is threatened by poor production quality, obsolete technology and competition from urban-based producers and foreign imports, rural workers cannot feel secure in their employment. In the absence of comprehensive welfare packages, the access of rural households to their land-use rights as well as to a rural enterprise income continues to be central to their livelihood security. A further consideration is that the development of township and village enterprises has been most successful in the coastal regions, where geographical location and dense transport connections have enabled the provision of logistical and support services. However, in the interior where the bulk of surplus rural labour is located, less well-developed transport connections and the dispersed development of

rural enterprises mean that the rural enterprise sector is not sufficiently robust to absorb large numbers of labourers.

Returning migrants have been hailed in much of the Chinese academic and policy literature (including in the white paper, *China's Employment Situation and Policies*, 2004) as potential contributors to town construction and township and village enterprise creation in interior provinces. Several studies detail the ways in which individuals have used capital, contacts, skills and information accumulated during their time as migrant workers to set up businesses and build houses in towns and county seats. These studies find that migrants are often able to learn a new skill or improve and refine an existing skill through their urban work experience (e.g. Mobility and Rural Development Research Group, 1999). One example is that of village carpenters who make crude low chairs and tables and then, through migrant work experience, learn to make refined and polished lacquer pieces. Nankang furniture city in Jiangxi province has become famous as the place where several hundred former migrant workers from Guangdong furniture factories have set up networked workshops to produce elegant furniture. The local timber resources, combined with the city's location close to a new railway connection enable the products to be distributed within China as well as to be exported. Many migrants also obtain specific items of market information through their time in the city that lead to particular business opportunities in the sending region. Although not all returned migrants are successful entrepreneurs and not all remain permanently in the home area, the fact that a small proportion of returnees are entrepreneurial means that in some regions their economic impact may be much greater than their numbers alone would suggest. For instance, according to an article in the *China Daily*, by 2000, of some 10 million labourers who had left Sichuan province, around 4 per cent returned and set up business in their home areas (Zheng, 2000).

While returned migrants do set up businesses, there are several caveats to be borne in mind. First, in China, as in other countries, most of the beneficial return flows from migration go to localities that are sufficiently strong economically to offer investment possibilities. This means that poor and remote sending areas are unlikely to benefit from return migrant entrepreneurship. Second, although the migrants say that they are **returning home** to set up their business, on the whole they are not going back to their villages, but are pursuing a second stage of migration to a nearby town, county seat or small city – so return migrant entrepreneurship seldom directly transforms the home villages. I have, however, seen several villages in which, on account of an urban purchaser contacted through a migrant, many households had become involved in a side-line activity, most commonly basket weaving. Third, it is also a fact that many businesses set up by returned migrants actually fail. Aside from the high failure rate of small businesses the world over, a further factor in the case of returnee enterprises is that the kind of enterprise set up by the returned migrant is largely determined by the nature of the individuals' city work experience rather than by the realities of the place to which they are returning. There was, for instance, one man who returned to a rural township in Jiangxi province to set up a mannequin factory because he had learned how to make the moulds in Guangdong. Unfortunately, his investment was wasted because there was no market for mannequins in his county seat and he was too distant from transport connections and contacts to sell his product to other localities. Fourth, it is often difficult for migrant entrepreneurs to market their products. If they are subcontracting, for instance, completing a partially produced garment for a coastal partner, their dependence on one purchaser for their product leaves them with little leverage to negotiate prices. Some small-scale producers overcome the difficulties in marketing their product by using cheaper materials to

make affordable stylish shoes, handbags and clothes for local rural consumers. Finally, returnee enterprises in poorer locations are on the whole only able to survive because agriculture contributes enough to the subsistence of the workers so that low wages are possible.

Government efforts to encourage and support return migrant entrepreneurship have been significant in some counties and resulted in the establishment of several large factories and many smaller workshops and stalls. These government efforts have included distributing letters to migrants who have advanced to white-collar positions in urban factories and visiting successful migrants in the cities to offer them preferential access to land, electricity and other resources, and to grant them tax exemptions. This support is important because, as scholars researching in other countries have noted, migrants often return home with information, equipment or training that is overlooked by local leaders, and the returnees' hopes of becoming self-employed are subsequently frustrated by obstacles such as predatory officialdom and the lack of micro credit (e.g. Laite, 1985). In the case of rural China, studies find that most villagers are not well equipped to become entrepreneurs and those who were able to establish businesses have, on the whole, some previous experience that they were able to use in business management; for instance, many were former commune managers or former soldiers (e.g. Chan, et al., 1992) – now some returned migrants could be added to this list.

The approach of the Chinese leadership in encouraging entrepreneurship in county seats and small urban settlements has certainly meant that many rural people have obtained the moral and practical support necessary to earn a better livelihood. In the case of interior counties, this support could include the use of increased deposits obtained through remittances to increase the availability of micro credits: this suggestion has been made by several Chinese scholars and banking research groups, but has not really been translated into practice (e.g. Research Group of the Yichun Prefecture Agricultural Bank Planning Research Group and Zhangshu City Agricultural Bank Planning and Science Federation). A further aspect of providing support could involve the creation of business advice centres: instead of a fixation on the physical creation of showcase factories, these advisers would, where appropriate, **dissuade** individuals from embarking on unviable projects.

Summary: China's policies of developing towns and small cities, and of supporting entrepreneurial returning migrants have helped some rural people to improve their livelihoods, either by becoming urban residents or by partaking in rural livelihood diversification within their localities. Channelling the massive injection of migrant remittances towards expanding the availability of, and access to micro credit, could encourage entrepreneurship and local diversification opportunities. At the same time, continued vigilance is needed to ensure that all forms of rural industry creation, including that by returned migrants are, in fact, viable depending on local socio-economic and environmental conditions. Vigilance is also needed to ensure that urban expansion is sensitive to local economic and environmental conditions.

3. DIVERSIFIED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND AGRO-INDUSTRIES

The two major obstacles to raising the living standards in China's rural areas include the lack of jobs for rural surplus labourers and the stagnation of agricultural incomes. The figures suggest

that surplus labour in rural areas is likely to continue to be a problem for the foreseeable future. There were 328 million agricultural labourers in China at the end of 2001, and this number has increased by over 8 million in each subsequent year. Moreover, an estimated one-third of China's rural labourers – 150 million rural surplus labourers – are underemployed, and between 2001 and 2010 a further 63.5 million surplus rural labourers will be added (Zhang, 2003). At the same time, WTO entry and competition from cheaper and higher quality imports is expected to result in the loss of at least 20 million jobs in agriculture. Major grain-producing areas will be the hardest hit because China has no comparative advantage in grain: both the production costs and retail prices of China's grain are above the world market average. Oil- and cotton-producing regions will, for similar reasons, also be negatively affected.

Adjusting the structure of agricultural production is now one of the governments' priority tasks (*China Daily*, 26 April 2004). One aspect of this adjustment involves encouraging farmers to improve the quality rather than quantity of their produce. In Jiangxi, initiatives to improve quality have included programmes whereby township and village cadres actively inform farmers about new seed varieties and guide them when and how to apply pesticides and fertilizers. The initiatives also include classes to instruct village and township cadres and agricultural technicians about WTO regulations regarding food exports, for example, what fertilizers and pesticides are permissible. Another aspect involves initiatives to encourage farmers to pursue animal husbandry and aquaculture because these ventures are labour intensive and generate higher incomes than conventional grain production. Encouraging this specialized production is in accordance with the ILO approach to development that emphasizes the creation of jobs and the securing of individual entitlement to income above the pursuit of economic growth per se.

During the late 1990s and into the twenty-first century a policy approach of integrating the commercialization of agricultural production with the development of rural towns and processing enterprises in China's interior provinces has gained ground. Indeed, some planners advocate that the partial/complete processing of agricultural products must become the cornerstone of the rural enterprise sector (also township and village enterprise sector). To this end, it was stated at the Fifteenth Meeting of the Third Plenary Session (1998) that township and village enterprises should focus on processing subsidiary agricultural products, the storage and preservation of foods and their dispatch, transport and marketing. The Ninth Five Year Plan (1996-2000) emphasized the increased construction of agricultural processing bases and the exploration of appropriate means to deliver the finished products to export markets.

The Chinese Government has advocated concrete measures to encourage the development of agribusinesses. One set of initiatives involves tax concessions and loans for some agribusinesses. Another initiative, started in 2001 (a variation and elaboration of previous agricultural extension initiatives), concerns the establishment of specialized agricultural production ventures and demonstration depots that are linked with agro-industries located in county seat processing zones. The demonstration depots inform farmers about new crops and animals through examples and provide material, information and business linkages for them. The situation in rural Jiangxi province suggests that although such government-initiated specialized production and processing bases have yielded some positive results, there is the risk that if such projects are established primarily through administrative fiat and in response to official concerns about reaching top-down quotas for bringing in investments and setting up projects, the actual aims of the initiative

will not be achieved. This is because the cadres' rush to show political results is likely to lead to the creation of wasteful projects and showcase zones with little economic robustness.

Chinese policy makers have increased their emphasis on integrating agricultural production with agricultural processing industries for several reasons. First, agricultural processing enterprises may be more viable than township and village industries, because the latter face increased difficulties following WTO accession and mounting competition from superior imports. Second, the partial and complete processing of agricultural produce is labour intensive. This is well suited to the conditions of surplus labour and capital shortage that characterize the economy in the interior provinces. Third, ideally, rural towns and enterprises should facilitate the development of higher value cash crops and husbandry by making the products more saleable. For instance, Chinese commentators point out that oil, condiments and sugar from China should be competitive in domestic and international markets, but they are handicapped in sales because their processing and packaging is not competitive. Fourth, agricultural processing industries play an important role in propelling the development of agricultural production by adding value to products, thereby generating resources that could be reinvested into the rural economy. Finally, there is immense potential for the development of agricultural processing enterprises, in particular the processing of foodstuffs. This is suggested by the fact that processing levels in China lag far behind those of developed countries (Liu, et al., 2004). Given the effects of urbanization, new lifestyles, increased per capita incomes and new consumer patterns in China there is also the likelihood that consumer demand for a variety of processed foods will increase.

Prior to 2000 government control over grain purchasing and marketing in China was high. The cropping choices of farmers were also subject to much local government intervention. In recent years much more flexibility was introduced into agricultural production and marketing in interior provinces. Also, prefectural and county governments have made strenuous efforts to develop Internet access to agricultural bureau offices in rural townships and counties for the dissemination of information about agricultural product varieties, market prices and regional investment opportunities. The work style of county agricultural bureaux has also shifted from issuing orders to farmers about what to produce, for example setting quotas of a favoured cash crop, to providing information and services to farmers through hotlines, the internet and introductions to individuals and agencies able to provide product information and investment.

In agricultural counties, migration and return migration are just one small part of wider processes of information exchange and liberalization that overlap with other sources of information exchange and innovation. For instance, there are cases of returned migrants who had information and contacts regarding a new agricultural product and an urban marketing outlet gained during their stay in the city. Because the proposed initiatives involve the sub-contracting of many village households to produce a set amount of the new product, for instance American bullfrogs, bait, catfish, scorpions or Chinese medicine (all examples I encountered in Jiangxi), the innovators receive poverty alleviation loans or other credits arranged through the local government, as well as technical support from the county agricultural bureau. There are also cases where initial information about an opportunity is obtained through a returning migrant, and then the local agricultural bureau investigates further to see if it is worth attracting investment to develop the project. Finally, there are cases where contact is made with an investor and the project is developed in conjunction with a county government agency.

Examples of the agricultural restructuring policy and the potential indirect contributions of migration can be seen in one Jiangxi county that I visited in 2004. The agriculture bureau cadres invested their own money in raising rabbits and fish in an agricultural demonstration depot – rural households also began their own rabbit- and fish-raising projects, obtaining the young rabbits and eggs, feed and technical information from the agricultural bureau and selling the grown rabbits and fish back to the bureau. A factory processing rabbit fur and leather was set up in 2003 with the investment from a Zhejiang boss. Other factories have also been established in the past one to three years, such as for curing duck meat, canning fish, processing vegetables and producing make-up. One of these bosses was contacted through a returned migrant, while others approached the county government after learning about incentives and opportunities by word of mouth and through the county website. Once these rabbit, duck and fish ventures had been established, raising livestock provided outlets for the investment of remittances as well as for other sources of income for rural households. Sometimes migrants also help in selling these products. For instance, one village in the county specializes in growing chrysanthemums used for Chinese medicine and a processing factory has been established in a nearby township – now, migrants from the township assist with sales in coastal regions.

Summary: Given the reality that large numbers of labourers will continue to earn their living in agriculture in the foreseeable future, and that their goods will face fierce competition from superior and cheaper imports, the Chinese Government has been trying to restructure agricultural production. This has involved promoting labour-intensive cash crops and animal husbandry and linking diversified agriculture with the development of processing enterprises. In interior provinces, much of this innovation has been state-led, largely because of a continuing tendency for local governments to interfere in household production decisions; because farmers lack the money to invest in their own innovative projects, and because it is difficult for them to obtain reliable information about products and markets. Information flows established through return migration have in some instances contributed to innovations in agriculture, but they are just one small part of other information flows, including those facilitated by county and township governments, the media and broader social networks. The increasing liberalization of the agricultural sector is likely to improve conditions for bottom-up innovation in agriculture.

4. HELP FOR THE LEFT-BEHINDS (THE ELDERLY)

Many families with migrant members benefit from remittances. Depending on the location, estimates of the contribution made by remittances to the per capita income in a village range from 10-30 per cent. This money alleviates the worries of many left-behinds over meeting the expenses of building a house, paying school fees or for marriage and lifecycle ceremonies, and purchasing agricultural inputs. It also enables people to buy consumer goods that improve the quality of their lives. Even though the contribution of remittances is crucial to the livelihoods of people in rural areas, this money is obtained through the long-term loss of key members from the family and community. It should also be noted that not all members of a family necessarily benefit from remittances, either because the migrants fail in the cities, or because this money is not allocated to them.

Those who remain on the land often experience difficulties in their daily life and work. The nature of these difficulties varies from village to village. This is because each village establishes a connection with a particular destination area and urban occupational sector, and different forms of urban employment remove different kinds of labour from the village. The kind of link a village establishes with a destination area and occupation is determined by the effects of chain migration, the accumulation of different skills in different localities, the local gender norms and divisions of labour in the village, and the particular demands in urban sectors for particular kinds of labour. Villages also differ as regards the duration of migrants' absences and their involvement in village life as this will depend on the distance between origin and destination areas, transport and the labour demands of urban employment.

In villages where most people leave to work as traders, the need for many hands means that most adult labourers depart from the village, leaving only the very old and the very young behind. If the destination area is far away from the village, migrants are less likely to return home on a regular basis. Remittances may also be fewer because the migrants feel more detached from the concerns of the village and may elect to use their money to expand their urban stall or business. Alternatively, if an overnight train is available between the origin and destination areas, then migrants may shuttle between them thus maintaining involvement in both the urban activity and the rural family and land. In other villages men go to work in the mines leaving women and the elderly behind in the village. In yet other villages, the migrants work in factories which means that predominantly younger people, usually young single adults are recruited, with more middle aged and elderly labourers remaining in the villages. As the work in mines and factories is exacting and insecure, the migrants generally remit money home to maintain a stake in the village and its resources and to prepare for their return.

Because of the huge variety in migration patterns and socio-economic conditions across villages, the effects of labour migration for sending communities always depend on the particular context (de Haan, 1999). Therefore, policy interventions to help people in the sending villages need to be based on an understanding of local conditions and problems as there is no "one-size-fits-all" policy response.

It is nevertheless possible to generalize about the kind of support needed by the people who are left behind. Given the limited space here, I focus on the often overlooked group of the elderly. The main difficulties faced by the left-behind elderly (and also left-behind spouses) include being overworked with farming and childcare, and feeling lonely. The kind and extent of support appropriate for these particular groups of vulnerable left-behinds depends on the village characteristics regarding the quality and size of land holdings, as also the number and vitality of those remaining in the village. Household characteristics affecting needed amount of support include the wealth, health, age and numbers of labourers still remaining in the household, as well as the number of dependants. Here it should be noted that, although at the aggregate level and in the popular perception it is only "surplus" or zero-value labour that migrates, when examined at the village or household level it is often the most vital and essential labourers who leave, leading to severe labour shortages.

In one township that I visited most adult labourers spent much of the year in the city as traders. Even so, convenient transport enabled them to return often to the village. They maintained an

interest in the village, in part because the land was fertile and flat and offered the potential to generate income. The local township government responded to the labour shortages in agriculture by organizing collective mechanized ploughing and harvesting services. Most migrants were willing to use their remittances to pay for these labour substitution services and to shuttle back to the village to coordinate particular farming tasks at particular intervals. The farming support service generated revenue for the local government and also offered relief for the elderly family members and spouses remaining in the village as well as for the migrants themselves. But this option was only available for those able to pay, and was only feasible in localities where the land is reasonably flat.

The elderly provide crucial assistance in caring for grandchildren. This can be a strain if they are in poor health, given that young children are prone to running around and the grandparents must always be alert to dangers in the rural environment as, for instance, irrigation water channels. Some villages have a privately run kindergarten that can ease the care burden for some elderly grandparents or wives who have been left behind. At around 100 yuan per year, the fees for these kindergartens are affordable for all but the poorest.

Despite all the labour that the rural elderly devote to making the migration of their adult children socially and economically possible, they are often perceived, and even perceive themselves, as burdens rather than as contributors. Their access to remittances varies from household to household. Although many elderly do receive remittances, migration exacerbates existing struggles within families (common in all countries) over resources. As detailed by researchers of family economics (Sen, 1991; Kabeer, 1994), those members who are not perceived by others as active contributors often lose out in negotiations over the allocation of resources and work burdens. Several scholars have written about the worsening social conditions of the elderly in rural China and their rising suicide rates (see WHO country survey) as families are becoming increasingly nuclear and subject to pressures, including those associated with migration (Zhang, 2004; Yan, 2002). This contrasts with the situation in rural South Africa where, owing to the pensions they receive, the elderly are visible contributors to their families and so enjoy high status. Even though in China old age security is mostly centred on families, and this arrangement is buttressed by various laws, including a 1996 law intended to protect the rights and interests of the elderly, the Chinese Government is currently exploring ways to provide pensions to the elderly in rural areas. There have been some localized pilot projects – and there may be scope for international development agencies to assist with devising or expanding these projects.

Summary: Help for the “left-behinds” and the elderly is the least well-developed aspect of policy responses to migration in both China and other countries. Localized government and community resources are available in some villages in China to ease the work burden in farming and childcare for the elderly and other left-behinds, for example, mechanized ploughing services and kindergartens. But, for the most part, the elderly shoulder a heavier work burden on account of outmigration. This, however, does not always mean that they are correspondingly valued and supported. Independent access to cash income could greatly empower some of the most vulnerable among them.

CONCLUSION

In recent years, rather than trying to limit rural-urban labour migration, the Chinese Government has been facilitating the settlement of rural people in urban areas and urban jobs. It has done so by supporting the expansion of both basic education and specialist vocational training, easing restrictions on the movement of rural people to urban centres, and promoting the development and expansion of towns, county seats and small cities.

Aware, however, that it is not possible for everyone to move into secure urban employment in the short or even intermediate term, the Chinese Government recognizes that the livelihood for many will continue to depend on the rural economy. Therefore, employment-generating strategies involve rural livelihood diversification and agricultural diversification. Rural livelihood diversification requires that farmers' land-use rights continue to be protected so that they are able to use subsistence/petty commodity farming as a base while pursuing off-farm income either locally in towns and rural enterprises, or in other regions through migration and remittances. Agricultural diversification involves adjusting the structure of agricultural production so that farmers no longer depend only on subsistence grain production, but can also engage in activities that yield higher incomes, such as producing high quality cash crops, partaking in animal husbandry, and working in agricultural support and processing businesses and in other agribusinesses.

In some localities the government has encouraged returned migrants and the families of migrants to use the resources generated by migration to become involved in off-farm enterprise creation and diversified agricultural production. This has taken the form of tax concessions and assistance to obtain access to inputs, such as land and electricity. This practical support could also extend to using increased rural deposits from remittances to expand the availability of micro credits in counties, townships and villages. It is important, though, that micro credits not be extended only to people who develop special on- and off-farm ventures, but also to the poorest farmers, some of whom are forced to borrow fertilizer from their neighbours and repay their loan with grain after the harvest, again depriving them of sufficient input.

The Chinese Government's approach of facilitating migration and diversifying the livelihood options for those who stay behind is to be encouraged. But in China, as in most other countries, there are very vulnerable people whose needs cannot be met simply by increasing the number and range of opportunities for higher paying work. These include the injured, the sick, the elderly and the very young. Their needs tend to be overlooked by governments and development agencies because urbanization, town construction, skills training and education, and the creation of rural enterprises and processing businesses are more dynamic and results-oriented and more likely to attract attention and resources.

The situation of the elderly in rural China is of particular concern as their lives have been dramatically affected by migration. Instead of receiving filial care in their old age, many are expected to support the migration of their adult children despite their frailty and advanced years. The main problems faced by the elderly on account of the outmigration of their adult children include increased workloads, lack of emotional support as well as lack of income or economic support. In some townships the work of the elderly and other "left-behinds" is eased by government-run

mechanized services for ploughing and harvesting. There are also community- and household-level solutions to labour shortages, such as the formation of mutual help work teams and hired labour, and the establishment of private kindergartens. Income support is a more serious problem. Although remittances are an important contribution to the livelihoods of most villages affected by outmigration, not all rural people actually receive remittances. Some only have the right to keep and use the grain they produce from farming their adult children's land. Moreover, some who receive support, such as the elderly, often feel that they are a burden and their dependence deprives them of bargaining power within their households. Evidence from other countries (e.g. South Africa and India) suggests that income entitlements are central to ensuring the well-being of the elderly poor because they increase their status within their families and are a more effective way to ensure food security than the access to land alone. China already has plans to provide old age security in rural areas, and this should be encouraged.

Of course, it is important to note that migration can create or exacerbate vulnerability not only for those left behind in the countryside, but also for those living in the cities. In particular, if migrant workers become sick, injured, unemployed or old they are invariably left to their own devices. And this is despite the fact that most become sick or injured on account of unsafe or poor working conditions, and that many are dismissed by employers without notice and with their wages unpaid. Given that the long-term aim of China's planners is to build a predominantly urban society, the concept of "urbanization" needs to be broadened to include not only the expansion of construction and urban space, but also of social protection. Humanitarian reasons aside, only when workers have better conditions and access to security will they feel safe enough to relinquish their land permanently.

According to leading Chinese demographers, for example Zheng Zizhen, head of the Sociology and Population Research Institute, Guangdong Academy of Social Sciences, there will be no relief from rural surplus labour before 2030 (Central News Agency, 28 February 2005). This means that the outflow from interior rural localities to the cities and the coast will continue. The question of how to respond to migration and how to use migration in ways that benefit the livelihoods of rural people in both the cities and the countryside is, therefore, of critical importance. The Chinese Government has clearly already come up with some worthwhile answers, and is in the process of exploring many others.

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CONFERENCE REPORT AND SYNTHESIS OF DISCUSSIONS*

The conference focused on managing migration, in particular internal migration, with a view to promoting development and reducing poverty. This chapter summarizes the discussions that took place during the conference, as follows: (1) A review of the main key note and country presentations, (2) A summary of the five conference workshops and (3) General recommendations extracted from the policy roundtable and reflections on the conference session, as well as from cross-cutting debates.

1. A REVIEW OF THE MAIN KEY NOTE AND COUNTRY PRESENTATIONS

1.1 Introductory remarks

Managing internal migration with the objectives of maximizing benefits and reducing risks

The conference opened with addresses from the three partners organizing the conference: the People's Republic of China (PRC) with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the representative of Gansu Province, where the conference was held, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Steve Jones, special consultant to the event, facilitated the conference sessions. The speakers acknowledged from the start that the current debate on development and migration, was clearly focused on international migration rather than on internal movements. Moreover, internal migration is generally perceived as a barrier rather than a contribution to development. The conference aimed to respond to these concerns by setting internal migration on the agenda and exploring its social and economic determinants and impacts.

Internal migration is a major local and regional issue

Yang Zhiming, Vice Governor of Gansu Province, welcomed the participants to the city of Lanzhou and Gansu Province, with its 26 million inhabitants and cultural and ethnical diversity. His address established from the start the reality of internal migration at the local level, and that regional authorities have an important role to play.

* Prepared by Dina Ionescu, IOM Research Officer, Research and Publications Division, IOM Geneva. With the contribution of Jennifer Holdaway, Program Officer, Social Science Research Council (SSRC), USA on the Gender workshop.

Recognizing and promoting migrants as a valuable human resource

Chen Weixiong, Senior Counsellor, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of China emphasized that this conference represented a step forward in recognizing migrants as a valuable human resource. He also stated that this also called for the better integration of migration concerns into other development preoccupations, such as education, employment or health issues. He also stressed the need to take into account the negative trends, such as trafficking in human beings. He underlined his government's intention to take the necessary action and implement appropriate policies.

Migration as a means to contribute to poverty reduction

In his welcoming address, **Adrian Davis**, Head of DFID China, explained DFID's intention to contribute through this conference with examples and analysis of successful experiences gained in reducing the poverty and vulnerability of migrants. Making the migration process a safer, and a more productive venture was central to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). In pursuit of this objective, which DFID fully supported, it was necessary to identify and understand the conditions conducive to poverty reduction and development, and the role that migration could play in this regard. As part of this process, migrants should be accorded the guidance and support, irrespective of age, ethnicity, gender, educational levels or social status. He indicated that DFID was active in China, on a broad range of international development issues, in particular concerning the interlinkage between migration and education, health, water and sanitation, areas in which additional efforts are needed to reach the goals.

Understanding international and internal migrations dynamics with a development objective

Completing the introduction, **Gervais Appave**, Director of IOM's Migration Policy, Research and Communication Department, underlined the importance of launching an international dialogue on internal migration, a matter which until now had been the subject of discussion at national level. For IOM this conference was part of a broader line of investigation and study concerning the complex relationship between migration and development.

Internal migration is diverse, often temporary and contributes to the expansion of the informal sector

The keynote speaker at the Conference, Ms. **Priya Deshingkar**, Research Fellow at the Overseas Development Institute, London, pointed to the wide range of new push and pull factors driving internal migration in Asia. In that connection she referred, in particular, to an increase in temporary movements triggered, among other factors, by environmental hazards and degradation and an expanding informal sector. The growth of the manufacturing sector and the sprawling urbanization remain very important internal migration driving forces.

She also pointed out that in some countries, rural-to-rural movements were considerably more important than those from rural to urban destinations. Priya Deshingkar also demonstrated in her contribution that migration could and did create virtuous circles between urban and rural areas, that contributed to a reduction in poverty and inequality however, sudden shifts in the opportunities in certain labour sectors, could reduce or wipe out the beneficial impacts. Thus, migration

remained a risky and expensive undertaking for the individuals and their families and communities. Coherent development programmes and policy frameworks were a necessary prerequisite to realizing the potentially positive outcomes for both the individuals concerned and the labour and economic development impact sought.

Five research and policy themes related to the MDGs to nourish debates issues

To close the morning session, **Frank Laczko**, Chief, Research and Publications, IOM Geneva, outlined current policy approaches on internal migration and development, encompassing pre-migration programmes, integration of migrants in receiving regions, support for those left behind and managing return flows. Furthermore, he invited the participants to look into the reasons that have led to the neglect of internal migration in the current migration and development debate, when it is clearly very important in scale and significant from a development perspective, given that the poor tend to move internally rather than internationally. Finally, he introduced the five conference workshops, “Internal migration and poverty reduction”; “Health, social protection and internal migration”; “Gender and internal migration”; “Linking internal and international migration” and “Enhancing the evidence base on internal migration”, and emphasized their significance to the achievement of the MDGs. If migration is to be better integrated into various development frameworks, it is necessary to demonstrate how migration can contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

1.2 Country case studies

The presentation of the various country case studies invited lively discussions among the participants.

The People’s Republic of China

The keynote address on China was delivered by Professor **Huang Ping**, Director General of the Bureau of International Cooperation, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). He informed the conference participants that the Chinese Government had recently adopted a more positive attitude towards rural to urban migration flows, in particular following the earlier shift of emphasis from agriculture to industrial development, and from a planned to a market economy. The process of reforming the *Hukou* registration system, started a few years ago, is still ongoing. The “New Paradigm for Development Strategy” was designed to foster a balanced geographical, social and economic development. Some sending areas perceive labour migration as a development strategy to reduce rural poverty, and most internal migration flows are directed from villages to towns and cities and into off-farm activities, and from the interior to coastal areas.

Massive migration flows have given rise to various difficulties, despite the efforts to manage them. Among these is the so-called “floating population”, people who are neither registered in their home nor their host regions. A new phenomenon in China is the return of migrants to their villages, disappointed with the labour market and poor working conditions. These returns to home areas cause labour shortages in urban areas, as happened in 2004. Other returns can be beneficial for home areas, such as remittances sent by migrants, the experience gained and improved family status, particularly for female labourers. In addition, **Huang Ping** highlighted

some positive outcomes of internal migration for receiving areas, for example the relaxing of institutional boundaries between rural and urban areas as well as coastal and central regions.

Bangladesh

Rita Afsar, Senior Research Fellow and Head of the Human Resource Division at the Bangladesh Institute for Development Studies presented the Bangladesh case study. She emphasized a number of key messages: migration takes various forms depending on the physical, human and social capital available, and can boost incomes depending on conditions at departure and opportunities at arrival. However, gains from migration can be short lived in the absence of appropriate policies concerning these mobile populations. She reminded the participants that NGOs are also having difficulties in interacting with the poor migrant groups, who are excluded even from micro-finance programmes because of the interplay between the supply and demand for credit. Therefore, policies should be adapted to include the extreme poor, as current macro level and sector-led strategies cannot target these populations. The policy tools proposed to better integrate poor migrants include the decentralization and devolution of power and finances to local governments, flexible micro-financing and savings programmes and a broader safety net to cover urban and rural poor populations.

Cambodia

The Cambodian case study was introduced by **Bruno Maltoni**, Professor at the Royal University of Phnom Penh. He highlighted that internal migration in Cambodia was mostly short term and seasonal for paid work. The main factors influencing internal migration were demographic growth, the availability of land and the appearance of new labour markets that are not land-related. **Bruno Maltoni** also showed the general increase in migration as such, and specifically in urban migration between 1996 and 1998, from 17.43 per cent of the total urban population to 29.56 per cent, respectively.

The Cambodian case study also puts in perspective the magnitude of internal migration compared with international movements: in 1998 only 5.92 per cent of migrants moved across borders, with 94.08 per cent moving inside the country. Furthermore, a considerable portion moved within the same district (34.34%) or the same province (23%), with only 36 per cent crossing into another province. Two final distinctive points emphasized were that much of the migration movement was rural to rural – for both men and women – and that more moves are made for family and marital reasons than for work, although family and marital migration can hide labour migration, people taking new jobs after the move.

India

Ravi Srivastava, Professor at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, presented the Indian case study. He explained that both of the two major official data sources used to measure internal migration underestimate some important migration streams and that migration had a low or mainly negative visibility in India. The estimates suggest that 27.4 per cent of the population are internal migrants, representing nearly 232 million people, and possibly 25 million short-term labour migrants, of whom 15-20 million are seasonal. It was interesting to note that the poor

populations accounted for a larger percentage of short-duration migrants, and that these movements, in particular, were underestimated.

Ravi Srivastava drew attention to two main areas for policy action – ensuring basic entitlements to migrants and their families, which might require some form of registration to facilitate their access to social services, and improving labour market access and conditions by simplifying and implementing appropriate labour laws. He emphasized the need to advocate for a positive view of migration and migrants to strengthen their representation and counteract stereotypes and prejudice.

Pakistan

The Pakistan case study was presented by **Rashid Memon**, Research Associate at the Collective for Social Science Research, Karachi. Attention was focused on the role of labour markets in favouring or impeding migration. The bonded labour market in sending regions, where the employer retains the worker's earnings to repay an outstanding debt, as well as the segmentation of markets in destination areas, both restrict migration opportunities. However, labour market complexities cannot explain migration in its entirety, given that social networks play a significant role in the migration process. According to the Pakistan Integrated Household Survey undertaken in 1998, 21.5 per cent of the population are migrants, representing 48 per cent of all households. Migration remains a predominantly rural phenomenon in Pakistan (56% of movements). Economic migrants move mainly towards urban areas, and indirect evidence indicates that even greater numbers of people move temporarily.

Rashid Memon argued that the recent amendments to labour laws, such as the Minimum Wage Act, have positive effects, yet many internal migrants are in the informal sector that is not covered by existing labour laws. Further enforcement of labour contracts and improved methods of collective bargaining can contribute to support migrants.

Viet Nam

The Viet Nam case study was introduced by **Anh Dang Nguyen**, Director of the Social Development Programme at the Asia Pacific Development Centre, Hanoi, who concentrated on voluntary economic rural to urban migration under the Vietnamese economic reforms, started in 1986. Migration in Viet Nam appears as a viable option and a livelihood strategy for poor people. Since the start of the reforms, 6.5 per cent of the population has migrated internally (4.4 million people), a figure that does not include important short-term and temporary migration. In consequence, the scale and volume of migration to urban centres and, in line therewith, the informal sector have grown substantially, making it difficult to gather evidence. The increased feminization of these flows has been noted.

The speaker underlined the negative and positive dimensions of these movements: on the one hand, migrants lack social protection and work under harmful conditions; on the other, the multiplier effect of migrant remittances can be observed through an increase in local demand for goods and services, easing the strain of daily expenses and longer-term investments in, for example, housing, health and education. To conclude, **Anh Dang Nguyen** recommended different avenues for action: simplifying the *Hukou* system, collecting and making better use of data,

improving migrant access to basic services, mainstreaming migration in development programmes and advocating the positive potential of migration through policy dialogue.

1.3 Questions and cross-cutting issues

Managing internal migration

The conference offered a very useful comparison among different strategies to manage internal migration. Asian countries use extremely diverse strategies, ranging from control to non-intervention. In spite of changing policies, Viet Nam still has recourse to a well-enforced registration process and procedures that, according to **Dang Nguyen Anh**, remain complicated in urban areas and make it difficult for migrants to access social services. Pakistan, in contrast, has not introduced any specific legislation concerning internal migration but, as highlighted by **Rashid Memon**, many social and labour market obstacles act as impediments. India placed no restrictions on internal migration, however, as pointed out by **Ravi Srivastava**, there are a number of policy initiatives related to internal migration concerns that have been introduced, such as HIV prevention, job creation and the education of migrant children. In the case of China, the transfer of rural labour is part of an overall strategy to respond to labour demands in urban areas and non-farming sectors.

Labour needs and shortages affect migration patterns

Changes in labour markets directly affect internal migration dynamics. In Cambodia, the opening of new labour markets was as a definite factor in attracting migrants. The garment industry in Bangladesh created numerous opportunities for migrants, particularly women. However, as explained by **Rita Afsar**, this sector-led growth strategy led to a truncated development process and created bottlenecks in delivering basic services. In India, manufacturing in industrial conglomerations attracts large numbers of workers. Export-oriented manufacturing centres in China are major migrant destination areas. Questions were raised on how migration trends would be affected by the future evolution of labour, viz. if and when some industrial sectors in Asia become less labour intensive, what will be the effect on future migration flows?

Internal migration and the labour demand in the informal sector

All country presenters acknowledged that the informal labour sector is a reality directly related to internal migration for work purposes. It is thought that 92 per cent of workers in rural areas in India are in the informal economy. Internal migration in Viet Nam is mainly composed of labourers in exporting manufacturing industries, and of numerous young and low-skilled single persons in the informal sector. Labour discrimination against migrants and ensuring labour standards for migrant workers was discussed during the conference. This requires the enforcement of legal requirements as regards employers, such as the payment of minimum wages, and to enable workers from rural areas to find better jobs both at home and in towns.

Demographic trends interact with urbanization and industrial change

Demographic growth was identified as a factor that strongly influenced internal migration, for instance, in the case of Cambodia. Participants raised questions about the relationship between long-term demand for labour and demography, and how the birth ratio affects migration flows, gender and labour activities. Questions were also raised regarding the disparate demographic policies pursued in India and China and their respective effects, and future scenarios concerning labour supply and demand and their impact on migration trends. It is estimated that by 2015 the Chinese population will have stabilized; but Chinese specialists do not foresee any labour shortages as migration from rural areas is expected to satisfy labour needs.

Land ownership as a significant factor inducing migration

Pakistan, Cambodia, Bangladesh and India, to cite only a few, identified land ownership and the availability of land as important factors influencing migration decisions. Depending on whether women or men own the land, migration would be gender specific.

Migration is affected by class, ethnic, religious, cultural and other group identities

Caste systems, ethnic and group identity issues were identified as factors favouring or impeding internal migration. Caste systems still exist in a number of Asian countries and often determine the economic status of people, in turn affecting migration propensity. Though the caste system is a limiting factor and can impede access to informed and sustainable migration, to move away can also be a means to break out from the caste system.

Linking internal migration and development

One of the chief questions raised during the presentations is whether internal migration could be considered a key engine for growth. Labour migration from rural to urban areas in China is considered to have contributed to 16 per cent of total GDP growth in the past 18 years, through labour force inputs. In contrast, internal migration can also be a barrier to development by limiting the access to public services, in particular education and health. There are number of trade-offs either for the migrants, their families and their home and host regions.

Internal migrants' financial situation, skills, business achievements and returns

Internal migrants can play a role in development through various activities. Evidence regarding internal remittances is less well documented than international remittances. Presenters endeavoured nevertheless to give some examples. Thailand was quoted as an example where internal remittances contributed to reduce households inequalities in rural areas, and evidence from India shows that migrant transfers improved the well-being at household level regarding nutrition, education, housing improvements and daily expenses. For the Asian case study, internal remittances appear to operate as a safety net for poorer migrant households. Evidence is still limited

on the numbers of returning internal migrants and their impact on their communities. In Viet Nam, for instance, returnees invested in new businesses, but in other cases, migrants returned without having been able to save, nor acquire new and useful skills.

2. SYNTHESIS OF THE WORKSHOPS

Five workshops were held during the conference:

1. “Internal migration and poverty reduction”
2. “Health, social protection and internal migration”
3. “Gender and international migration”
4. “Linking internal and international migration”
5. “Enhancing the evidence base on internal migration”.

Each workshop benefited from the expertise of a facilitator, one or more resource persons, and a rapporteur, and sought to identify research gaps and to provide policy guidance.

2.1 Poverty and Internal Migration

This workshop was run twice, allowing a significant number of participants to take part in the debates. The workshops were facilitated by Jillian Popkins, Social Development Advisor, DFID China, with the support of three resource persons: Rachel Murphy, Research Fellow in Contemporary Chinese Studies at the Institute for Chinese Studies at the University of Oxford, UK; Zhu Ling, Deputy Director, Institute of Economics CASS, PRC, and Xiang Biao, Research Officer, University of Oxford. Amar Prasad, Chief Executive Officer, Gramin Vikas Trust, acted as a Rapporteur and presented the conclusions of the workshop in the session dedicated to the workshop briefings.

Poverty, a push factor among others, revealing vast development challenges

The workshop recognized access to off-farm employment as a critical determinant of inequality, and a strategy to escape poverty. However, the poorest of the poor are less able to use migration as a strategy to diversify household economies. There is a need to make a distinction between survival poverty, where poverty is **a very strong push factor** driving people out of home regions because they are unable to achieve basic food security, for example, and the less-poor, who migrate to seek other opportunities and a better life elsewhere. Participants agreed that the **link between poverty and migration is not mechanical**: people do not necessarily move from deprived to better-off regions. To draw an automatic link between poverty and migration can be harmful for a number of reasons. First of all, the poorest of the poor also lack labour skills and the basic resources required to leave their home region. Those who have no resources to migrate, have no resources to survive in poor rural areas either. Therefore, the challenge is to deal with a lack of social and economic sustainability of poor populations in general, deprived regions and very poor landless labourers. The issue of migration needs to be discussed in the broader context of social safety nets in rural areas for the very poorest, and regional economic growth policies.

The risk of poverty transfers through migration

The encouraging of migration as a way to escape poverty was questioned during the workshop. Indeed, adopting migration as a strategy to escape rural poverty can lead to poverty being transferred from rural to urban areas if not managed effectively. Despite possible positive effects, such as reducing poverty through offering new employment opportunities and different types of returns, migration can also have negative effects, such as greater indebtedness to secure the initial resources to move. There are clear trade-offs for migrants between short-term economic gain and increased vulnerability, particularly if their working conditions are unsafe and they do not have access to social services.

Poverty was identified as more than a question of income

Poverty encompasses education and a mindset, especially in the context of globalization where people can compare themselves with other groups and expectations are increasing. Participants noted that even though migration can improve the socio-economic situation of people, policy makers should refrain from using migration as a central means to address poverty. Hence, migration can contribute to development, if not always to poverty reduction. The main concern raised in the discussions on poverty and migration is that development schemes and safety net programmes do not cover poor migrants. Migrants' entitlements, as well as their income, need to be taken into account.

Key messages

Participants agreed that migration could be both a **cause of and remedy for** poverty, depending on prevailing conditions. The workshop conveyed some key messages: first of all, the non-agricultural income (including remittances) is important for poverty reduction, but the **poorest are dependent on agriculture**, and issues such as land ownership will remain critical. The modernization of agricultural production would reduce the cost of internal migration, and would-be migrants in rural areas could have the possibility of finding employment without having to migrate far away from their homes. Second, further clarification is needed to identify **the role of governments, the market, communities and employers** in dealing with migration and poverty reduction, and how the responsibilities are shared. Third, **a positive policy change** in internal migration in China was acknowledged, influenced by the availability of infrastructure, economic growth and political commitment. Fourth, any policy tackling internal migration needs to be **flexible and sensitive** depending on different kinds of environments and realities. Finally, participants considered that the **“voice of migrants”** is important, which means involving migrant representatives in decision making as well as dispute settlement and conflict resolution.

Research principles and gaps in linking poverty and internal migration dynamics

The workshop produced a list of research principles concerning internal migration and development. First, research must be based on **local realities** and linked to dissemination, information and good experience sharing, which can feed into policy.

Participants considered that the main gaps in research were to be found in the following areas: problems in understanding **what causes policy change** and whether policy change is the only,

the most important or one among numerous other factors contributing to migration. This point calls for a better understanding of the reasons for migration, of why people migrate or not. It also means **evaluating the role of governments** in encouraging migration directly or indirectly. Knowledge is also limited concerning the different effects of **seasonal versus permanent** internal migration.

Two other important knowledge gaps were raised: what is the relationship between **migration dynamics** – in particular labour migration – and the growth or sustainability of the **informal economy**; what do we know on absolute poverty and **survival migration**? The migration of the poor is often related to labour in the informal economy, meaning that we lack basic information on who they are, how many, their financial behaviour etc. These movements remain basically informal and lead to the creation of groups such as “floating” migrants who are not registered anywhere and, as such, have no recourse to any public services or safety nets.

Programmes that bring together internal migration and development concerns

A number of ideas for cross-learning and good practice examples were proposed: developing micro-credit schemes to facilitate investments from returning migrants, or the productive use of remittances in home regions; facilitating safe remittance transfers; supporting training programmes and migrant resource centres; dealing with delayed and unpaid wages and, finally, registering migrants and improving their access to services.

2.2 Health, social protection, HIV and internal migration

This workshop was run twice, first focusing on issues of social protection and public services and, second, putting the spotlight on HIV/AIDS issues. The workshop was led by **Danielle Grondin**, Director of the Migration Health Department, IOM, Geneva, with the support of two resource persons: **Xiang Biao** Research Officer, University of Oxford, and **Joel Rehnstrom**, Country Coordinator, UNAIDS. The Rapporteur, **Robyn Iredale**, Associate Professor at the University of Wollongong, Australia, and representing the Asia Pacific Migration Research Network, presented the conclusions during the workshop briefing session.

Participants in the workshop endeavoured to respond to a number of specific questions raised by the interlinkage between internal migration and health.

- How to develop **integration and prevention strategies in rapidly expanding urban environments**?
- To what extent are **existing migration health policies** targeting internal migrants?
- How to **improve access to healthcare** services for internal migrants, especially when the medical schemes are employment based, localized and geographically fragmented?
- How to favour better collaboration on health issues between **sending and receiving regions**?
- How to support **a sustainable public health service**?

Migration is not synonymous with health problems, but can be a cause of vulnerability

Health and migration are linked and interdependent. The health implications of human movements require specific migration management. **Mobility itself is not synonymous with health problems and risks;** however, **migration can increase the vulnerability and health risks** of people, who will be exposed to poor working conditions, overcrowded living quarters, lack of access to health services and education, and risky sexual behaviour. This is particularly true for seasonal migrants, or labour migrants working in sectors where conditions are particularly difficult. UNAIDS in China has pinpointed mobility and migration as risk factors for the spread of HIV, as presented by **Joel Rehnstrom**, UNAIDS Country Coordinator.

Migration can make access to health services more difficult

One other main health issue related to internal migration, which is of concern to all migrants and not only for the poorest ones, is **access to health services, including public health**. Urban environments grew massively in a very short time and do not offer the necessary services. Moreover, internal migrants are not well integrated in the health systems of their home regions nor in the host region, and are thus totally unprotected in case of need.

Key principles on internal migration and health

The participants of the two workshops underlined a few key guiding principles for programmes or policies on internal migration and health. First of all, health should be understood as a “state of well-being”, which means adopting an all-encompassing attitude to health, i.e. physical, mental and social well-being. In order to envisage the migration/mobility and health relationship, policy makers need to take an integrated approach to health and acknowledge migrants as being often exposed to vulnerable situations. The stigmatization of migrants often leads to discrimination, especially when the stigma of “being a migrant” occurs in relation to HIV, mental illness or disability. Regarding access to health services, participants agreed that services must be **portable** from rural to urban environments, **accessible**, which includes making services also “culturally” accessible to all and, finally, **affordable**.

Participants in the workshop agreed on a number of principles for the design of migration and health programmes along the following lines: coherent programmes based on the needs of migrants and communities affected by migration; measures tailored to programme planning and implementing responses; preventive action (e.g. trafficked persons, HIV/AIDS); information sessions that are culturally sensitive and transparent.

Health matters are part of a broad development agenda

Specific attention was given to education and awareness-raising activities for migrants as well as for migrant-receiving regions. These activities should take place in schools and workplaces, or be conveyed through training courses and the media. Policies dealing with health and migration should not be disconnected from a set of other concerns such as housing, living conditions and employment. Participants thought, in particular, that training in occupational health should be provided at the workplace and that training for small and medium-sized enterprises should also include health modules. Finally, particular industrial sectors called for adapted and targeted

responses because they bear more health risks than others. The existing and growing informal sectors are of major concern in terms of healthcare provision, in particular as even basic information about migrant strategies is difficult to come by, and the precarious conditions in which these persons live.

The health of migrants is more than a question of medical care system; it is a development issue **Xiang Biao** presented the work of the COMPAS project (Centre on Migration, Policy and Society, University of Oxford) on the connections between migration and health, discussing the **triangular relationship** between migration, institutional arrangements and health problems. He argued that institutional arrangements are more complex than the medical care system, since medical policies are embedded in many other institutions. Hence, focusing on medical care alone would fail to take account of living and working conditions, which are the reality of migrants' everyday lives.

Examples of programmes responding to health and migration needs

Diverse programmes concerned with the dual internal migration and health concerns have been identified and discussed. Migrants can be targeted at source (in schools), transit (the railway system) or destination (in work places), such as in the United Nations (UN)-Canadian International Development Agency project, a programme on migration and AIDS, combining the expertise of different UN agencies.

Facilitate the inclusion of migrant populations into health systems

Health systems tend to exclude mobile populations. But, participants argued that targeting exclusively migrants might not necessarily lead to the desired result. The challenge is to **better integrate mobile populations into general health systems** and make health systems more sensitive and inclusive, rather than to create new types of programmes for migrants that would keep them separate and open to stigmatization.

Address structural problems and causes of vulnerabilities

Participants considered that the articulation between migration and health problems is at the centre of the migration and development nexus. Helping migrants access health services during the migration route is not sustainable in the long term if policy action is not targeted towards **reducing the conditions of vulnerabilities** (i.e. the living and working conditions). Therefore a **multi-sectoral strategy** should be envisaged that involves not only health but also labour, agricultural and justice sectors, and civil society.

Recommendations for policy action

The workshop provided a number of key recommendations as priorities for future action:

- **Healthcare systems need to be strengthened** to cover migrants.
- Health and internal migration policies should be constructed on **evidence-based** knowledge, which called for better data and research.

- The health of migrants should be integrated into the **overall provision of services affecting health** (living environments, employment, prevention and health education).
- HIV/AIDS interventions should be integrated into existing health services, including **training programmes** for migrants.
- **Culturally appropriate messages** should be practiced (e.g. through media, internet, billboards) and **preventive measures** (e.g. condoms) should be available and affordable.
- **Vulnerable sub-groups**, most exposed sub-sectors and “hot spot” locations should be particularly targeted.

2.3 Gender and internal migration

Jennifer Holdaway, Programme Officer, Social Science Research Council (SSRC), USA, chaired this workshop. Two resource persons introduced the gender and internal migration subject: **Hans van de Glind**, Chief Technical Advisor for the Project to Prevent Trafficking in Girls and Young Women in China at the International Labour Organization (ILO), and **Swarnalathka Ukwata**, Lecturer at the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, while **Dina Ionescu**, Research Officer, IOM, Geneva acted as Rapporteur.

Why consider gender?

Gender was defined as “institutionalized and dynamic relations between men and women, a socially constructed reality at individual and collective levels”. Participants felt that there was still a need to explain the importance of including a gender perspective to many scholars and policy makers, who considered gender issues as problems facing women only. There is insufficient awareness of how gender relations institutionalized in families and households, communities and social structures shape migration, and its potential to contribute to development and to address the problems of social exclusion.

Men and women encounter different opportunities and vulnerabilities

Seen in this light, gender influences who, when, why, how and where the persons will migrate, and pervades every stage of the migration process. Male and female migrants face **different opportunities and vulnerabilities** at each stage, and often draw on different resources, networks and institutions in navigating the migration process.

For instance, at the pre-departure stage men and women will encounter different constraints and prospects. They will have different access to information about migration, education and training opportunities, migration expectations, different landownership commitments etc. In terms of **preparation for migration**, men and women often have unequal access to education, and there are different expectations regarding whether and when women or men should migrate. In general, the preference for boys in most Asian countries means that girls are more likely to leave school early and so be less well prepared for migration. In terms of **the migration process** itself, women are vulnerable in certain obvious ways, and trafficking of women into the sex industry, involuntary marriage or bonded labour is a problem in many Asian countries, as presented by **Hans van de Glind**. However, some of these problems are also relevant to men, especially young boys who are sometimes also at risk of being trafficked into the sex industry.

The labour demand is gender specific

Gender plays a very clear role in determining the kinds of work that men and women migrants do, both through gendered cultural norms and as a result of gendered labour market demand. The gender analysis draws attention to the relevance of sector analysis (some industrial sectors will create needs for male or female workforces) regarding the informal economy (men or women will tend to go more into informal sector depending on local economic and social realities) and the differences in the supply of human capital (men and women are not equally qualified for some specific jobs). **The gendered labour demand** varies considerably by country and even by region. For example, while in China women migrants are most likely to be employed in domestic service, entertainment and light manufacturing, and men are concentrated in the construction industry, in India many female migrants also work in construction. While it is often the case that women migrants are found in the lowest paid and least socially valued occupations, this is not always the case. Male migrants may work in particularly dangerous conditions, such as mines, and may be rejected for some lucrative types of work (for example, light manufacturing) on the grounds that women are more dexterous.

The development strategies of migrants can be gender specific

Clearly, gendered patterns of economic incorporation will lead men and women to reap different returns from migration in terms of income and the acquisition of skills that may improve their subsequent employment prospects. Some research has already shown that there are also gendered patterns of remittances, with women generally remitting more regularly a larger portion of their earnings and, in the case of those who stay behind, being more likely than men to use remittances to pay for education, healthcare and investments in the family.

Equally important, however, for a longer-term assessment of the impact of migration on development, are some of the **social and demographic returns on migration**. For example, research has shown that women who migrate generally expect to have fewer children than do non-migrants: an important change in countries where population growth is a problem. Research in China has also shown that migrant women have more liberal attitudes toward divorce and are less likely to tolerate domestic violence. This work hints at the ways in which migration is changing gender relations with long-term positive implications for development. However, the Sri Lankan case study presented by **Swarnalathka Ukwatta**, Researcher at the University of Colombo, showed that if the migration process empowers women on the short term, this is not sustainable in the long term once they return to traditional households and societies.

An area about which we know less is the question of **social capital and gendered patterns of social exclusion**. Members of the group pointed out that in the process of migration, men often have stronger formal networks that give them superior access to employment opportunities. Yet, women may be more able to draw on the support of informal networks, especially in situations of forced migration.

How can gender improve the knowledge on internal migration?

It was clear from the workshop discussions that considering the role of gender is crucial to the achievement of the MDGs, including not only increasing gender equity for its own sake, but also

improving maternal and child health and combating disease, improving access to education, and reducing poverty, all of which require the full engagement of both men and women and more equitable relations between them.

The gender analysis draws attention to neglected factors that would otherwise remain unexplored: personal relationships, expectations, emotional relations, demographic trends, fertility, pride and even bad conscience.

Challenges of gendered migration for research and policy

A gendered analysis is crucial to understanding the migration process and its implications for development; but, because gender is highly contextual and because it interacts with class, ethnicity, religion and other factors, it presents particular challenges for research and policy. The example of Pakistan illustrates some of the complexity. Among upper-class Pakistani women, access to education is quite similar to men, whereas poor women are generally much less educated than men and it is culturally unacceptable for them to migrate alone.

A number of research gaps were identified

First, participants pinpointed the **lack of gender-disaggregated data**, on internal migration in particular, but also on other areas such as entrepreneurship and enterprise registration. Second, more **qualitative data** were needed, given that gender analysis helps to translate figures into realities. For instance, many women migrate with their husbands and they generally work in the destination place, but, as “tied migrants” they are invisible in labour migration statistics. Third, longitudinal data are needed that follow households and individuals along the migration and settlement (possibly return) process. Fourth, improved knowledge on **male migrants** is required, in particular on male migrant vulnerabilities (in low-skilled sectors) or on men choosing unusual professional sectors (nursing sector). Finally, the **long-term** impact on economic and social inclusion and changing gender roles necessitates further analysis. Knowledge is indeed limited on how men change their attitudes to gender roles throughout the migration process or how they take up new gender roles in their households and children care, when their wives migrate.

For further action

Availability of data varies widely across countries and the first need is to ensure that data regarding migrants can be disaggregated by gender. In countries where heads of households are generally men this presents a serious challenge. Policies designed to maximize the benefits of migration for development need to integrate gender as a crucial variable, but they must be based on an understanding of how gender relations operate in specific contexts and of how gender interacts with other factors.

There is clearly room for gender-sensitive policies at each stage of the migration process that can take multiple forms. The UNESCO project “Together with Migrants”, presented by **Geneviève Domenach-Chich** is an example of a successful programme implemented locally and targeting young female migrants. The group suggested making use of existing informal and formal institutions (including government agencies, mass organizations and NGOs), where possible. Finally,

the gender analysis highlights the fact that rights do not necessarily mean real opportunities, and specific policy attention should be devoted to **implementation**.

2.4 Linking internal and international migration dynamics

This workshop was facilitated by **Shiv Kumar**, Director of India Catalyst Management Services, and benefited from the presentations of two resource persons, **James Durr**, Policy Support Officer, Migration Team, DFID, London, UK, and **Prum Wimol**, Deputy Director, Department for Foreigners, Ministry of Interior Cambodia. **Adrian DeWind**, Programme Director at the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), USA, acted as Rapporteur.

What comes first: internal or international migration?

Participants were invited to discuss: **are internal and international migration two distinct or related migration phenomena?** Participants discussed whether internal migration can lead to international migration and vice versa; whether international migration can create opportunities for internal mobility, and what evidence there was about the complex trends and types of migration? The workshop brought together participants with very diverse backgrounds dealing with internal as well as international migration, offering a very good opportunity to exchange migration management methods and learn from the experience of international migration management. The discussion was directed towards development issues and how both internal and international migrants can be actively involved in the development process.

Key messages

Although, there are obvious similarities and commonalities between internal and international migration, there is **no strong linkage**. There may, however, be **a stronger link** when considering **unskilled migrants**, given that the economic causes for migration appear to be similar and to represent the main causes for moving in both cases. However, internal and international migration should be addressed as a social as well as economic process. Other factors, such as **demography**, need to be considered in particular, to better understand future migration scenarios and how demography in one country influences trends in international movements. The workshop suggested that **both internal and international migration could benefit development**, if well managed.

Two separate phenomena, which can nevertheless combine

The relations between internal and international migration are extremely complex. International migration can create opportunities for those who are left behind in the country; however, little evidence could be provided during the workshop discussions on this point. It was rather suggested that rural-urban migration lasts over two generations as skills are learnt and that this can later lead to international migration. Evidence from different countries, and especially from China, was suggestive of the fact that international migrants are relatively more skilled than internal migrants. Further research is needed to establish profiles of internal and international migrants.

The example of emigration from the Fujian province in China shows that internal and international migration in China tend to be two separate phenomena. Since 1993 the province has managed the migration of millions of rural-urban migrants in the province. Poor migrants normally migrate inside the region, while overseas migration involves other population groups.

Whether within or across borders, migratory movements are seasonal, temporary or permanent

The comparative analysis of internal and international migration phenomena highlights the **diversity** that is hidden behind these two general notions and, in particular, the necessity to distinguish **temporary from permanent** migrants. There is scarce data to document whether internal migration is a step towards international migration. Research on the connections between the two is limited, and knowledge on how policies targeting internal and international migrations are connected is lacking. However, policy makers need to connect internal and international movements for the comprehensive management of migratory movements. Besides, internal migration requires international cooperation on migration flows, types of movements and the links between migration and macroeconomic issues, though policies will vary from country to country. A common ground for policy dialogue is the sharing of knowledge on how to address poverty as a cause of both types of migration.

2.5 Enhancing the evidence base for policy making on internal migration and development

The last workshop was facilitated by **Shiv Kumar**, Director of India Catalyst Management Services, with the contribution of **Adrian DeWind**, Programme Director Social Science Research Council, USA, as Rapporteur.

Participants felt there was a **general underestimation** of the numbers of internal migrants and internal migration flows, and that data linking migration to macroeconomic growth was still limited, while awareness on the need to improve the collection of data on internal financial transfers and their contribution to poverty reduction was growing.

Internal migration requires a mix of data collection methods

Participants considered that data collection was hindered by a lack of appropriate measurement methods of the internal migration phenomena. The macro-level data cannot capture part-time and seasonal activities and, therefore, often underemphasize mobility. Integrated household surveys are not appropriate tools to measure internal migration because they fail to follow cohorts over time. In contrast, positive results were obtained from other exercises, such as village studies, that used qualitative and quantitative methods and were able to better capture multi-location livelihood strategies.

Establishing migration policies requires a better understanding of recent qualitative changes and quantitative increases of internal migration in Asia. Evidence is necessary to determine policy goals, design programmes, implement strategies and evaluate outcomes. To obtain improved

policy understanding, already existing research and administrative data would need to be synthesized and new information generated through research activities.

Focus research on development impact of migration at collective and individual levels

Participants recommended that research should focus on two primary areas of interest. First, **how migrants contribute to development strategies** and, second, **how the migration process impacts on migrants' own livelihoods**. To do so, various complementary modes of research should be envisaged: qualitative case studies, broader surveys, as well as standardized and collated government administrative data, such as registrations and permit records.

Research can help to identify who are the migrants and design policies to tackle challenges

The main objective of the workshop was to improve the **linkage between research and policy**, and to understand the kind of research policy makers need to arrive at informed choices. To attain these objectives, participants recommended research to focus on defining who the migrants are, on understanding the types of migrant flows, on evaluating the impacts of migration on development, and the effects of migration on migrant livelihoods.

Recommendations

In designing national development strategies, current evidence on migration suggests that policy makers should combine rural and urban development planning and take into account different types of migrants. Internal migration hides very different individual profiles. Temporary and permanent migrants would indeed have different housing, education and health needs. Research should also identify and address the specific group vulnerabilities so as to be able to adapt the responses concerning protection and services.

Dealing with internal migration means working towards a **comprehensive development policy** that is much more than the management of rural to urban movements. It includes sustainable rural development; management of small to middle-sized towns; administration of the urban spread; improved knowledge concerning the rural-rural and urban-rural flows; transformation of local infrastructure and evaluating the influence of such transformation on migratory movements; understanding of the role of social networks; a better appreciation of the informal economy; grasping realities at the household level; access to health services, and employment strategies.

To conclude, participants considered that **sharing migration research results with key development stakeholders** is essential. Therefore, partnerships between migration authorities, local authorities and development actors are further steps to be taken. Partnerships for the exchange of data and experience can reach out to very diverse development actors, including national and local development agencies, business services, micro-credit institutions, business associations and networks, training institutions, clusters of enterprises, public and private service providers or trade unions and employers organizations.

3. CONFERENCE GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Internal migration is a reality and needs to be managed to ensure development benefits

The broad picture conveyed by the debates during the conference is that migration will remain a **reality** for Asia for the next 50 years; and that countries should acknowledge this phenomenon and develop their policy frameworks to manage the movements of people.

Conference policy roundtable and reflections

The following conclusions and recommendations are extracted mainly from the “Policy Round Table” and the “Reflections on the Conference session”, as well as from the questions and debates related to these two sessions.

The following participants took part in the Policy Round Table: **Ismail Hassan Nazi**, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Interior, Pakistan; **Geneviève Domenach-Chich**, UNESCO China Office; **Mohammad Wahid Hossain** Joint Secretary, Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment, Bangladesh; **Ding Yuanzhu**, Senior Researcher, National Development and Reform Commission, PRC, and **Bert Hoffman**, World Bank China Office. The Reflections on the Conference Session benefited from the insights of **Dai Xiaochi**, Director, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, PRC; **D.S Poonia**, Protector General of Emigrants, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs; **Antero Vahapassi**, Senior Labour and Vulnerable Groups Specialist, Asia Development Bank, and **Jean Foster**, Migration Team, DFID, London Policy Division.

The main policy issues raised during the conference concerned the following questions:

- Can and should governments regulate the movement of people?
- How to balance responsibilities among stakeholders?
- How to manage contradictory development objectives?

Other questions raised by the audience were: which is the most appropriate level to deal with internal migration issues; is the national, regional or local level the most appropriate? What laws are needed to protect and provide basic services and entitlements (e.g. public food distribution) to internal migrants? What policies could support migrant-sending regions? How can migrants be meaningfully engaged in the policy decisions that affect them? How to fight the misuse of policies in place (bribes and corruption)?

The responses are summarized in four areas: institutional arrangements; policy coherence issues; types of policies and programmes, and recommendations for action.

3.1 Institutional arrangements

Who is responsible for internal migration and how to facilitate collaboration?

The question “**who is responsible**” for managing internal migration emerged regularly during the discussions and brought into the debate issues related to decentralization policies, as well as to sharing responsibilities between public, private and non-governmental stakeholders.

As regards **decentralization**, giving more means and freedom of action to local governments was proposed as a means to better divide responsibilities among the national, regional and local levels on migration, to foster cooperation between the sending and receiving regions and bring authorities closer to the migrant. Concretely, this can be translated into having local authorities, such as *Panchayats* in India (rural local councils) maintain registers of migrants, issue identity cards and enforce regulations concerning local employers.

As for sharing responsibilities between **different types of stakeholders**, speakers strongly recommended that governments should offer the opportunity for society to mobilize. NGOs, in particular, are able to reach excluded groups and can be more flexible than government programmes, therefore, their actions can complement government action, without substituting it. Civil society as such goes beyond NGOs, as it also encompasses trade unions and employer organizations, making it possible for different actors to get involved during the migration process.

3.2 Policy coherence between development objectives and migration policies

The question of policy coherence was encountered throughout the conference. The diversity of participants either with international migration backgrounds, specialized in internal migration issues, in urban and rural problems, or coming from the development field demonstrated the significance of dialogue among different disciplines.

The question of policy coherence encompasses many different levels

- Deal with migration in a **comprehensive framework** together with other important **policy concerns**, such as education, employment and health.
- Relate **internal migration to existing development**, poverty reduction and growth strategies that will allow to combine rural and urban development and avoid dual policy approaches, and confronting rural peasants with urban dwellers.
- Coordinate programmes between migrant-**sending and receiving areas**, implying effective coordination at the inter-state/provincial levels.
- Share knowledge between **internal and international** migration concerns.
- Recognize and support the work of **different stakeholders**, such as NGOs, trade unions, employer associations, recruitment agencies etc.
- Integrate **internal migration** policies onto **regular policy planning**.

Internal migration is not urbanization and its management involves rural development

Participants strongly underlined that internal migration should not be confused with urbanization which does not necessarily involve the movement of populations. Studying the reasons, trends and long-term impacts of internal migration called for a comprehensive development strategy that combines rural and urban development.

Participants highlighted the fact that migration is not always a choice between rural impoverishment versus urban enrichment. Moreover, the rationale for rural development does not stand in contradiction to migration towards urban areas, as better prepared migrants will take better jobs in urban areas. For the majority of Asian countries, migration is an essential component of rural livelihoods and is often seasonal. However, it can also lead to stagnation in the agricultural sector if the most dynamic people leave to work elsewhere.

Development policies should address the issue of poverty alleviation in the source areas through such strategies as linking town development with commercial farming, and diversifying livelihoods so that households do not rely exclusively on agricultural income, but develop off-farm occupations. Discussants encouraged policy makers to integrate migrants into rural development strategies and make them an integral part of the development process.

3.3 Types of policies and programmes

Principles for designing policies and programmes

- Adopt a **bottom-up** approach to programme development, **in harmony with top-down** approaches.
- Use **testing** and introduce **experimental approaches** before determining far-reaching policies.
- Combine a **broad scale** approach with very **specific projects**.
- Use **comparative interdisciplinary** research methods, which take account of **past** and **present** experiences.
- Raise **awareness** of internal migration phenomena among **policy makers and donors**.
- Exchange **knowledge internationally** about internal migration.
- **Enforce** already **existing laws** and pursue closer scrutiny and simplification of some.
- **Use gender-specific indicators** and analyse gender specificities of migration, while taking account of other contextual elements (ethnicity, religion, class, caste).
- Introduce **migration data into poverty reduction strategies**.
- Improve the **general environment** in favour of migration and develop synergies between migration and development.
- **Evaluate** existing programmes and **share** good practices.

Address the issue of internal migration and development at all migration stages

- **Prepare for migration** (information, education, training, counselling, direct intermediation, collective bargaining).
- Support **most vulnerable** migrant groups.

- Strengthen migrant **support networks**.
- Enforce **labour rights** for migrants.
- Address issues, positive and negative, for **those left behind**: migrant families in sending regions.
- Integrate migrants in **receiving regions** through improved access to health and social welfare, enforcing labour laws.
- Implement **social security strategies** aimed at reducing distressed migration, and basic entitlements for migrants.
- Manage human, social and economic **return flows**.

3.4 Main areas for action

A very large sample of concerns was considered during the conference. Given their number and diversity, we endeavoured to assemble them around some main thematic and action clusters of discussions, pinpointed as main subjects for policy attention and action:

- Acquire better knowledge about internal migrants through improved data collection at national, regional and local level, as well as through international agreements on common definitions and data collection and cross-country comparisons. Indeed, the conference pointed out that countries used different definitions of internal migration and that there was very limited comparable data at, for instance, the Asian level. This makes it difficult to determine whether internal migration was more or less important in different countries, or whether internal migration increased more in some countries than others.
- Draw lessons and evaluate existing micro projects that have experimented on the ground working with migrants for development purposes, and ensure that policies are based on local realities. Successful local interventions can illustrate what incentives, mechanisms and types of programmes dealing with migration have a real impact on poverty reduction and development. For instance, a successful initiative supporting migrant populations involved in the construction sector in India was presented in the film “Moving Livelihoods: Migration in Andhra Pradesh”, presented by Priya Deshingkar.
- Provide better education, training and guidance for potential internal migrants. This encompasses very diverse programmes: pre-departure information about destinations that disseminate diverse information about the risks and benefits of migration; information on the procedures to obtain residence permits; training of rural migrants; improving the information base and bargaining strength of migrant workers and giving voice and representation to migrants to better involve them in policies on migration.
- Improve access to public services for internal migrants. Large numbers of people are not entitled to basic services because access is based on residence status. This raises issues of citizenship rights (ensure migrants have full citizenship rights in destination areas and access to basic public programmes) and of sustainable and far-reaching public services. Indeed, pro-poor measures should support both backward regions, source areas and growing destination areas, which means stretching public services and broadening the safety net coverage to target the poorest through housing, sanitation and nutrition schemes.

- Manage the benefits of migration for poverty reduction. This encompasses a broad range of activities, such as, developing conceptual frameworks that link migration and development; supporting migrants' access to micro credit and entrepreneurship; surveying internal migrants' social and economic returns and their impact on local, regional and national development (in terms of remittances as well as returning migrant business creation) and working together with those left behind to maximize the use of remittances received.
- Design comprehensive multi-territorial strategies that balance rural and urban development. Multi-territorial policies were presented as good practice. This means the better integration of rural and urban policies rather than treating them as two different and often opposed areas of action. **Antero Vahapassi**, Senior Labour and Vulnerable Groups Specialist, explained, for instance, that the Asian Development Bank offered integrated urban-rural lending programmes for development. **Bert Hoffman** from the World Bank China Office stated that the rural-urban dichotomy was a major question concerning fiscal revenues. What is the added value for rural areas if migrants are taxed in urban areas? This also questions the developmental impact of remittances sent from urban to rural areas; do they compensate the fiscal loss that migration represents for rural areas? Can cities afford to receive new populations and formalize their arrivals in the absence of migrants' fiscal capacities? Public services cannot finance support programmes without having a solid tax base.
- Develop appropriate responses to the challenge of seasonal migration. Seasonal and short-term migration are very common features in Asia. In India alone, 20 million people migrate seasonally. Much of this migration happens annually; therefore, the movements can be anticipated and better supported. Beyond public services, non-governmental organizations can also provide flexible repayment and savings schemes and allow seasonal migrants to take part.
- Respond to unexpected population movements by having a risk planning strategy. Internal migration is closely related to environmental risks, as natural catastrophes often trigger migration. Often the human movement can be foreseen, given that these phenomena are recurrent and often related to annual floods and drought. Thus, specific programmes could be devoted to these expected population movements. Furthermore, sudden sectoral shifts (from an industry to another, from a labour-intensive activity to a mechanized one) can also induce massive internal migration. To anticipate such movements, a major policy strategy would be to look beyond sector-led industrial approaches towards regional development planning.
- Consider the short-, medium- and long-term implications of policy choices. Some development strategies will indirectly encourage internal migration. Paradoxically, measures to support rural development might lead directly to encourage migration from rural to urban environments as people have better access to information, networks, infrastructure and education. Therefore, policy choices must be informed and aware of the long-term implications of their strategies and clearly state the objectives pursued. Some choices must be made: whether or not to support specific industrial sectors that, at the macroeconomic level, stimulate migration (as the official encouragement of garment factories stimulated internal migration); whether or not to favour decentralization and devolve more power to local authorities; whether to support urbanization through export-oriented growth of mega cities or prefer the development of medium-sized cities.

- Recognize and reflect on the development dilemmas. To conclude, the intense discussions that took place during the conference showed that internal migration raised many challenges for policy makers as regards the maximizing of the development potential of human movements, while also diminishing the related risks. The many recommendations and the numbers of issues and needs discussed, raise some obvious development dilemmas, a notion introduced to the conference by **Ravi Srivastava**. Policy makers have to determine priorities among numerous issues. These dilemmas concerned, i.a. what resources to allocate to help poor populations in rural areas to access non-farm employments, and what part to dedicate to the promotion of urban development; how to support migration without provoking even stronger regional imbalances and inequalities; how to make internal migration compatible with managed urban development; how to reach out to the informal sector to supply services to poor migrants and what methods should be adopted to facilitate the access to services (health and education, etc.) without restraining the possibility of migration.
- Imagine if... The conference keynote speaker, **Priya Deshingkar**, asked participants to imagine what would happen if internal migration were not possible? The scenarios proposed included: growing numbers of landless people, stronger dependence on low-productivity agricultural activities, dependence of labourers on interlocked markets where patrons provide employment, credit and other supplies and lack of perspectives for many families. Internal migration cannot and should not be barred and policy had a main role to play in making internal migration compatible with and conducive to development.

3.5 Final remarks

The conference concluded with a session chaired by **Wang Chuan**, Deputy Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PRC, and the closing remarks presented by **Liu Xiaoming**, Assistant Governor of the Gansu Province of China; **Adrian Davis**, Head of DFID, China, and **Gervais Appave**, Director, Migration Policy, Research and Communication, IOM, Geneva.

A meaningful conference for a province where internal migration is a reality

Liu Xiaoming, Assistant Governor of the Gansu Province, PRC, reminded the conference that internal migration was a reality for the Gansu Province. The migration flows were mainly composed of people moving from rural areas to cities, and from the farming to non-farming sectors. The conference had offered a very good opportunity for the Province to learn from the useful experiences from outside, and contributed to the Province's efforts to further improve the management of internal migration. Internal migrants contributed greatly to the overall development and progress of the Province.

A comprehensive management strategy for a positive approach to migrant contributions

Adrian Davis concluded that the conference contributed greatly to DFID's effort to offer a more positive approach regarding the contributions by internal migrants to development and design strategies that will help to cope with migration and contribute to economic growth. The focus of DFID is on poverty reduction and how internal migration could contribute to this objective, such as through employment and business creation by returning entrepreneur migrants. A major area

of concern remained the support and viable development solutions to be provided for those left behind. This conference played a significant role in relating migration issues to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and alerting countries to the potential of internal migration, as well as raising donor awareness.

Building a new language between migration and development stakeholders

Gervais Appave explained that there were still what he called, two “tribes”, on the one hand the migration “tribe” and, on the other, the development tribe, each with its own set of values and languages. The novelty of this conference was to bring these different stakeholders together to build a new common idiom. In addition, he urged participants and policy makers not to rush too quickly towards “instrumentalizing” migration in order to put it in the service of development. The links between migration and development were complex and migration, if well managed, could have a very significant development impact, but we had to proceed with caution. Finally he reminded the participants that the migrant should remain at the centre of all concerns.

REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA

LANZHOU, CHINA

14-16 MARCH 2005

DRAFT AGENDA

13 MARCH 2005 ARRIVAL AT LANZHOU	
16:00-22:00	REGISTRATION
19:30-21:00	INFORMAL DINNER FOLLOWED BY SCREENING OF FILM 'MIGRANT SUPPORT PROGRAMME IN INDIA'

First Day: 14 MARCH 2005 OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE	
08:00-09:00	REGISTRATION
09:00-12:30	INAUGURATION
09:00-10:30	<p>Session chaired by Chuan Wang, Deputy Director, Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), People's Republic of China</p> <p><u>Welcome speeches by representatives from the People's Republic of China:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weixiong Chen, Senior Counsellor (MFA), People's Republic of China - Yang Zhi Ming, Vice Governor of Gansu Province, People's Republic of China <p><u>DFID Welcome:</u> Adrian Davis, Head of DFID China</p> <p><u>IOM Welcome:</u> Gervais Appave, Director, IOM Geneva, Switzerland</p>
10:30-11:00	Coffee/Tea Break

11:00-12:30	<p><u>Keynote Presentations</u></p> <p>Session facilitated by Steve Jones, Consultant to the Conference</p> <p><u>Maximizing the Benefits of Internal Migration for Development</u> Priya Deshingkar, Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute, London, United Kingdom</p> <p><u>Migration and Development, the Chinese context:</u> Huang Ping, Professor, Deputy Director, Institute of Sociology, Director-General, Bureau of International Cooperation, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) People's Republic of China</p> <p><u>Discussant and Introduction to the Themes of the Conference</u> Frank Laczko, Chief of Research and Publications, IOM Geneva, Switzerland</p> <p>Discussion</p>
12:30-14:00	Lunch

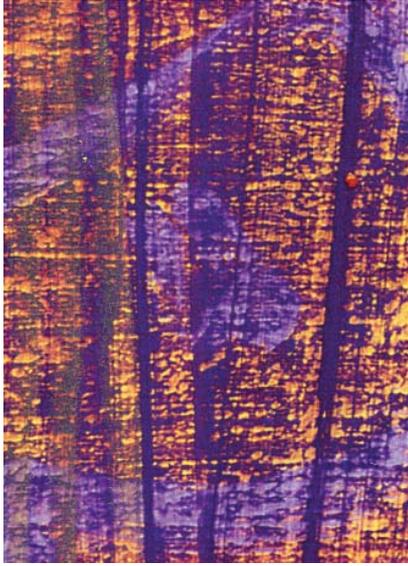
14:00 –15:45	THEMATIC WORKSHOPS - 1
14:00-15:45	<p><u>Thematic Workshops</u></p> <p>1. <u>Poverty and internal migration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Facilitator</u>: Jillian Popkins, Social Development Adviser, DFID China - <u>Resource Person</u>: Rachel Murphy, University of Oxford, UK - <u>Rapporteur</u>: Amar Prasad, India Gramin Vikas Trust (GVT), India <p>2. <u>Health, social protection and migration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Facilitator</u>: Danielle Grondin, Director, Migration Health Department, IOM Geneva, Switzerland - <u>Resource Person</u>: Biao Xiang, University of Oxford, UK - <u>Rapporteur</u>: Robyn Iredale, Asia Pacific Migration Research Network, University of Wollongong, Australia <p>3. <u>Gender and internal migration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Facilitator</u>: Jennifer Holdaway Social Science Research Council, USA - <u>Resource Person</u>: Hans van de Glind, Manager /Chief Technical Advisor ILO/IPEC project International Labour Organisation (ILO) China - <u>Rapporteur</u>: Dina Ionescu, Research Officer, Geneva, Switzerland <p>4. <u>Linking internal and international migration dynamics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Facilitator</u>: Shiv Kumar, India Catalyst Management Services (CMS), India - <u>Resource Persons</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - James Durr, Policy Support Officer, Migration Team, DFID China - Prum Wimol, Deputy Director, Department for Foreigners Immigration, Cambodia - <u>Rapporteur</u>: Zhang Juwei, CASS, People's Republic of China (replaced by Adrian de Wind)

15:45-16:15	Coffee/Tea Break
16:15-17:15	PLENARY COUNTRY CASE STUDIES - 1 INTERNAL MIGRATION: ISSUES AND LESSONS LEARNT FROM COUNTRY STUDIES
	Session Facilitated by Steve Jones , Consultant to the Conference <u>Country case studies:</u> - India: Ravi S. Srivastava , Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India - Pakistan: Rashid Memon , Collective for Social Science Research Karachi, Pakistan Discussion
17:15	CLOSE
18:15	RECEPTION hosted by Yang Zhi Ming , Vice Governor of Gansu Province, People's Republic of China

Second Day: 15 MARCH 2005	
9:00 –10:45	THEMATIC WORKSHOPS - 2
9:00-10:45	<p><u>Thematic Workshops</u></p> <p>1. <u>Poverty and internal migration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Facilitator</u>: Jillian Popkins, Social Development Adviser, DFID China - <u>Resource Person</u>: Zhu Ling, Deputy Director, Institute of Economics, CASS, People's Republic of China - <u>Rapporteur</u>: Amar Prasad, Gramin Vikas Trust, India <p>2. <u>Health, HIV and Migration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Facilitator</u>: Danielle Grondin, Director, Migration Health Department IOM Geneva, Switzerland - <u>Resource Person</u>: Joel Rehnstrom, Country Coordinator, United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) China - <u>Rapporteur</u>: Robyn Iredale, Asia Pacific Migration Research Network, University of Wollongong, Australia <p>3. <u>Gender and internal migration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Facilitator</u>: Jennifer Holdaway, Social Science Research Council, USA - <u>Resource Person</u>: Swarnalathka Ukwatta, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka - <u>Rapporteur</u>: Dina Ionescu, Research Officer, IOM Geneva, Switzerland <p>4. <u>Enhancing the evidence base for internal migration policies</u></p> <p><u>Facilitator</u>: Shiv Kumar, India Catalyst Management Services (CMS), India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Rapporteur</u>: Adrian DeWind, Program Director, Social Science Research Council

10:45-11:15	Coffee/Tea Break
11:15-12:45	PLENARY COUNTRY CASE STUDIES - 2 INTERNAL MIGRATION : ISSUES AND LESSONS LEARNT FROM COUNTRY STUDIES
	<p>Session facilitated by Steve Jones, Consultant to the Conference</p> <p>Country case studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cambodia: Bruno Maltoni, Professor at the Royal University of Phnom Penh, Cambodia - Bangladesh: Rita Afsar, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, Bangladesh - Viet Nam: Anh Dang Nguyen, Asia Pacific Development Centre, Hanoi, Viet Nam <p>Discussion</p>
12:45-14:15	Lunch
14:15-16:15	Afternoon: POLICY ROUND TABLE
	<p>Session Facilitated by Steve Jones, Consultant to the Conference</p> <p><u>Policy Round Table</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ismail Hassan Niazi, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Interior, Pakistan - Geneviève Domenach-Chich, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), China - Mohammad Wahid Hossain, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, Bangladesh - Ding Yuanzhu, Senior Researcher National Development and Reform Commission, People's Republic of China - Bert Hoffman, World Bank, China
16:15	Close of day
16:45	Bus tour of Lanzhou (Optional)
18:30	Buffet Dinner
19:30	Buses leave for Cultural Show . Return 22:00

Third Day: 16 MARCH 2005	
THEMATIC ISSUES, CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS AND FOLLOW UP	
9:00-12:00	MORNING
9:00-10:00	Review of the thematic workshops, briefings by each Workshop Rapporteur
10:00-11:00	Reflections on the conference - Dai Xiaochu , Director Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Government of the People's Republic of China - D.S Poonia , Protector General of Emigrants, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, India - Antero Vahapassi , Senior Labour and Vulnerable Groups Specialist, Regional and Sustainable Development Department, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Philippines - Jean Foster , Migration Team, DFID Policy Division, UK
11:00-11:30	Coffee/Tea Break
11:30-12:15	Session chaired by Chuan Wang , Deputy Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China Closing addresses: - Xiaoming Liu , Assistant Governor of Gansu Province, People's Republic of China - Adrian Davis , Head of DFID, China - Gervais Appave , Director, IOM, Headquarters, Switzerland
12:15	Close of Conference



MIGRATION, DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION IN ASIA

Earlier versions of the papers in this volume were presented at the “Regional Conference on Migration and Development in Asia”, held in Lanzhou, China, 14-16 March 2005. The conference, hosted by China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was organized by IOM and funded by Britain’s Department for International Development (DFID).

Though there has been increasing attention paid to the potential role migration can play in fostering development, most of that attention has tended to focus on international migration. Internal migration has been somewhat neglected but is also an extremely important policy area.

One of the key aims of the Lanzhou conference was to identify more effective ways to enhance the benefits of internal migration for poverty reduction and development, and how this could be complemented by strategies to ensure that migrants have decent working conditions and access to health and social services.

