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Introduction

The Institute of Policy Studies organized a conference on “Policies for Mainstreaming Migration into Development in Sri Lanka”. The conference took place on 14th of August as a component of the IPS project Meeting the Development Challenges of Migration (MED_MIG), which is funded by the Think Tank Initiative (TTI) - a multi-donor program managed by Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The conference brought together a host of local and international stakeholders to discuss policy initiatives aimed at mainstreaming migration into development under the three sub-themes: 1) Sri Lanka’s potential to penetrate new labour markets, 2) Vulnerability of female domestic workers, and 3) Reintegration of returnee migrant workers.

Hon. Dilan Perera, Minister of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare, Government of Sri Lanka was the Chief Guest of the event, while a number of key government representatives including Mr. Madihahewa, Secretary/Senior Ministers Secretariat, and Mr. Nissanka Wijeratne, Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion also participated. 70 key local and international stakeholders including IPS research staff and media personnel attended the conference.

This report is a summary of the proceedings of the International Conference. The report is organized into four sections, namely the inauguration, session one, two and three, reflecting the Agenda of the conference. The Agenda and Presentations are attached at the end of the report.

This report was compiled by Keshni Sridharan, Neluka Gunasekera, Janaka Wijayasiri and Maryam Noordeen. Editorial support was provided by D.D.M. Waidyasekera.
The International Conference on Policies for Mainstreaming Migration into Development in Sri Lanka, organized by the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS), commenced with the lighting of the traditional oil lamp by the dignitaries present. Following the National Anthem, a brief overview into the conference was provided.

In 2014, IPS was successful in securing funding from the Think-Tank Initiative (TTI) to embark on a series of activities under Meeting the Development Challenges of Migration (MED_MIG) project. This project aims to build the capacity of the IPS and its researchers to undertake quality, policy oriented migration research as well as to improve policy linkages/engagement. This conference was organized not only to disseminate the initial findings from the three studies which were undertaken under the project but also bring together selected international and local resource persons to discuss on how to successfully mainstream migration into development in Sri Lanka.

The welcome and introductory remarks were given by Dr. Saman Kelegama, Executive Director, IPS. Mirroring the global trend, Dr. Kelegama stated that international labour migration is becoming a socio-economic priority in Sri Lanka. At present, nearly 250,000 Sri Lankans annually leave for foreign employment and their remittances account for nearly 9.5 per cent of GDP (2013). The estimated stock of migrant workers of Sri Lankan origin stood at 1.7 million in 2010, which accounted for about 20 per cent of the labour force. As such, this stock of 1.7 million was said to have eased the labour market pressure for jobs in Sri Lanka.

Dr. Kelegama highlighted that unskilled labour into the Middle East continues to account for a bulk of migrants. In 2013, 94 per cent of total migrant labour departures were to the Middle East region, while unskilled labour and housemaids together accounted for nearly 60 per cent of total departures.

While making efforts to promote and diversify labour migration in terms of destinations, skills, occupation and gender; and improve welfare of migrants and their families, he noted that there is much scope for Sri Lanka to grow in terms of labour migration, now more so than ever, in preparation for the Post-2015 era.

Looking at on-going emphasis and expected further prominence of international migration in Sri Lanka, IPS initiated a project on international migration under the theme of “Meeting the Development Challenges of Migration” with the support of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The objectives of this project were two – fold. It was aimed at: (a) to strengthen the research capacity and quality of research work undertaken by the IPS on migration, and (b) to improve policy linkages and engagement. Key research components of this project focused on identifying the reintegration challenges faced by return migrants in Sri Lanka and finding whether recruitment through agents minimize the vulnerability of female domestic workers who migrate abroad.

Dr. Kelegama stated that the main constraint to migration research and developing migration related policies in the country is the lack of access to resources. Available research on migration related studies in the country are scarce, scattered and not easily accessible. In this context, IPS established a Labour Migration Resource Centre (LMRC) within the IPS library to address this gap. To fulfil this, the library developed a special collection on migration related resources including books, journals, websites, data sets, policy documents and other relevant material. An annotated bibliography of this
material was compiled for easy reference to this material. Access to information on this Centre will be made available through the Migration Portal of the IPS website.

Further, Dr. Kelegama said that research will be disseminated beyond policy makers through various channels. The studies will be published under IPS Research Studies Series and the findings will also be collated into blogs and will be published in IPS’ Blog, Talking Economics.

To ensure the policy relevance and the quality of research outputs generated under these projects, a Steering Committee was set up at the start of the project, which included the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, Ministry of Labour and Labour Relations, Department of Demography at the University of Colombo, ILO and private recruitment agent.

This conference, as part of the dissemination activities of the project, also aims to initiate a dialogue for improved policy linkages and engagement among all stakeholders. The conference focuses on the trade-off between promoting migration and protecting the welfare of migrants and their families at all three phases of migration – pre, present and post. However, policies on migration would be successful if related policy packages are drawn in consultation with all relevant stakeholders; such as migrants, their families, foreign employment agents, relevant ministries and institutions, and researchers.

This Conference which brings together policy makers, stakeholders and international resource persons, will consist of three sessions, where the first two sessions will focus on expanding the market for migrant workers and worker welfare at different stages of migration, and the last session will be a Panel discussion based on the first two sessions aimed at a way forward for migration in Sri Lanka.

With the conclusion of Dr. Saman Kelegama’s speech, Hon. Minister Dilan Perera ceremonially launched the Labour Migration Resource Centre (LMRC) and MED_MIG Search. Along with the Labour Migration Resource Centre (LMRC), IPS compiled a Select Annotated Bibliography on Labour Migration in Sri Lanka. The bibliography covers the ten year period between 2004 and 2014. With the aim of enabling those who wish to locate the publications listed in this bibliography, the physical location where a copy of the publication can be found and the web link when available is included in the publication. This annotated bibliography will be an extremely useful tool for researchers and policy makers, seeking information on the subject of labour migration in Sri Lanka. Prof. W.D. Lakshman, Chairman, Institute of Policy Studies, presented the first copy to the Hon. Minister Dilan Perera, Mr. Mahinda Madhihaewa, Secretary, Senior Ministers’ Secretariat and Mr. Nissanka Wijeratne, Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion & Welfare and Private Secretary to the Minister.

The guest of honour, Mr. Nissanka Wijeratne, Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion & Welfare delivered the Key Note Address. Mr. Wijeratne reiterated the importance of migration and remittances to Sri Lanka’s development process. He identified that remittances even reach the remotest areas of Sri Lanka, and as such is more effective than development aid. However, he claimed that much more needs to be done in terms of better directing and increasing remittances.

In this context, the Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion & Welfare together with the Ministry of Economic Development initiated loan schemes for the returnee migrants in March 2013. The loan scheme initiatives apply to those migrants who wish to construct houses, and to assist with self-employment. These schemes have proved to be successful thus far, with 4200 houses built in this year, and 640 loans provided for self-employment.
Mr. Wijeratne mentioned that the Sustainable Development Goals (2016-2030) will contain five clauses addressing the betterment of migration; health, education, employment and decent work, economic growth and development and means of implementation for global partnerships. In addition, the recent International Conference held in Dhaka, attended by 80 countries, debated on how migration issues could be mainstreamed into the sustainable development goals. In this context, more funding through the international network for migration will be made available.

On a different note, Mr. Nissanka Wijeratne stated that 15 per cent of the remittance income does not enter the banking stream. Thus, it is important to capture this income into the formal stream, and mainstream it into the development process. He added that, a majority of professionals do not send remittances, choosing to maintain these monies in overseas banking accounts, possibly owing to provide foreign education for their children. Thus, foreign universities must be encouraged to set up campuses in Sri Lanka, which would be effective in directing remittances of professional migrant workers to Sri Lanka.

The government has set a target of realising $10 billion from migrant remittances by the end of 2016. Given that remittances currently stand at $6.4 billion, several policy implements have to be taken.

The profile of migrant workers needs to be upgraded, in other words the quality of the migrant stock needs to improve, given the demographics of Sri Lanka. Skilled workers in sectors which are demanded have to be produced; construction, hospitality and care giving are prospective industries.

In 2013, 57 per cent of the migrants were female domestic workers; in this regard the Ministry has made the NVQ level three qualification mandatory to improve the skills of these females, relabeling them as domestic housekeeping assistance and thereby demanding higher salaries for these workers.

However to achieve this up-skilling, several training centres need to be established. In this regard, the Ministry hopes to set up 15 migration resource centres by 2015. In addition, vocational training catered to the foreign rather than the local labour market will need to be provided, as proficiency in English will instil better confidence among migrants and enable better access to opportunities.
Session 1: Expanding the Market for Migrant Workers

The first session was centred on ‘Expanding the Market for Migrant Workers’. This session was chaired by Dr. Saman Kelegama, Executive Director, Institute of Policy Studies.

Dr. Janaka Wijayasiri, Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies initiated the session with a presentation focusing on ‘Accessing New Employment Markets Abroad’. (See Annexure for presentation) This presentation was based on one of the three studies under the MED_MIG project, and the preliminary findings of this were shared. A brief background to the study was provided. The Middle East was discovered to be most important market for Sri Lanka, given that it hosts 93 per cent of Sri Lankan migrant workers, with a significant female participation rate creating high social costs for the economy. Additionally, the proportion of skilled and semi-skilled migrants is small and in this context, he stated that the government of Sri Lanka wishes to promote new markets for migrant workers. The presentation highlighted the potential new employment markets available for Sri Lankan migrant workers in the near future and the perceived challenges faced when attempting to access markets.

Preliminary findings revealed that a vast majority of the Middle East has opened up in the recent past, particularly Qatar. With the FIFA World Cup being hosted in Qatar there has been an ever present demand for Sri Lankan skilled migrants in the construction and hospitality industries. UAE and Saudi Arabia are other countries within the region that have continued to employ Sri Lankan migrants. Other markets which have provided opportunities are South Korea, Malaysia and Australia. Agents indicated that Qatar would continue to be the most significant market for Sri Lanka in the future, along with Saudi Arabia and UAE. Other markets opening up to Sri Lanka in the future would be Malaysia, Australia and perhaps Libya.

Seventeen challenges were indicated by recruitment agencies, with the top ten being highlighted in the presentation. These included: lack of language proficiency among both low skilled and high skilled workers; redundant rules and regulations governing the recruitment of migrants (such as the training imposition on high skilled workers); limited job orders outside the traditional markets; comparatively inadequate salaries; preferences of Sri Lankan migrant workers; lack of capacity to supply the required manpower (skills mismatch); lack of unity amongst agencies (intense competition, ineffective association); Sri Lanka’s uncompetitive nature vis-à-vis other labour sending countries; lack of marketing on the part of SLBFE and Ministry; and excessive paperwork.

While the scope for addressing the demand side challenges is limited, he stated that much more needs to be done in addressing the supply side challenges in Sri Lanka to penetrate markets abroad. In this regard, the following were emphasised: training (vocational and technical), marketing, streamlining recruitment procedures, enhancing co-operation within the industry amongst agents, between agents and the government, and between governments of existing and potential labour receiving countries. Dr. Wijayasiri, concluded by stating that consolidation of the existing markets is necessary, while exploring other regional markets abroad.

Dr. S. Irudaya Rajan, Chair Professor, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Centre for Development Studies, Kerala was the second speaker of the session. “India has 12 million recorded immigrations, excluding diaspora, and of this, 6 million workers are employed in 6 countries in the Gulf. Thus, the Gulf is more connected to India, than Kerala to India,” stated Dr. Rajan. He added
that Kerala has almost all the same characteristics as Sri Lanka, with the exception of certain numbers, where, one fourth of the economy is managed by migration.

However, Dr. Rajan claimed that yet migrants are invisible and people only speak of remittances and nothing more. He compared migrant workers to candles, as they give light but die in the process. Recognition of their effort on the part of both their families and the economy is lacking.

He raised the following questions to Sri Lankan policy makers, “Are you promoting migration vigorously or are you only facilitating legal safe migration? Do you have a target for the number of migrant workers allowed? Do you essentially include this figure in the migration policy?” He added that Sri Lanka needs to have a Minister of Planning, and foreign employment has to be mainstreamed into this planning. He cited an example from Kerala, generating more nurses than necessary, highlighting the need for planning. In short, migration deserves more than what is given to them in terms of policy space.

Further, he commented that in Kerala, of the 2 million migrant workers, 1 million fall under the replacement migration category, as such this needs to be accounted for.

Dr. Rajan, stated that quantity-wise Sri Lanka will fail, because there is insufficient immigration into the country. To elaborate, there is an ageing population in both Kerala and Sri Lanka, with the number of births steadily declining. Therefore for Sri Lanka to be competitive, it needs to move from the numbers game to skilled migration. He cited the strategy of Kerala in handling this issue; skill creation was the key. He similarly advised Sri Lankan policy makers, to pick sectors which are more comfortable and fitting to Sri Lankans and improve the skills of workers to fit these sectors. This would address the ‘scarcity of labour’ crisis.

Dr. Rajan further advised policy makers as follows: “It is time for Sri Lanka to move from the oil rich economies to the ageing economies. Instead of sending housemaids to Saudi Arabia, send home care workers to Europe to look after the old in Europe.”

He stated that Sri Lanka is addicted to the Gulf and this needs to change. After 3 months of training, housemaids can be converted to nurses, solving the problem of vulnerabilities and inadequate salaries. He referred to India, spending billions of rupees on training for the hospitality and automation sectors. Following this example, Sri Lanka needs to undertake skill based training, with standardised certification for global recognition.

Other policy recommendations made by Dr. Rajan were regarding the formulation of bilateral agreements for welfare, and the negotiations of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs). He stated that India has signed a labour mobility partnership with Denmark, focussing on vocational training and standardised certification, aiming at enhancing labour productivity in both countries. He suggested that Sri Lanka should do the same. In relation to welfare, the India community welfare fund for migrants has apparently 135 countries involved, which is a promising example for Sri Lanka to follow.

Dr. Katheryn Lum, Research Fellow, Migration Policy Centre, Italy was the final speaker of this session, who put together a presentation examining the following; ‘A Comparative Analysis of Sri Lanka and Other Migrants in European Labour Markets.’. (See Annexure for presentation)

Her focus was centred on how Sri Lanka can exploit the EU policies given that countries in the region like Italy, has the lowest birth rates in the world, and as such is in need of labour.
One such measure, in which Sri Lanka can penetrate the European Market, is the ‘EU Blue Card Directive’. The first full year of operation of this initiative was 2013, and though it has not attained the standardisation the EU hopes for, the first step has been taken. This scheme addresses and eliminates the issue of inadequate salaries, as it primarily deals with the high skilled – those who have at least completed a tertiary education. However, one must have a binding job offer or contract in hand to be applicable to this scheme. Ireland, UK and Denmark did not adopt the Blue Card Directive owing to their own specific schemes.

The benefits of the Blue Card Directive are that there are automatic rights for family reunification, unlike in the Middle East. To elaborate she stated that the immediate family of the migrant worker could also access the labour market. It promotes long-term residency as opportunities are not harmed, that is, after two years of employment in any European country, flexibility is achieved. For instance, after 18 months, a worker could move to a new EU country.

The top destination countries are Germany, which is the only country which uses the Blue Card Directive as the sole policy to attract Non – EU residents (particularly Indians, as the skills on offer by the Indians, match the skills on demand by the Germans) while Spain and Luxembourg are other popular destinations.

Dr. Katheryn Lum recommended Sri Lankan policy makers to promote knowledge of the Blue Card, as Germany is demanding for labour. Encouragingly, there is no language test; therefore language will not be a barrier in terms of on the job performance for entry into Germany.

However this directive, does present challenges in the form of a maze of rules. Therefore, first select the destination country and then study the rules; for instance, the Netherlands is more attractive to those employees who are below the age of thirty as they have lower salary requirements to qualify for the Blue Card.

Dr. Katheryn Lum also discussed United Kingdom’s stance on migration, as the United Kingdom is one of the most significant markets for Sri Lanka, given that, language barriers are non – existent. She elaborated that the UK offers entrepreneurship visas which Sri Lanka could take advantage of, as this a fast track to permanent visa. Surprisingly, this visa is quite popular in Sri Lanka, as Sri Lanka was the number one applicant for this. However it must be noted that there are no quotas for this visa. She posed a research question to Sri Lankan policy makers and researchers alike, “What happened with the entrepreneurship visa process, for Sri Lanka to not make the top five list of successful applicants?” In other words, identify why Sri Lankans failed to obtain this visa.

Similarly, other schemes such as the Graduate Entrepreneurship Programme exist to obtain work visas in the UK. Italy, too has launched a ‘start up visa’, for which you do not need to be academically inclined.

Given that Italy has signed a MoU with Sri Lanka, it is important to realise the present profile of Sri Lankans in Italy. Italy is not a destination for high skilled labour; it announces a quota per year for primarily low skilled migrants. Sri Lanka has a privileged quota of 3500, for home based workers. At present, several Sri Lankan males work in the textile industry and there is good diversification as there are several food shops run by Sri Lankan migrants.

However, according to Dr. Katheryn Lum there is room for much more diversification. For instance, in the past, Sri Lanka had an agreement with Tuscany to carry out training programmes for home based workers (those who assist the old). Although contracts are assured for this type of work and
salaries are guaranteed as compared to domestic workers, the standard of living and salaries are inadequate; these jobs are not viewed as socially prestigious. Therefore, Sri Lanka needs to eventually move away even from ‘home based work’ job category.

Competition for Sri Lankan workers exist in the form of migrants from India, who have similar profiles to Sri Lankans, with the exception of the wide income gap which exist between these two groups of migrant workers. This income gap is attributed to the fact that most Indians in Italy have completed their tertiary education, and work in industries such as the dairy industry for higher salaries while Sri Lankans are caught in home based work.

Therefore, policy makers need to recognise the scope for entrepreneurship training for the youth, to provide mentoring and assistance for Sri Lankans in setting up businesses in both Sri Lanka and Italy. Some of the ways forward for Sri Lanka would be to obtain institutional support, pressure Italy to accept high skilled workers and negotiate with Italy on start-up visas. It is important to note that IT workers are in high demand in several countries. Therefore Sri Lankan universities need to gear its graduates. Finally, as Dr. Rajan said, follow India’s example of the bi-lateral agreement with Netherlands, and negotiate a social security agreement with Italy for temporary workers and inter-company transfer workers.

This presentation concluded the session and Dr. Saman Kelegama, opened the floor to questions.

Dr. Nisha Arunatilake, Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies stated that the schemes in the EU are primarily targeted at employing high skilled workers; however Sri Lanka faces labour shortages of highly skilled workers. She added that Sri Lanka is concerned with remittances of migrants, and as such raised the question of whether skilled migrants in Europe send remittances back, and what the gap in remittances is between the highly skilled and low skilled migrant workers.

Dr. G. M Arif, Joint Director, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics stated that as Dr. Rajan mentioned, moving on to the new markets away from the Middle East may not be possible, given that the Middle East is still the largest market employing migrants. Further, as Dr. Lum mentioned, Europe offers limited opportunities, focusing on the high skilled workers, and provision of training to up-skill the present low skilled migrants would be difficult for the South Asian countries. He added that even Entrepreneurship schemes present difficulties, as they require migrants to bring in some influx of funds to start up.

Mr. Raja Korale, Department of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka stated that Sri Lanka has an ageing population, with the number of births per year declining. He added that Sri Lanka’s Department of Immigration needs to reconcile the number of migrants leaving the country, accounting for the re-migration process.

Dr. Katheryn Lum, Research Fellow, Migration Policy Centre, Italy in response to the question, by Dr. Nisha Arunatilake, stated that there is data available for the remittance comparison between the high skilled and the low skilled which she will send at a later date, owing to the unavailability at hand. She added that legal migrants in Italy are actively involved in sending remittances back through Western Union. With regards to the promotion of high skilled workers, Dr. Lum stated that she did not promote nurses, as she knew that Sri Lanka has shortages of workers in this category. The message she attempted to pass on was that if Sri Lanka is promoting any migrant labour, it should be high skilled workers, though the brain drain creates a complementary situation.
Dr. S. Irudaya Rajan, Chair Professor, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Centre for Development Studies, Kerala in response to Dr. G. M Arif’s question reiterated the need to diversify from oil rich economies to the ageing economies. He added that given the negative growth rates (birth rate), Sri Lanka can send one million workers instead of two million workers, with their changing education profiles. There is eminent risk in the Gulf, given the recently publicized harassment, the living conditions in the Gulf are poor, and as such he encouraged Sri Lanka to have more flights to Europe than to Qatar.

In response to Mr. Raja Korale’s comment he stated that, in terms of the stock of migrants, return migration is very weak in Sri Lanka. Therefore, Sri Lanka needs to conduct surveys to identify the number of return migrants, to obtain a complete picture of migration. He stated that Kerala has 1.2 million returnee migrants. It is important to mainstream these returnee migrants along with the migrant workers into the development process in Sri Lanka.

Dr. Saman Kelegama stated that the Sri Lankan government has taken measures to explore new markets and under National Advisory Committee on Labour Migration (NACLM) I which was established in 2010/2011, there was a sub-committee on accessing new markets for Sri Lankan migrants. Quite a lot of work was done, as pointed out by Dr. Janaka Wijayasiri, in his presentation, where further penetration into a number of existing markets was looked at; for instance Qatar with the forthcoming World Football Tournament has opened up jobs to migrants in the construction industry.

At the same time, Sri Lanka needs to look at new markets emerging for different skills, such as nursing for old people and so on in North Asia, South Korea, Japan and the European Market. This has been explored by Sri Lanka, as a number of new training nurse training programmes were initiated. However, Sri Lanka is in the early days of the programmes.

As highlighted in the morning, migration became an important issue in the Sri Lankan economy only after the mid to late 70s and thereafter when migration started growing, it just remained as one aspect of the economy. It is only now, from about mid-2000, that policy makers really started looking at migration because it became the largest foreign exchange earner to this country; it earns more exchange than ready-made garment exports, tea exports, tourism etc. equivalent to almost ten per cent of GDP. Therefore a decision has been taken to mainstream migration to overall development. In that context, the migration policy statement was brought out in 2008, and the National Advisory Committee on Labour Migration (NACLM) and Sub-Committees related to migration were initiated. In this regard, IPS produced the first Sri Lanka Migration Profile with the support of the IOM and ILO which provides the requisite statistics.

Now Sri Lanka is actively involved in the Colombo Process, and bringing out issues relevant to migrants. If all these things fall into place; accessing new markets, studying the demands that are emerging in various countries for workers, parallel to that mainstreaming migration would enable ease in exploring new markets.
Session 2: Worker Welfare at Different Stages of Migration

The second session of the conference was on ‘Worker Welfare at Different Stages of Migration’ and was chaired by Dr. Swarna Ukwatte, Senior Lecturer, Department of Demography, University of Colombo. The panel consisted of four resource persons: Dr. Bilesha Weeraratne (Research Economist, Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka), Suwendrani Jayaratne (Research Officer, Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka), Dr. G.M. Arif (Joint Director, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics), and Ms. Lucia Villamayor (Director II, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration).

Dr. Ukwatte opened the session highlighting the importance of giving priority for the migrants and their welfare at different stages of migration: pre-departure, at destination and upon return.

The first presentation by Dr. Weeraratne based on a study conducted by the IPS, focused on the question ‘Does Recruitment through an Agency Reduce Female Domestic Workers’ Probability to experience Difficulties?’ (See Annexure for presentation) The significance of the particular study lies in the fact that among all female migrant workers, domestic workers are disproportionately vulnerable in destination countries than a similar migrant in a different occupation. In this context, the study sought to answer the question of ‘How do different recruitment channels of female domestic workers affect their likelihood to experience difficulties at destination?’ The findings revealed that migrants who go through an agent have higher probability of being vulnerable, which appears to be somewhat counter-intuitive. To explain the problem, the study undertakes an in-depth analysis by disaggregating the different types of vulnerabilities separately. In-depth analysis revealed that those who go through combination of agent and sub-agent have higher probability to perform activities that they did not agree to. The study assumes that this could be due to the false information provided by sub-agents at the time of recruitment. The study further revealed that migrants who go through an agent have lower probability of being forced to work long hours without overtime payments, as expected. In addition, it was found that those who go through an agent have higher probability of being forced to work for a different employer. This might be due to agents managing a pool of potential employers. As a whole, the study highlighted the fact that the effect of recruitment channel on experiencing vulnerability varies by difficulty experienced.

Key policy implications of the study include: discouraging involvement of unlicensed sub-agents in the recruitment process whilst encouraging foreign employment through licensed agents; drawing up concrete employment contracts restricting the possibility of changing employer; targeting the pre-departure trainings by level of education; and giving more priority to less educated potential migrants.

After the first presentation of the session, a short video was shown regarding some of the challenges migrants face upon their return to Sri Lanka. The key findings of the interviews revealed that most of the returnees find it difficult to reintegrate due to lack of funds. However, the video further revealed that reintegration experiences vary depending on the personality.

Suwendrani Jayaratne, Research Officer, Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka was the second speaker of the session, who put together a presentation focused on ‘Reintegration of Returnee Migrant Workers in Sri Lanka’. (See Annexure for presentation) The presentation was based on the preliminary findings of one of the three studies carried out under the MED_MIG project. The study is centred on three main questions: How has migration affected the economic and social standing of migrants? ; What are the characteristics of returnee migrants who are economically better-off and
have successfully reintegrated in society? ; And how effective have the existing programmes & institutions been in assisting returnee migrants integrate to the society and the economy?

One of the key findings of the study was that successful reintegration of migrants upon their return is very poor in Sri Lanka. Another observation of the study was that returnees of the unskilled labour category in general were less likely to successfully reintegrate both economically and socially. The results also revealed that for female returnees however, regardless of the skills categories they belonged to are less likely to be economically better off than male returnees. During the course of the study it was also revealed that institutional involvement, both public and private sectors, in the reintegration process was very poor in Sri Lanka.

Conducting awareness programmes for returnees about livelihood programmes available to them; Identification of acquired skills from overseas employment in developing new livelihood programmes for returnees; Creating and expanding local markets to improve self-employment opportunities; Systematic monitoring and evaluation of existing programmes; and the identification of returnee migrants as a special group in order to develop livelihood programmes that exclusively cater to their needs and circumstances were some of the recommendations made by the research team at the end of this study.

Dr. G.M. Arif, Joint Director, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics discussed Pakistan’s experience in Worker’s Welfare at Different Stages of Migration. Findings of a study conducted focused on this phenomenon in Pakistan were presented. (See Annexure for presentation) The three main objectives of this study are as follows: How channels of recruitment affect workers’ vulnerability while abroad; How does migration affect socio-economic well-being of migrants and their families; and to examine how successful the existing programmes and institutions are in reintegrating migrants.

The study revealed that there are three channels of recruitment in Pakistan: through the Overseas Employment Promoter of Pakistan (OEP), through a person known to the migrant, and direct migration. Although the results reflected a mixed effect on the working conditions of the migrants when comparing them with the channel of recruitment they opted to migrate through, migrants who opted to directly migrate for employment were comparatively better off.

The examination of the effect of migration on the social well-being of migrants and their families showed that migration has a positive effect on the improvement of household consumption expenditure and housing conditions in the country. Dr. Arif proceeded to discuss the existing programmes in Pakistan focused on the reintegrating of returnee migrants as well as highlight some of the more successful initiatives adopted by the Pakistani government, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), and Overseas Pakistani Foundation (OPF) for the welfare benefit of returnee migrants.

The Government of Pakistan has made a few customs incentives available to returnee migrants such as, the exemption of custom duties on personal baggage and special immigration clearance counters exclusively for migrants. The initiatives by the State Bank of Pakistan can be identified with the facilitation of the flow of foreign exchange remittances through official channels. The Overseas Pakistani Foundation (OPF) is a governmental organization which has been set up for the benefit of Pakistani migrants and their families. OPF has several schemes which focus on different aspects of welfare of Pakistani migrants and their families such as: Education, health care, housing, vocational training for productive employment of returnee migrants etc.
The final presentation of the session was by **Ms. Lucia Vilamayor, Director II, Philippines Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), Philippines** on ‘Protection and Promotion of Welfare of Filipino Migrant Workers’. (See Annexure for presentation)

Ms. Vilamayor discussed the formal institutionalization of labour migration in the Philippines over the years and the establishment and core functions of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA). Philippine overseas employment programme has been developed in order to ensure Philippine migrant workers’ protection in all three phases of migration; pre-migration, on-site, and post-migration. POEA conducts public education and information campaigns on overseas employment for interest groups prior to migration in order to ensure they are fully aware of the migration process, risks, benefits, welfare programmes available to them etc. Mechanisms to monitor the private recruitment agencies’ status and the condition of recruited migrant workers at the destination of overseas employment are some of the practices adopted in order to ensure on-site worker welfare. At the post-migration stage, the POEA provides an effective complaints lodging mechanism for migrants who encountered issues during any stage of the migration process. Further, the POEA is authorised to subject any violator (employment agencies) of the standard recruitment procedure to strict disciplinary action.

Ms. Vilamayor further explained a few successful reintegration programmes conducted in the Philippines by the National Reintegration Centre for Overseas Filipino Worker. Formation of Investors and Entrepreneurs (FIE), Creation of Enterprise (CE), Local Employment Facilitation and the provision Support Services are some of the projects conducted by this initiative. These projects are geared towards providing training on entrepreneurial skills, small scale business development, livelihood skills development, etc.

This presentation concluded the session with Dr. Swarna Ukwatta, opening the floor to questions.

**Mrs. Padmini Ratnayake, Coordinating Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare:** requested Dr. Arif to elaborate on the migrant welfare fund in Pakistan.

**Mr. L.K. Ruhunage, Consultant on Labour Migration, Former Addl. General Manager, Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment:** questioned Dr. Bilesha Weeraratne regarding her results. He pointed out that there is a contradiction between the findings and the policy recommendations, as the results show that there is a higher probability of migrants being vulnerable by going through an agency while policy recommendations encourage migrations through an agent.

**Dr. Arif:** in response to the question, described the existing welfare fund in Pakistan. According to him, the Overseas Workers Foundation, established in 1979, is not merely for rehabilitation. For instance, if an overseas Pakistani died within three years after returning, his wife is entitled to a grant worth Pakistani Rs. 50,000. In addition, it has established educational institutions such as schools and housing scheme programmes, which have benefited not only overseas workers but the general population.

**Dr. Bilesha:** in clarifying Mr. Ruhunage’s comment, said when one groups vulnerabilities together, there was a higher probability of being vulnerable by migrating through an agent. But if one looks closer into specific categories of vulnerabilities it varies. For instance, there is less probability of being vulnerable going through an agency in terms of being forced to work longer hours without overtime allowances, whereas there is higher probability of being vulnerable going through an agency in terms of being forced to work for a different employer than what was agreed. Since the latter would
not be a serious issue as far as the worker’s welfare is concerned, the policy implication should be to encourage migration through agencies.

**Ms. Swaiiree Rupasinghe**, International Labour Organization (ILO) asked Dr. Bilesha whether the recruitment channel mentioned in the study was in Sri Lanka or overseas.

**Dr. Bilesha:** in reply stated that the data set does not distinguish this clearly. However, based on the answers given by the respondents in the survey, it appears that recruitment was done in Sri Lanka.
Session 3: Panel Discussion on Policies for Improving Migration from Sri Lanka - A Way Forward

This session was chaired by Mr. Somasundaram, Private Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Employment, Promotion and Welfare. The panellists representing various institutions were: Mrs. Padmini Ratnayake, Coordinating Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Labour Relations; Mr. Mangala Randeniya, Deputy General Manager, Foreign Relation & Publicity, Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment; Mr. L. K. Ruhunage, Consultant on Labour Migration, Former Addl. General Manager, Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment.

The chairperson opened the floor for queries regarding the quality of Sri Lanka’s migrant stock.

Mr. M. Munas (Centre for Poverty Analysis): The number of females employed as migrant workers is falling at present, as such, what aspects of improvement to the quality of the labour force have been undertaken?

Mr. L. C. D. Sigera (Sri Lankan Bureau of Foreign Employment): In response to the question mentioned by Mr. Munas, he stated that the organisation he represents (SLBFE), issues certifications, to improve the quality of people going abroad.

Mr. Mangala Randeniya: stressed on the ‘term’ alteration of housemaids to domestic housekeeping assistance, which adds a certain weightage to the job description of this profession. He added that, all those migrants employed as domestic housekeeping assistants, had to have acquired the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level three qualification, which addresses a majority of challenges faced previously, and ensures a certain level of quality. Furthermore, with the working age of migrants being increased from 18 to 21 in 2008, with a further increase to 23 at present, for domestic housekeeping assistants, he claimed that the stock of migrants would be more mature lending itself to a higher quality workforce.

Mr. L. K. Ruhunage: stated that there exist a vast number of low skilled opportunities, matched by the surplus of low skilled workers in Sri Lanka. These workers cannot be converted to high skilled as a result of their capacity. Therefore, though there is no argument about the need to upgrade skills, this scenario cannot be ignored.

Mrs. Padmini Ratnayake: added that though Sri Lanka promotes ‘safe, skilled migration’, one needs to study the Sri Lankan labour market. If opportunities exist largely for unskilled work, training workers would be a futile effort, as there have to be sufficient job opportunities for the skilled workers. She elaborates on three necessary steps that have to be taken in this account. First, the labour market needs to be assessed, and new markets identified. Following which, the provision of vocational training needs to be considered. The final step involves the formalisation of the selection and recruitment process. In relation to this, she stressed that Sri Lanka is always facilitating and promoting migration as it is an open economy, while it essentially needs to devote resources to developing the foreign employment industry.

Chairperson, Mr. Somasundaram: highlighted that though Sri Lanka has nearly reached full employment at 4 per cent, the levels of youth unemployment are high. As such, the policy suggestions mentioned by Dr. Rajan in the first session can be followed; converting low skilled domestic
housekeeping assistants into caregivers catering to markets such as Italy, Israel and possibly Sweden, etc. He emphasised that such a policy would be feasible in mopping up the high youth unemployment.

Dr. S. Irudaya Rajan, Chair Professor, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Centre for Development Studies, Kerala: commented on the cross-country comparisons made by panellists, regarding the level of low skilled workers. He stated that Sri Lanka cannot be compared to India or Pakistan with regard to the percentages of low skilled migrants, as Sri Lanka is unique in its demographically ageing population. Therefore, those high school dropouts mentioned by Mr. Ruhunage need to be converted and repackaged as skilled workers, providing them with employment opportunities in new markets, where the demand for specific skills exist.

Dr. Katheryn Lum, Research Fellow, Migration Policy Centre, Italy: posed the following question to the panel, “What has been done to pressure the KAFALA system to protect the vulnerabilities of female domestic servants?”

Chairperson, Mr. Somasundaram: claimed that this was a sensitive issue, and as such briefly stated that the ILO is attempting to intervene with certain policy measures, and additionally the Hon. Dilan Perera, Minister of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare is involved in several committees overseeing and attending to the protection of the low skilled female migrant workers.

Mr. G. Wijayasiri: commenced a new round of discussion, stating that Korea is a gold mine. Catering to this market is essential, as such; proper selection procedures need to be in place alongside training or orientation for those Sri Lankan migrants departing to Korea for employment. Korea requires efficient workers who follow their motto of being quick. Therefore, training programs similar to that implemented in Korea have to be undertaken in Sri Lanka as well, with specific attention given to enforcing appropriate work ethics. This would facilitate increasing employment opportunities from Korea.

Panellist, Mr. Mangala Randeniya: in response to the statement mentioned above stated that, Sri Lanka has been awarded a quota for migrant workers, by Korea. 80 per cent of this quota has been utilised, with 9998 passes being granted in 2011. With respect to training, he stated that, fourteen days of mandatory training is conducted for those migrants destined for Korea. He added that, particularly re-migration is high for Korea, as employers for the most part are satisfied with Sri Lankan employees.

Dr. S. Irudaya Rajan: at this point in the session chose to highlight to institutions the pressing importance for a nationwide survey focusing on a general population sample rather than purposive sampling. He stated that this sample needs to identify the number of temporary migrants working abroad, the returnee migrants, re-migration process, and so forth. Sri Lanka is lacking in statistics in this regard, and it is high time for a generalised survey.

Dr. Swarna Ukwatte, Senior Lecturer, Department of Demography, University of Colombo: raised the question, on how one identifies returnee migrants.

Panellist, Mr. Mangala Randeniya: stated that they have signed a MoU with the Immigration Department to publicize data on the number of returnees and stock of migrants. This is still in progress, and as such over the course of time, the requisite statistics will be available to the public.

Panellist, Mrs. Padmini Ratnayake: spoke of the RATAVIRU program in relation to returnee migrants. She stated that this policy corrected the previously present ad hoc programs, and was the
first step in creating the base of sub-policy for returnee migrants. The program enables institutions to systematically gather information on the quantity of returning migrants; provides assistance to obtain loans from financial institutions; assists migrants upgrade their skills to suit the local labour market for instance, provides entrepreneurship training, and in relation to this, an MoU with the Youth Ministry has been signed. This program additionally provides a platform for migrants to share their experiences, in terms of the skills learnt and any challenges faced with migration.

**Dr. Dushni Weerakoon, Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies:** posed the following question to the panel, “How are we going to keep sending workers abroad with our shrinking labour force? Are we promoting or facilitating foreign employment? What is our stance on migration with regards to overall macroeconomic policy?”

**Chairperson, Mr. Somasundaram:** responded stating that the number of migrants travelling abroad for foreign employment will be capped at 300,000; given our labour market situation, the only path to take is upgrading the skills of migrants. Reassuringly, he claimed that the Treasury shares this opinion, as an overwhelming positive response was received regarding budget allocations for Migration Resource Centres. With the Ministry of Finance backing labour migration, room for migration advancement exists.

With regard to policy implements, **Mr. Janaka Jayalath (Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission):** claimed that the plan for 2014 – 2020 needs to include huge development measures. 25 University colleges catering to the NVQ level, craft level are needed to feed the huge demand.

**Panellist, Mrs. Padmini Ratnayake:** in regard to migration policy, stated that the Migration Act needs to be revised, to regulate the incoming migrants together with the outgoing. She stated that the domestic labour market has to be taken under consideration, and accordingly specific strategies need to be implemented.

**Panellist, Mr. Mangala Randeniya:** in response to Dr. Dushni’s query stated that Sri Lanka promotes and facilitates safe family friendly migration.

**Panellist, Mr. L. K. Ruhunage:** contributed to the ‘policy debate’ by stating that labour migration has not been included in the National Development Plan thus far, and this has to change.

**Chairperson, Mr. Somasundaram:** wrapping up this topic of discussion, claimed that foreign employment has been recognized and that the ILO has received cabinet approval. He added that progression is in place, albeit rather slowly.

The ‘Health policy on human resources’ was the next topic at hand. **Dr. Susie Perera, Director Policy Analysis & Development, Ministry of Health:** in relation to this, stated that health policy in Sri Lanka focuses on migration as a whole; both inward and outward migration, together with internal migration. She added that particular attention was given to the health of those migrants’ families left behind. In other words, health in the entire migration cycle was under consideration. This is particularly significant, as there are potential health risks when people come into the country. In terms of policy implements, Dr. Susie stressed on improving outbound health assessment and introductory health assessment for inbound migrants. In addition, for those families left behind, a coordinated care plan needs to be in place, with specific note of those children (below the age of five) left behind by female migrants.
Dr. Janaka Wijayasiri, Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies posed the following question to the panel: “What is the government doing in terms of seeking markets abroad?” He elaborated that while interviews with recruitment agencies revealed that, agents rely on the government for promotions, interviews with government institutions revealed otherwise. It appears that the ball is being passed from one person to another.

Chairperson, Mr. Somasundaram: in response to this query claimed that agents are not marketers; they do not possess the skills in this arena. As such, the government is desperate to fill the gap. He added that Sri Lanka has a comparative advantage in the care givers job category. In countries where these skills are a premium such as Italy and Israel, MoUs have been negotiated. Further, developed housemaid markets like Singapore and Cyprus are being focused on by the government, as these are well regulated markets.

In addition, he brought into light the Colombo process, which enables the portability of qualifications, and pays attention to markets. In this regard, progress is being made, as the first ‘Asia – EU’ meeting will be held in Sri Lanka, where the means and mechanisms of tapping into the European Market will be discussed. He concluded his arguments, by stating that in his opinion, agents cannot promote, they can only supply labour.

Panellist, Mr. L. K. Ruhunage: in relation to the ‘search for new markets’ stated that the Malaysian labour market is open to the manufacturing sector, therefore this market needs to be looked into. In response to agents exploring new markets, he claimed that several agents are involved in harbouring, and as such reportedly spoil 60 per cent of feasible job orders from certain markets. He added that this behaviour is attributed to the ALFEA not functioning and the lack of enforcement of the ILO code of conduct. Though agents have to be recognized for their support with migration, penetration of new markets has to be left to the government.

Dr. S. Irudaya Rajan: in response to the afore-mentioned statement by Mr. Ruhunage, advised a suitable policy implement to rectify this misconduct by agencies. Capacity building is the key: all agents essentially need to possess a minimum undergraduate qualification and must pay a minimum of two million rupees to qualify as a legal agent. Apart from these requirements, they need to hand in an annual performance report. Therefore these ethical requirements, as practised in Kerala, will ensure quality among agencies.

Panellist, Mrs. Padmini Ratnayake: proceeding with the discussion of new markets, affirmed that the government plays the role of skill development and mutual recognition; formulating partnership agreements for the promotion of skilled migration.

Dr. Bilesa Weeraratne, Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies: questioned the panel on UAE’s labour policy which at present violated the rights of migrant workers.

Panellist, Mr. L. K. Ruhunage: in response to the question, stated that Sri Lanka is stepping down from sending domestic workers to UAE, as a result of the labour law.

Prof. Ariyawansa Dissanayake: declared that the internal labour market is being ignored; with the population growth being stationary, and the youth declining, what would happen when those workers geared for the foreign labour market return?

Dr. Swarna Ukwatte, Senior Lecturer, Department of Demography, University of Colombo: enquired of the care giving programme for families left behind by migrant workers.
Chairperson, Mr. Somasundaram responded by citing examples of after school help for the children left back by female migrant workers.

This session was then concluded by Mr. Somasundaram, thanking the panel and members of the audience.
Annexure
International Conference on Policies for Mainstreaming Migration into Development in Sri Lanka

Organized by the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS)
August 14, 2014
IPS Auditorium

Agenda

9.00 a.m.-9.30 a.m. \textbf{Inauguration}

Welcome address by Dr. Saman Kelegama, Executive Director, IPS

Launch of Labour Migration Information Resource Center by the Chief Guest - Hon. Dilan Perera, Minister of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare

Presentation of Select Annotated Bibliography on Labour Migration in Sri Lanka, by Prof. W.D. Lakshman, Chairman, IPS to:

- Hon. Dilan Perera, Minister of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare,
- Mr. Mahinda Madihahewa, Secretary, Senior Ministers’ Secretariat
- Mr. Nissanka Wijeratne, Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion & Welfare

Address by Guest of Honour, Mr. Nissanka Wijeratne, Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion & Welfare

9.30 a.m.-10.45 a.m. \textbf{Session 1: Expanding the Market for Migrant Workers}

\textbf{Chairperson:} Dr. Saman Kelegama, Executive Director, IPS

\textbf{Resource Persons:}

- \textit{Accessing New Employment Markets Abroad}
  Dr. Janaka Wijayasiri, Research Fellow, IPS

- Dr. S. Irudaya Rajan, Chair Professor, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Centre for Development Studies, Kerala

- \textit{A Comparative Analysis of Sri Lankan and Other Migrants in European Labour Markets}
  Dr. Katheryn Lum, Research Fellow, Migration Policy Center, Italy

Floor Discussion.
10.45 a.m. - 11.15 a.m.  **Tea**

11.15 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.  **Session 2: Worker Welfare at Different Stages of Migration**

**Chairperson:** Dr. Swarna Ukwatte, Senior Lecturer, Department of Demography, University of Colombo

**Resource Persons:**
- *Does Recruitment Through an Agency Reduce Female Domestic Workers’ Probability to Experience Difficulties?*
  Dr. Bilesha Weeraratne, Research Economist, IPS.

  **Short Video:** *Migrant Voices – Returning Home*

  **Reintegration of Returnee Migrant Workers in Sri Lanka.**
  Suwendrani Jayaratne, Research Officer, IPS

  **Workers’ Welfare at Different Stages of Migration - The Case of Pakistan**
  Dr. G. M Arif - Joint Director, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics.

  **Protection and Promotion of Welfare of Filipino Migrant Workers**
  Ms. Lucia Villamayor, Director II, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

  **Floor Discussion**

12.30 - 1.25 p.m.  **Session 3: Panel Discussion on Policies for Improving Migration from Sri Lanka - A Way Forward**

**Chairperson:** Mr. Somasundaram, Private Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare

**Panelists:**
- Mrs. Padmini Ratnayake Co-ordinating Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Labour Relations.
- Mr. Mangala Randeniya, Deputy General Manager - Foreign Relation & Publicity, Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment
- Mr. L.K. Ruhunage, Consultant on Labour Migration, Former Addl. General Manager, Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

**Floor Discussion**

1.30 p.m. onwards  **Lunch**
Accessing New Employment Markets Abroad

Janaka Wijayasiri, Dharshani Premaratne, Chandana Karunaratne

14 August 2014

Outline
1. Rationale and Research Questions
2. Methodology
3. Initial Findings
4. Policy Implications
5. Limitations of the study and future research direction

Rationale
- Currently, the Middle East is the largest foreign employment market
- Many migrants are females – housemaids
- Significant social costs associated leaving families behind
- Proportion of skilled and semi-skilled workers is comparatively small

Research questions
1. What are the perceived potential new employment markets and occupations available for Sri Lankan migrant workers in the near future?
2. What are the perceived challenges that Sri Lankan migrant workers and agencies face when attempting to access new markets?

Methodology
- Qualitative methodology
- Primary data:
  - Face to face open ended interviews with foreign employment agencies, association and govt. institution
  - Questionnaire
- Sampling technique (purposive): Maximum likelihood variation
  - Agency size: small (15), medium (2), large (5)
  - Designations: Assistant Manager, Manager, Director, Managing Director, Chairman, Licensee
  - No. of Employees: from 3-40
  - No. of years in Business: from 3-40
  - Recruiting all types of job categories
  - Mostly to Middle East
- Secondary data:
  - SLBFE Annual Statistical Handbook
  - Documentation: Publications and policy documents
- Analysis of initial findings
  - Tabulation of interview findings, transcription of interviews, coding of data into 17 themes and sub-themes, etc.
Initial findings

Job categories which have opened up in recent past

Qatar (16/22) | Saudi Arabia (12/22) | U.A.E. (14/22)
--- | --- | ---
Civil engineers | Civil and mechanical engineers | Hospitality sector
Facility management | Hospitality sector | Male nurses
Quantity Surveyors | | Architects and draughtsmen

South Korea (4/22)

Civil engineers

Malaysia (4/22)

Security guards for manufacturing firms

Australia (4/22)

Professionals

Potential regions to open up in future

Qatar (12/22) | Saudi Arabia (9/22) | U.A.E. (5/22)
--- | --- | ---
Construction workers | Construction sector | Civil engineers
Carpenters | | Drivers
Technicians and supervisors for construction sector

Malaysia (5/22)

IT professionals

Australia (2/22)

Hospitality sector

Libya (3/22)

Banking sector

Potential Job Categories to Open Up in Future

Qatar (12/22) | Saudi Arabia (9/22) | U.A.E. (5/22)
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Perceived challenges and solutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges in Accessing Markets (no. of respondents)</th>
<th>Possible Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language proficiency (16/22)</td>
<td>• Language training programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules and regulations in Sri Lanka (10/22)</td>
<td>• Minimise amount of rules; Training to be more specific to needs of occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited job orders outside traditional markets (11/22)</td>
<td>• Assist in identification of genuine recruitment agencies &amp; job orders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unattractive salaries (10/22)</td>
<td>• Negotiate a higher minimum wage/salary for low-skilled workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefessionals (6/22)</td>
<td>• Marketing to promote workers to take up jobs in ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of capacity to supply the required man-power (9/22)</td>
<td>• Introduce effective training programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of unity amongst agencies (5/22)</td>
<td>• More co-operation and better representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka's uncompetitive nature vis-à-vis other labour sending countries (8/22)</td>
<td>• Up-skilling workers; Capitalise on inherent qualities of Sri Lankans; Minimum wage/salary negotiations; career guidance</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Perceived challenges and solutions (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges in Accessing Markets (# of respondents)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of marketing (7/22)</td>
<td>• Conduct exhibitions/attend job fairs; • Canvas reputable companies; • Follow up on Missis; • Cooperation of SL embassies</td>
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<td>Excessive paperwork (6/22)</td>
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<td>High recruitment costs (6/22)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difficulties in obtaining visas (5/22)</td>
<td>• Negotiate MoUs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quotas (4/22)</td>
<td>• Removal of quotas; • Better allocation based on accepted system; • Greater awareness of allocation</td>
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<td>Certain professional jobs are dominated by few migrant countries (4/22)</td>
<td>• NA</td>
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Challenges in Accessing Markets

- Lack of marketing (7/22)
- Excessive paperwork (6/22)
- High recruitment costs (6/22)
- Difficulties in obtaining visas (5/22)
- Quotas (4/22)
- Certain professional jobs are dominated by few migrant countries (4/22)

Possible Solutions

- Conduct exhibitions/attend job fairs
- Canvas reputable companies
- Follow up on Missis
- Cooperation of SL embassies
- Simplify recruitment process
- Upgrade web-based recruitment system
- Increase awareness of officials
- Set-up telephone help desk in SL embassies
- Obtain guarantee for loans from agents
- Negotiate MoUs
- Removal of quotas
- Better allocation based on accepted system
- Greater awareness of allocation

Policy implications

- Supply and demand side constraints to accessing markets abroad
- Scope for addressing demand-side challenges is limited
- Much more can be done in Sri Lanka to deal with supply-side constraints:
  - Training
  - Marketing
  - Streamline recruitment procedures
  - Enhance cooperation within the industry
- SL needs to be more proactive in search for new markets
- Consolidation of existing markets

Limitations and future research directions

- Purposive sampling – difficult to generalize the findings to the general population
- Undertake a survey amongst employment agencies in Sri Lanka
- Interviews with potential migrants and returnees in accessing markets abroad
- Interviews with foreign recruitment agents and employers abroad

THANK YOU!
A comparative analysis of Sri Lankan and other migrants in European labour markets

Expanding the market for migrant workers

The EU Blue Card Directive

- Adopted in 2009 and unevenly transposed across the EU (UK, Ireland, and Denmark did not adopt the Directive)
- Gives enhanced legal protection to third country nationals with a job contract or binding job offer
- The salary must be at least 1.5 times the average annual gross salary in the Member State (MS) or 1.2 times the average salary in certain shortage occupations; most MS require a labour market test
- Salary thresholds in 2013 ranged from €46,400 in Germany to €60,952 in the Netherlands

The EU Blue Card: Enhanced Rights

- The Directive gives EU Blue Card holders the right to be accompanied by their family members, who are also entitled to unrestricted access to the labour market.
- After two years of employment, Blue Card holders can receive equal treatment with EU nationals on the labour market.
- Temporary unemployment of up to three months is allowed.
- Intra-EU mobility: card holders can move to another EU country after 18 months of legal residence in the original country.
- The Blue Card gives access to long-term residency.

Implementation of the Blue Card

- In 2012, a total of 3,644 Blue Cards were granted, mainly by Germany, Spain, and Luxembourg.
- In 2013, the number of Blue Cards issued increased to 15,261, with the leading countries being Germany, Luxembourg, and France.
- The top five nationalities receiving Blue Cards (in 2012) were India, China, Russia, US and Ukraine.
- The main occupations in 2012 were general management, ICT, and administrative and commercial management (more detailed occupational data has yet to be provided by all Member States).

The Blue Card and Sri Lankan highly skilled migrants: Case Study

- Data from from Germany (2013) shows that the largest number of Blue Card holders come from India (1,989), followed by China (714) and Egypt (310).
- Among South Asian highly skilled migrants in Germany (after India), Pakistanis received 140 Blue Cards, Bangladeshis 128, Nepalis 23 and Sri Lankans 11.

Diverse application across the EU

- The mode of application for the Blue Card varies: although the majority of MS require that the migrant makes the application, five require that the employer prepares the application (ex. Italy and France), two require that both migrant and employer submit the application (ex. Belgium) and some allow either the migrant or employer to apply.
- Throughout the EU, the Blue Card competes with previously established national schemes for attracting highly skilled professionals.
- In 2012, the Netherlands issued 5,514 national permits but only 1 Blue Card
- In France, 3,030 national permits were granted but only 77 Blue Cards.
The UK Points System

- In 2012 the top ten nationalities issued work-related visas in the UK included two South Asian nationalities - India, in first place, and Pakistan in 7th place. Other Asian countries also did well, especially the Philippines in 4th place and China in 8th place.

- Sri Lankan nationals occupied 10th place in the list of nationals receiving an extension to their work visa in 2012.

- Sri Lankans do not figure in the first list, since the majority of them were granted work visas under the Tier One post-study graduate work route (now closed).

Entrepreneur Visas granted

Entrepreneur visas issued, by country of origin of applicant

New opportunities for the highly skilled in the UK

- The entrepreneur visa, launched in 2011, enables those with £50,000 in investment funds or £200,000 of their own funds to establish their own business in the UK (other criteria include English-language requirements).

- If, after three years, entrepreneurs can demonstrate that they have created 10 permanent jobs or generated income of at least £5 million, they can apply for fast-track access to permanent residence, rather than waiting for 5 years.

- A report from E&S Consultancy, based on government figures, shows that Sri Lanka represented the number one applicant country in 2013.

Graduate Entrepreneur Visa

- Launched in April 2012 in order to compensate for the suspension of the very popular post-study work visa

- University graduates with a viable business plan, who are endorsed by either a list of approved universities in the UK or UK Trade and Investment, and able to support themselves, are able to apply

- The visa is initially for one year, which can be extended for a further year

Low Application Rate

- In the first 12 months of operation, just 119 Graduate Entrepreneur Visas have been granted, out of 135 applications.

- In contrast, the previous Post-Study work visa granted 47,700 permits in 2010.

- Obstacles: many international students have complained that there is insufficient time to submit business plans endorsed by their universities.

- Some universities charge fees to endorse, guide and mentor students, such as Oxford Brookes University, which charges £1,500.

Entrepreneur Visas: A Growing Trend Across the EU

- Several MS target entrepreneurs and investors in their national policies for attracting highly qualified migrants.

- Austria, Ireland, Belgium, Germany, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Italy and Sweden all have specific policies in place.

- The vast majority of MS do not require minimum educational qualifications for an entrepreneur visa.
The Sri Lankan community in Italy

- Italy in general has a very low level of non-EU highly skilled employment: just 5% of third country nationals are employed in highly skilled occupations in Italy, versus 53% in the UK and Luxembourg (Italy has issued just 118 Blue Cards to date).
- In 2013, the majority (66%) of Sri Lankans are employed in low-skilled sectors, with domestic work (36%), cleaning workers (12%), and restaurant work (10%) being the leading occupations. Skilled service workers account for 5.4%. 40% of employed Sri Lankans have an upper level secondary school education and 2.7% tertiary.
- 755 Sri Lankans are business owners (mostly of restaurants/hotels), of whom 19% are female. The share of Sri Lankans with their own business is 5.6%.

Indian Community in Italy

- Most Indians living in Italy are also engaged in low-skilled occupations, but their sectoral distribution is quite different. Indians are concentrated in industry and agriculture.
- 36% of employed Indians have upper level secondary education, 9% tertiary education.
- 3,256 Indians are business owners, of which 14.8% are women, mostly in trade/small shops. The share of Indians with their own business is 4.6%.

South Asian Income gap in Italy

- Despite the similar low-skilled occupational profiles of the Indian and Sri Lankan communities in Italy, Sri Lankans are concentrated in lower income brackets.
- Most Sri Lankans are in the €501-750 income group.
- Most Indians are in the €1,001-1,250 income group, with a significant minority who earn more than €1,500 a month.

Making the transition to highly skilled work

- Expansion of business mentoring programmes, such as those undertaken by Youth Business Sri Lanka, to include a focus on those who wish to set up a business abroad.
- Negotiating further agreements with countries such as Italy (where a bilateral labour agreement already exists) in sectors in which skilled and highly skilled labour are in demand.
- Fine-tuning of degree programmes in areas of high demand in Europe, such as certain sub-fields of ICT (cloud computing, big data & analytics, regulation & security). The IT field is officially defined as a shortage occupation in France, Germany, Austria, Ireland, Italy, Spain, and the UK.
Female Domestic Workers in the Middle East: Does Recruitment Through an Agent Minimize Vulnerability?

Bisleha Weeraratne
Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka
August 14, 2014

Migration from Sri Lanka

- Total departure for employment:
  - On average: 247,000 depart per year.
  - In 2013: 293,105 departed.

- Female departures in 2013:
  - 43% were females.
  - 33% were female domestic workers.

Decline in female share:
- Share of females and domestic workers have decreased in recent years.

Trends in migration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Migrant Placements</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Housemaids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>130,000</td>
<td>65,000</td>
<td>55,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>140,000</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>65,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Complaints by migrant workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Complaints</th>
<th>Female Complaints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vulnerability of female migrants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Complaint</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-payment of agreed wages</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disease</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence (Physical &amp; sexual)</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuses of Employment Contract</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of communication</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sent back after completion of contract</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem at home (Sri Lanka)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premature termination</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major illness or injury</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8,550</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SLBFE
Vulnerability of female domestic workers

Triple exploitation
Women are experiencing 'triple exploitation as females, workers and foreigners' (Hune, 1991).

Vulnerability of female domestic workers
Among all female migrant workers, domestic workers are disproportionately vulnerable in destination countries than a similar migrant in a different occupation (ILO, 2013).

No party with interest
One of the reasons for such vulnerability is the near absence of any party with any interest in these women (Cox, 1997).

Placement for foreign employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Placed by licensed agents</th>
<th>Total migrant placements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>25000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>30000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>35000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>11000</td>
<td>40000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>13000</td>
<td>45000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>15000</td>
<td>50000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>17000</td>
<td>55000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>19000</td>
<td>60000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>21000</td>
<td>65000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Often hypothesized
- Employment through informal channels increases the risk of domestic workers experiencing difficulties at the destination.

Not empirically tested
- Though hypothesized, existing literature has not empirically tested this.

Objective
- NAICLM has identified the need for a comprehensive study to explore the vulnerability of domestic workers who seek employment on their own against those who seek employment through a recruitment agency.

Details of the study

Research question
How does different recruitment channels of female domestic workers affect their likelihood to experience difficulties at destination?

Data
Secondary data from the SPARC - ILO dataset of 2012.

Summary statistics of female domestic workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did not face any difficulty</td>
<td>72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced to work longer than agreed</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced to work longer than agreed without OT</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrated when there are potential health risks</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrated when there is a threat of violence</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrated because of other activities than the agreed</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrated because of work in another location than the agreed</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced to work longer than agreed with the employer</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other difficulties</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methodology
A discrete choice methodology – a Probit model

Variables
Probability of Vulnerability = f(Demographic, Work, Recruitment)
Variables in regressions

Vulnerability
- longer hrs = OT
- longer hrs no OT
- potential health issues
- violence/threats
- other activities
- other employer
- other location
- stay longer
- other

Demographic
- age
- marital status
- ethnicity
- religion
- education

Recruitment
- are own
- agent
- agent and sub-agent
- sub agent only

Work
- no. of trips
- duration
- destination

Main findings (1)

Any vulnerability:
Those who go through an agent have a 7 p.p. ↑ probability to experience vulnerability.

Example

Main findings (2)

Forced to perform activities not agreed:
Those who go through combination of Agent + sub 4 p.p. ↑ probability to experience this specific vulnerability.

Example

Main findings (3)

Forced to work long hrs (no OT):
Those who go through an Agent have a 3 p.p. ↓ probability to experience this specific vulnerability.

Example

Main findings (4)

Forced to work for a different employer:
Those who go through an Agent have a 4 p.p. ↑ probability to experience this specific vulnerability.

Example

Other findings
- More mature in age - less issues faced
- More experienced in number of trips - more issues faced
- More aware of own rights/agreement
- had to return and go abroad again because faced issues
- Personal characteristics: separated/divorced - more issues faced
- More educated - less issues faced.
Summary of findings

Research question
How does different recruitment channels of female domestic workers affect their likelihood to experience difficulties at destination?

Answer
- The effect varies by the difficulty experienced.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Finding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forced to perform activities not agreed</td>
<td>Agent</td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced to work long hrs with no OT</td>
<td>Agent</td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced to work for a different employer</td>
<td>Agent</td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub Agent</td>
<td>Higher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Policy implications
1. Discourage involvement of unlicensed sub agents.
2. Encourage employment through licensed agent.
3. Improve enforcement of employment contracts by employers/agent.
4. Better target pre-departure training by –
   - level of education
   - marital status
5. Encourage mature females to migrate as domestic workers.

Closing remarks
- Findings do not imply a causal relationship - only a correlation.
- Findings cannot be generalized due to sampling.

Thank you.
**Motivation for the Study**

Returnee migrants face socioeconomic challenges:
- **Lack of savings**
- **Broken marriages & weakened family ties**
- **Negative impact on psychological status of children & spouse**
- **Difficulties faced by migrant children (education/abuse)**
- **Limited participation in community & social spheres**
- **Problems with extended family & neighbours**
- **Lack of skills & Skills mismatch**
- **Lack of information on potential economic activities**
- **Lack of access to self-employment loans**

**Reintegration Experience:**
- Can increase vulnerability & poverty or enhance economic development
- Individual & structural factors

**National Labour Migration Policy 2008**
- Reintegration a priority
- Rataviru Programme
- Continued efforts needed: comprehensive & effective

**Existing studies**
- Focus on domestic workers & females
- Reintegration of other skill categories – limited

---

**Research Questions**

- How has migration affected the economic and social standing of migrants?
- What are the characteristics of returnee migrants who are economically better-off and have successfully reintegrated in society?
- How effective have the existing programmes & institutions been in assisting returnee migrants integrate to the society and the economy?

---

**Methodology: Quantitative**

**Data:** "Reintegration with the Home Community: Perspective on the Lives of Returnee Migrant Workers", Social Policy Analysis and Research Centre (SPARC): Sample 2000, after adjustments 1981 returnees

**Correlation analysis of economically better-off (Probit Model)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model 1.1</td>
<td>Self-reported family economic improvement</td>
<td>Demographic, Socioeconomic, Foreign employment, Institutional support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1.2</td>
<td>Possession of productive assets</td>
<td>Demographic, Socioeconomic, Foreign employment, Institutional support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation analysis of successfully reintegrated, socially (Probit Model)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model 2.1</td>
<td>Integration with immediate family</td>
<td>Demographic, Socioeconomic, Foreign employment, Institutional support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2.2</td>
<td>Integration with extended family</td>
<td>Demographic, Socioeconomic, Foreign employment, Institutional support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Methodology: Qualitative**

- **Face-to-face Interviews with Returnee Migrants**
  - 10 interviews
  - Purpose: rapport, collaboration with relevant Government Officers (GPO 200)
  - Identify level of institutional support available for returnee migrants
- **Key Informant Interviews (KII)**
  - 21 KII
  - To identify level of institutional support available for returnee migrants

---

**Key Findings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How has migration affected the economic and social standing of migrants?</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economically Better-off</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Economic Situation Improved</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession of Productive Assets Improved</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successfully Reintegrated Socially</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successfully Reintegrated with Immediate Family</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successfully Reintegrated with Extended Family</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>75.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time taken to find employment</td>
<td>1-3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3-6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 2 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What are the characteristics of returnee migrants who are economically better-off and have successfully reintegrated in society?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Family economic improvement (%)</th>
<th>Proportion of productive assets (%)</th>
<th>Successfully reintegrated (with extended family)</th>
<th>Successfully reintegrated (with extended family)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.01***</td>
<td>0.02***</td>
<td>0.02***</td>
<td>0.02***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently married</td>
<td>0.00**</td>
<td>0.00**</td>
<td>0.00**</td>
<td>0.00**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Hindu</td>
<td>0.11***</td>
<td>0.01**</td>
<td>0.01**</td>
<td>0.01**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>0.08***</td>
<td>0.07***</td>
<td>0.07***</td>
<td>0.07***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>0.04**</td>
<td>0.03**</td>
<td>0.03**</td>
<td>0.03**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>0.03**</td>
<td>0.02**</td>
<td>0.02**</td>
<td>0.02**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>0.04**</td>
<td>0.03**</td>
<td>0.03**</td>
<td>0.03**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current recognition</td>
<td>0.03**</td>
<td>0.01**</td>
<td>0.01**</td>
<td>0.01**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieve professional</td>
<td>0.02**</td>
<td>0.02**</td>
<td>0.02**</td>
<td>0.02**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled work skill</td>
<td>-0.03**</td>
<td>0.08**</td>
<td>0.08**</td>
<td>0.08**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not classified</td>
<td>0.02**</td>
<td>0.02**</td>
<td>0.02**</td>
<td>0.02**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not working</td>
<td>0.07**</td>
<td>0.07**</td>
<td>0.07**</td>
<td>0.07**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who Fares Better? By skill level

- Level of economic improvement is higher for skilled workers compared to unskilled
- Even skilled workers need assistance

How effective have the existing programmes & institutions been in assisting returnee migrants integrate to the society and the economy?

Returnees who maintained links with institutions

- Total (1981)
  - Links with SLBFE: 63
  - Links with other institutions: 126
  - Total: 189
### Institutional support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Assistance programmes available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE)</td>
<td>Relative Union Programme Housing Loan: Rs.200,000 Self-Employment Loan: Rs.50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC)</td>
<td>Provide pre-departure training Lack of return migrant focused programmes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INGOs/NGOs</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Labour Organization (ILO)</td>
<td>Training for trainers Vocational training “Safe Migration” project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Organization for Migration (IOM)</td>
<td>Assisted Voluntary Return &amp; Reintegration (AVRR) Vocational training; job placement; Technical services; Business development training; Assistance to set up small businesses; Trainings to improve businesses; Training of Trainers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caritas Sri Lanka-SEDEC</td>
<td>Vocational training &amp; Skill development programmes Grievance support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Network for Migrant Workers (ACTFORM)</td>
<td>Work with women migrant workers Self-employment loans; Organising skills development programmes; Entrepreneurship programmes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Experiences of Other Countries: Philippines

**Republic Act 8042, or the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995**
- Support to returnee migrants has been made a priority under this law
  - i.e Pre-departure: guides migrant & family to set common goal

#### Key Programmes
- Livelihood Development Programme
- Overseas Filipino Workers Groceria Project
- Training at Foreign Worksites
- Recognition of outstanding returnee migrants
- One-stop center for all reintegration services

### Policy Implications

- Majority not reintegrated successfully
- Economic improvement: higher for skilled compared to unskilled workers
- Limited institutional support
  - Less no.s seeking help
  - National level programmes need improvement

**Need for a comprehensive Reintegration Programme**

### Policy Recommendations

- Direct returnees to existing livelihood programmes
- Identify new/special skills acquired & develop programmes to make use of them: benefit both returnee & country
- Create & improve local Industries & self employment opportunities
- Awareness of programmes
- Systematic monitoring & evaluation of programmes
- Identify Returnees as a Distinct/Special Group
  - i.e. credit facilities catering to returnee migrants

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Thank You!
Workers’ Welfare at Different Stages of Migration: The Case of Pakistan

Dr. G. M. Arif
Joint Director
Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Islamabad

Objectives
- How do channels of recruitment affect workers’ vulnerability while abroad?
- How does migration affect socio-economic wellbeing of migrants and their families?
- How successful are the existing programs and institutions in assisting migrants to integrate?

Magnitude and Pattern of International Labour Migration

- Approximately 7 million Pakistanis live and work abroad; about half (48%) of them in the Middle East, 28% in Europe and 21% in North America.
- Majority of overseas Pakistanis in the Middle East are in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE); in Europe, the main destination country is the United Kingdom and in North America, emigration occurs both to the United States of America and to Canada.
- Recruitment is involved for the Middle East migration

Recruitment Mechanisms in Pakistan - I

Management of overseas migration in Pakistan.
- Pakistanis can legally secure overseas employment through a number of routes.
  1) In the public sector, there is only one agency - the Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC). Its role has been limited.
  2) The predominant route through which labour is recruited for overseas employment is through the private sector in Pakistan, Overseas Employment Promoters (OEPs). At present, there are more than 1000 OEPs in the country.
  3) Individuals or groups of people may also secure an offer of employment and/or a visa directly through their own efforts or with the assistance of their relatives and friends abroad.

Recruitment Mechanisms in Pakistan - II

- OEPs typically receive a formal “demand letter” from a foreign employer; specifying the number/category of job opportunities available and the terms and conditions of employment.
- OEPs normally required to advertise the job opportunities, specifying as much detail as possible.
- OEPs are obliged to arrange for recruited workers to take a medical test with authorized medical officers in Pakistan. If any forged documents are detected, the concerned OEP is blacklisted.
- Prospective employees – no matter what channel was used to secure employment – must take out insurance with the State Life Insurance Company.
- Recruitment fee for OEP has been fixed in the rules.
Terms and conditions of contracts for overseas employment by channel of recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms and conditions</th>
<th>Channel of recruitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends/relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% who signed contract before migration</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% who understood the terms of the contract</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% who kept a copy of the contract</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Type of visa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of visa</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Visit</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employment abroad: fulfilment of contract by channel of recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% provided free accommodation</th>
<th>Channel of recruitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends/relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% provided free medical care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% provided for medical care</th>
<th>Channel of recruitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends/relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accident</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recruitment System: Working Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% paid wages regularly</th>
<th>% weekly paid for overtime</th>
<th>% who had weekly holidays</th>
<th>% who had annual holidays</th>
<th>% who reported deductions from their wages</th>
<th>% who considered deductions unfair</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends/relatives</td>
<td>OEPs</td>
<td>Direct visa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recruitment System: Reports of abuse by channel of recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% abused by employer</th>
<th>% were punished physically</th>
<th>% jailed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends/relatives</td>
<td>OEPs</td>
<td>Direct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Migration and Social changes at Household Level

Change in household consumption expenditures by quintile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quintile</th>
<th>Duration of stay abroad (years)</th>
<th>Average monthly household consumption expenditures before migration (Pakistani rupees)</th>
<th>Average household monthly consumption expenditures at the time of the survey (Pakistani rupees)</th>
<th>Growth/change (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First quintile</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td>1,167.92</td>
<td>2,283.42</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second quintile</td>
<td>8.71</td>
<td>1,586.99</td>
<td>3,036.09</td>
<td>91.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third quintile</td>
<td>7.56</td>
<td>2,222.91</td>
<td>4,317.71</td>
<td>94.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth quintile</td>
<td>6.86</td>
<td>2,078.65</td>
<td>5,445.36</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth quintile</td>
<td>6.72</td>
<td>3,727.99</td>
<td>11,622.46</td>
<td>211.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7.56</td>
<td>2,080.59</td>
<td>5,362.17</td>
<td>157.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Migration and change in housing conditions of the household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing situation/conditions</th>
<th>Total sample</th>
<th>Urban areas</th>
<th>Rural areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before migration</td>
<td>After migration</td>
<td>Before migration</td>
<td>After migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owes house (%)</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>91.2</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owes pucca house (%)</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has telephone (%)</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>62.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has water supply (%)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has sewerage (%)</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>84.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of rooms (mean)</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owes house with 5 or more rooms (%)</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: HSOMR 2009
Reintegration of return migrants

- Return migration is an integral part of the international contract labour migration systems.
- Reintegration is the process by which migrants, after their permanent return home from overseas employment, resettle into a social and economic structures of their countries of origin.

Initiatives by Government of Pakistan

- The GOP has provided certain incentives, such as exemption of custom duties on personal baggage and special immigration clearance counters to overseas migrants.
- According to the Import Policy 2009, an overseas Pakistani including the dual nationality holder can import a 3 year old vehicle (car, bus, van, trucks, pick ups including 4X4 vehicles) or can gift the vehicle to his/her family member under the Personal Baggage, Transfer of Residence and Gift Schemes.
- In 2010, this scheme was relaxed to import even five year old vehicles.

Initiatives by State Bank of Pakistan (SBP)

- Set-up centralized home remittance cells in 2002. Banks submit their remittance targets to SBP and an SBP taskforce ensured implementation. No restrictions on incoming remittances
- Pakistan Remittance Initiative (PRI), a joint venture of SBP, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Ministry of Finance was launched in 2009.
- In 2009, a MoU has been signed between PRI and PIA to enhance the remittances inflows by official channels.
- In order to encourage the flow of remittances through formal channels, the government in 2009 announced reimbursement of the marketing expenses to banks for attraction of remittances

Overseas Pakistani Foundation (OPF)

- OPF, a governmental organization for the welfare of overseas Pakistanis and their families has been working since 1979.
- Setup of education and health institutions, establishment of housing and industrial schemes, investment opportunities and providing necessary information and assistance to overseas Pakistanis.
- The two major schemes to improve the inflows of formal remittances are Foreign Exchange Remittance Card (FERC) and Pension Scheme for overseas Pakistanis.
- Under the former scheme, the five categories of cards are issued to overseas Pakistanis who remit foreign currency equivalent to US$ 2500 to US$ 50,000 per annum. The card holders get various incentives including, separate counters for special handling at international airports in Pakistan, free issuance and renewal of passport on urgent basis, and duty credits on some specific personal items.
OPF Schemes

- Prime Minister complaint cell to solve the problem of overseas Pakistanis and their families in Pakistan.
- OPF Schools (23 schools and 2 colleges)
- Medical facilities (MoUs with hospitals)
- OPF vocational training centres
- Skill development program for productive employment of return migrants
- Reserved seats for children of OPs in educational institutions
- Several housing schemes
- Facilitation centre for overseas Pakistanis in Jhelum.

Reintegration of Return Migrants

- Reemployment and occupational change
- Acquisition of productive assets
- Acquisition of real estate
- Financial investment: an investment of Rs 200000 on average

Success of existing program in reintegration of return migrants?

Relationship between recruitment channel and selected migration outcomes (reintegration)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Migration outcomes</th>
<th>Friends/ relatives</th>
<th>OEPs</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Illegal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duration of unemployment after return (days)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal monthly income (Rs.)</td>
<td>11'434</td>
<td>16'077</td>
<td>31'050</td>
<td>9'100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% owned agriculture land</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrigated land (kanals)</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-irrigated land (kanals)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% owned livestock</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% who owned house</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% who repaired house</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SRM, 2007

THANKS
PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF WELFARE OF FILIPINO MIGRANT WORKERS

I. INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF LABOR MIGRATION

1974
- Presidential Decree No. 442
  Labor Code of the Philippines created
- National Seamen Board (NSB)
- Overseas Employment Development Board (OEDB)
- Bureau of Employment Services

1982
- Executive Order 797
  Created Philippine Overseas Employment Administration to promote and monitor overseas employment of OFWs

1987
- Executive Order 247
  Reorganized POEA to promote and monitor overseas employment program and protect the rights of migrant workers to fair and equitable employment practices

1995
- Republic Act No. 8042 (Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act) enacted to further protect the workers throughout the whole cycle of migration

2002
- POEA Rules for Landbased Workers

2003
- POEA Rules for Seabased Workers

2007
- Republic Act 9422 amended RA 8042
  Strengthened the regulatory functions of POEA

2010
- Republic Act 10022 further amended RA 8042
  - Strengthened worker protection
  - Certification by DFA where OFWs can be deployed
  - Mandated insurance coverage for agency hired workers
  - Restrictions on placement fees
  - Disciplinary actions for recruitment violations
  - Arbitration of cases for violation of POEA Rules

II. POEA Mandate and Core Functions

- INDUSTRY REGULATION
- EMPLOYMENT FACILITATION
- WORKERS’ PROTECTION

III. PROTECTIVE MEASURES AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF MIGRATION

- License of agencies both landbased and seabased
- Accreditation of employers
- Better terms and conditions of employment
- Joint and solidary liability
- Standard employment contract
- Mandatory insurance coverage for agency hired workers
- Restrictions on placement fees
- Disciplinary actions for recruitment violations
- Arbitration of cases for violation of MOA
- Rules and Regulations except for money claims
EMPLOYMENT FACILITATION
- accreditation/registration of foreign principal/employers
- approval of manpower requests
- employment contracts evaluation and processing
- conduct of market research to gather information on labor migration
- pursuance of bilateral Regional/Multilateral Agreements
- recruitment of workers through government to government arrangement

PRE-MIGRATION
- public education and information campaign on overseas employment
  - Pre-Employment Orientation Seminar
  - Anti-Medal Recruitment Seminar
- Household Workers Reform Package
  - Certificate of Competency issued by TESDA (a national skills authority)
  - Attendance of worker to OWWA's comprehensive Pre-Departure Orientation on language and culture familiarization training
- POOS country specific CANADA, HK and ME culture, social mores and travel tips.
- arbitration of cases for violation of POEA rules and regulations except for money claims

WORKERS' PROTECTION
- monitoring of PRA's status and condition of recruited workers
- repatriation
  - Section 2, 3 & 4, Rule XIII, Omnibus Rules and Regulations Implementing RA 10022
  - Rule III, Part VIII POEA Rules & Regulations Governing the Recruitment and Employment of Landbased Workers

MIGRATION ON-SITE PROTECTION
- Philippine Overseas Labor Offices’ Services
  - Verification of Recruitment Agreement and Manpower Request
  - Management of Family Resource Center, 24/7 information and welfare assistance
  - Legal Assistance for recruitment violation cases
  - OEC Processing
  - Mandatory repatriation of underage workers
  - Repatriation of distressed workers
  - Medical & hospital assistance
  - Family welfare assistance
  - Location of OFW whereabouts

WORKERS' PROTECTION
- access to complaints mechanism
  - POEA
  - Police/Prosecutor Office
  - Labor Court (NLRC)
- administrative case against PRA for recruitment and deployment violations
- criminal case against recruiter for human trafficking
- money claims against PRA pursuant to JSL (unpaid salaries plus damages)

INDUSTRY REGULATION
- disciplinary action for recruitment and deployment violation
- arbitration of cases for violation of POEA Rules except money claims
NATIONAL REINTEGRATION CENTER FOR OFWs

REINTEGRATION PROGRAMS

- Formation of Investors and Entrepreneurs (FIE)
- Creation of Enterprise (CE)
- Local Employment Facilitation
- Support Services

FORMATION OF INVESTORS AND ENTREPRENEURS (FIE)

- Savings and Advocacy Project
  - to empower OFWs toward a culture of savings for investment
- Training
  - Financial Literacy/Financial Awareness Seminar
  - Entrepreneurial Development Training
  - Small Business Development Training
  - Livelihood/Technical Skills Training

CREATION OF ENTERPRISE (CE)

- Start up Assistance to Enterprises
  - Production Assistance and Specific Commodity Seminar
  - Mentoring/Coaching
- Access to Livelihood Assistance and Financing
  - Livelihood assistance to distressed returnees
    - A Php 10K livelihood assistance
  - Balik Pinay/Balik Hanapbuhay
    - A package of livelihood skills training and starter kits
  - 2B Reintegration Loan Fund
    - A loan facility from Php .3M – Php 2M

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT FACILITATION

- Referral for local employment
- Link to Phil-Jobnet
- National Skills Registry
- Training for immediate employment/certification
  - Training for Work Scholarship Program
  - Competence Assessment and Certification

SUPPORT SERVICES

- Formation of Regional Circle of Mentors on Enterprise Development
- OFW Reintegration Resource Centers
SUCCESS STORIES

- Clemente Manrique
  Handmade Fine Bone China Exporter

- Florentino Velasco
  Wood Products Exporter

WAY FORWARD

- Revising the 2002 POEA Rules to make it more consistent with existing laws, afford greater protection to workers, facilitate reasonable regulation of private recruitment agencies

- Streamlining rules on repatriation of workers to facilitate coordination among key agencies and exact accountability from those primarily responsible

- Strengthening inspection and monitoring agency compliance with licensing requirements and recruitment and placement regulations

- Establishing victim assistance programs to encourage reporting and prosecution of recruitment violations

Thank you!

LUCIA L. VILLAMAYOR
Director II
Licensing Branch
Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

August 14, 2014
Colombo, Sri Lanka