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Returning Home: Experiences & Challenges

The Experience of Returnee Migrant Workers of Sri Lanka

SUWENDRANI JAYARATNE, NIPUNI PERERA,
NELUKA GUNASEKERA AND NISHA ARUNATILAKE



INSTITUTE OF POLICY STUDIES OF SRI LANKA



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Executive Summary

Every year over 250,000 Sri Lankans leave the country for foreign employment. This outflow of migrants has increased steadily over time, increasing 20 fold from 1986 to 2012. But, little is known about those who return to the country after working abroad, although returnees can be of greater benefit to the economy than migrants. Returnee migrants bring back new skills and capital which can provide more value addition and create new employment opportunities among others, if properly directed and integrated to the economy and the society of the home country. However, after an extended period away from the country, most returnees find it challenging to reintegrate both socially and economically. Finding employment, lack of savings, lack of information on potential business activities are some of the key economic challenges they face. On the other hand, weakened family ties with spouse, children and neighbours make social reintegration difficult. A number of other individual and structural factors too affect the degree of integration of the returnees.

This study aims to analyse the reintegration experience of returnee migrants in Sri Lanka. It also assesses the variations in the reintegration experience between the skilled and unskilled returnees. Using a qualitative study, it examines the effectiveness of existing programmes and institutions in assisting returnee migrants to reintegrate into society.

The study uses the “Reintegration with the Home Community- Perspective on the Lives of Returnee Migrant Workers” survey data conducted by the Social Policy

Analysis and Research Centre (SPARC) of the University of Colombo in 2012 with funding from the International Labour Organization (ILO). The survey interviewed 2000 returnee migrants using a purposive sampling strategy. After statistical adjustments, a total sample of 1981 returnee migrants is used in the analysis. A series of qualitative interviews, including 10 interviews with returnees and 21 key informant interviews, were also carried out to validate the findings of the quantitative analysis and to obtain a deeper understanding of the reintegration experience of returnee migrants.

The improvement in the family economic situation of migrants was measured using a subjective measure and an objective measure: based on an individual’s self-assessment of their economic status pre and post-migration, and on the improvement in the possession of a migrant’s productive assets, respectively. The ability of the returnees to successfully reintegrate socially is captured by their ability to settle down satisfactorily with their immediate and extended families. Further, the effectiveness of the existing programmes and institutions were analysed based on whether the returnee received any help from the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment or any other institution to reintegrate. The effectiveness of the programmes were also assessed through the interviews carried out with returnees and institutions.

The results of the study show that a majority of returnee migrant workers were not able to improve their

Only 20.6 per cent of the returnees that were interviewed have been able to improve their family economic situation while only 6.3 per cent own more productive assets at present, compared to before migration. Further, only 47 per cent of the respondents are employed after returning.

economic situation upon their return nor successfully reintegrate socially. Only 20.6 per cent of the returnees that were interviewed have been able to improve their family economic situation while only 6.3 per cent own more productive assets at present, compared to before migration. Further, only 47 per cent of the respondents are employed after returning. Analyses by skill level show that economic improvement is higher for skilled workers compared to that of unskilled workers. However, the economic improvement of skilled workers is also limited, with only 28 per cent reporting family economic improvement. In terms of successfully reintegrating socially, only 25.9 per cent have been able to settle down successfully with their immediate family while 5.1 per cent have stated that they were able to do so with their extended family. The study also assesses which factors correlate more with improvements in family economic situation and better social integration.

In terms of institutional assistance to returnee migrants, the National Labour Migration Policy of Sri Lanka (2008) considers reintegration of returnee migrant workers to be a priority area, and several specific programmes on reintegration have come into operation by several state and non-state entities since then. Most state-assisted economic reintegration programmes concentrate on providing loans for self-employment ventures or for housing. Meanwhile, non-state actors play an active role in providing vocational training and business development training for returnee

migrants. Despite these programmes, the analysis of survey data reveals that less than 10 per cent of the returnees received any institutional support. The study also includes the reintegration programme in the Philippines, which is comprehensive and covers all phases of overseas employment: pre-departure, on-site and return, from which Sri Lanka can draw from, in designing a comprehensive reintegration programme.

Overall analyses lead to several policy recommendations. While a number of initiatives have been undertaken by the government to assist the reintegration process of returnee migrants, these are still at the initial stages and are far from being comprehensive. In order to improve the reintegration of migrants the study recommends, better coordinated, more comprehensive reintegration programmes that interact with migrants throughout their migration process, and focus attention on improving the financial literacy of migrants. Safe migration is key for successful reintegration into society. Hence, the study also recommends policies for improving safe migration. Lastly, better information on returnee migrants is important to identify their needs in reintegrating as well as identifying the contributions they can make to the economy through skills gained abroad and savings. Such information will also help to tailor the reintegration programmes according to needs.

Despite these programmes, the analysis of survey data reveals that less than 10 per cent of the returnees received any institutional support.

10%

returnees received institutional support

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සෑම වසරකම ශ්‍රී ලාංකිකයෝ 250,000 කට වැඩි සංඛ්‍යාවක් විදේශ රැකියා සඳහා රටින් පිටත්ව යති. 1986 හා 2012 අතර කාලයේදී රටින් පිටව යන සංක්‍රමණික සංඛ්‍යාව 20 ගුණයකින් වර්ධනය වී ඇත. සංක්‍රමණිකයන්ට වඩා පිටරටවල වැඩ කිරීමෙන් පසුව ආපසු පැමිණෙන අය ආර්ථිකයට වැදගත් විය හැකි නමුත් ඔවුන් ගැන තොරතුරු ඇත්තේ ස්වල්පයකි. ආපසු පැමිණෙන සංක්‍රමණිකයන් තම රටේ ආර්ථිකයට හා සමාජයට නිසි ආකාරයට යොමු කරන්නේනම් සහ අන්තර්ග්‍රහණය කර ගන්නේනම් ඔවුන් ගෙන එන නව කුසලතා සහ ප්‍රාග්ධනය වඩාත් වැඩි අගය එකතු කිරීම් සහ නව රැකියා අවස්ථා නිර්මාණය කිරීමට හේතු වේ. එහෙත් දිගු කාලයක් රටින් බැහැරව සිටි නිසා ඔවුන්ට සමාජයීය හා ආර්ථික වශයෙන් නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණයවීම අභියෝගයකි. ඔවුන් මුහුණ දෙන මූලික ආර්ථික අභියෝග වන්නේ රැකියා ලබා ගැනීම, ඉතිරුම් නැතිවීම, සුදුසු ව්‍යාපාරික අවස්ථා ගැන තොරතුරු නොමැතිවීමය. අනෙක් අතට සිය පවුල, දරුවන් හා අසල්වැසියන් සමග තිබූ සම්බන්ධතා දුර්වලවීම නිසා සමාජ අන්තර්ග්‍රහණය අසීරුය. ආපසු පැමිණි අයගේ අන්තර්ග්‍රහණ ප්‍රමාණයට බලපාන පුද්ගල හා ව්‍යුහාත්මක සාධක ගණනාවකි.

මෙම අධ්‍යයනයෙන් ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ආපසු පැමිණි සංක්‍රමණිකයන් නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණයවීමේ අත්දැකීම් විමසීම අරමුණු කරයි. ගුණාත්මක අධ්‍යයනයක් යොදා ගැනීමෙන් ආපසු පැමිණි සංක්‍රමණිකයන් සමාජයට නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණයවීමට සහායවීම සඳහා පවතින වැඩ සටහන් හා ආයතන ගැන හැදෑරීමක් කරයි.

මෙම අධ්‍යයනය අන්තර්ජාතික කම්කරු සංවිධානයේ අරමුදලින් 2012 දී කොළඹ විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ සමාජ ප්‍රතිපත්ති අධ්‍යයනය හා සමීක්ෂණ මධ්‍යස්ථානය විසින් 'දේශීය ප්‍රජාව සමග නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණය - ආපසු පැමිණි සංක්‍රමණික

සේවකයන්ගේ ජීවන දැක්ම' යනුවෙන් කරන ලද අධ්‍යයනයේ සමීක්ෂණ දත්ත යොදා ගනී. එම අධ්‍යයනය සාර්ථක නියැදි උපාය මාර්ගය යොදා ගනිමින් ආපසු පැමිණි සංක්‍රමණිකයන් 2000 ක් සමග සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා කර ඇත. සංඛ්‍යාතික ගැලපීමෙන් පසුව 1981 දී ආපසු පැමිණි සංක්‍රමණිකයන්ගේ මුළු නියැදියක් අධ්‍යයනය සඳහා යොදා ගෙන ඇත. ප්‍රමාණාත්මක විග්‍රහයේ සොයා ගැනීම්වල වලංගුතාවය සහ ආපසු පැමිණි සංක්‍රමණිකයන්ගේ නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණ අත්දැකීම් පිළිබඳ ගැඹුරු අවබෝධයක් ලබා ගැනීමට ආපසු පැමිණියන් සමග සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා 10 ක් සහ ප්‍රධාන තොරතුරු ලබා දෙන 21 ක් සමග සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡාත් පවත්වා ඇත.

සංක්‍රමණිකයන්ගේ පවුලේ ආර්ථික තත්වයේ වර්ධනය පිළිවෙලින් එක් එක් පුද්ගලයා සංක්‍රමණයට පෙර හා පසුව තම ආර්ථික තත්වය ගැන කරන ස්වයං තක්සේරුව සහ සංක්‍රමණිකයාගේ ඵලදායී වත්කම් අත්කර ගැනීමේ වර්ධනය මත පදනම්ව පුද්ගල මිනුම් සහ වාස්තවික මිනුම් යොදා ගනිමින් ගණනය කරන ලදී. ආපසු පැමිණි අයට සාර්ථකව සමාජයට නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණය වීමේ හැකියාව තමාගේම සහ ආසන්න ඥාතී පවුල් සමග සාර්ථකව එකතුවීමට ඇති හැකියාව අනුව හඳුනා ගැනිණ. තවදුරටත් ආපසු පැමිණියන්ට නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණය වීමේදී ශ්‍රී ලංකා විදේශ සේවා නියුක්ත කාර්යාංශයේ හෝ වෙනත් ආයතනවලින් කිසියම් සහායක් ලැබුණේද යන්න පදනම්ව පවතින වැඩ සටහන් හා ආයතනවල කාර්යක්ෂමතාවය විග්‍රහ කර ඇත. වැඩ සටහන්වල කාර්යක්ෂමතාවය ආපසු පැමිණි අය සහ ආයතන සමග පවත්වන ලද සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡාවලින් තක්සේරු කරන ලදී.

ආපසු පැමිණි සංක්‍රමණිකයන්ගෙන් බහුතරයකට ආපසු පැමිණීමෙන් පසු තම ආර්ථික තත්වය වැඩි දියුණු කර ගැනීමට

හෝ සමාජය සමග සාර්ථකව නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණයවීමට නොහැකි වී ඇති බව මෙම අධ්‍යයනයේ ප්‍රතිඵලවලින් දැක්වේ. සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා කරන ලද ආපසු පැමිණියන්ගෙන් සියයට 20.6 කට තම පවුලේ ආර්ථික තත්වය වැඩි දියුණු කර ගැනීමට හැකි වූ අතර සියයට 6.3 කට පමණක් සංක්‍රමණයට පෙර පැවති තත්වය හා සසඳන විට දැන් ඔවුන් සතු ඵලදායී වත්කම්වල වර්ධනයක් පෙන්නුම් කරයි. තවද ප්‍රතිචාර දැක්වූ ආපසු පැමිණියන්ගෙන් සියයට 47 ක් නැවත සේවයේ යෙදී සිටිති. පුහුණු මට්ටම විග්‍රහ කිරීමේ දී නුපුහුණු සේවකයන්ට වඩා පුහුණු සේවකයන්ගේ ආර්ථික වර්ධනයක් දැකිය හැකිය. එසේ වුවත් පුහුණු සේවකයන්ගේ ආර්ථික වර්ධනයද සීමිතය. පවුලේ ආර්ථිකයේ වර්ධනයක් වාර්තා වූයේ සියයට 28 කින් පමණි. සමාජයීය වශයෙන් සාර්ථකව නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණය වීමේදී සියයට 25.9 ක් තම ආසන්න පවුල් සමග සාර්ථකව ජීවත් වන අතර පවුලේ බාහිර ඥාතීන් සමග සුහදව සිටින්නේ සියයට 5.1 ක් පමණි. මෙම අධ්‍යයනයෙන් පවුලේ ආර්ථික තත්වයේ වැඩි දියුණුව සහ වඩාත් හොඳින් සමාජ අන්තර්ග්‍රහණය සමග ඇති සහසම්බන්ධතා සාධක ගැනද තක්සේරු කෙරේ.

ආපසු පැමිණෙන සංක්‍රමණික සේවකයන්ට සලසා ඇති ආයතනික ආධාර සම්බන්ධයෙන් බලන විට ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ජාතික ග්‍රමික සංක්‍රමණික ප්‍රතිපත්තිය (2008) ආපසු පැමිණෙන සංක්‍රමණික සේවකයන් නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණය ප්‍රමුඛතා ක්ෂේත්‍රයක් ලෙස හඳුනාගෙන ඇත. ඉන් පසුව රාජ්‍ය සහ රාජ්‍ය නොවන ආයතන ගණනාවක් නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණය පිළිබඳ වැඩ සටහන් ගණනාවක් ක්‍රියාත්මක කරති. රාජ්‍ය අනුග්‍රහය ලබන ආර්ථික නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණ වැඩ සටහන් බොහොමයක් ස්වයං රැකියා ව්‍යාපාර සහ නිවාස ණය පහසුකම් ලබාදීම කෙරේ යොමුව ඇත. මේ අතර රාජ්‍ය නොවන ආයතන ආපසු පැමිණි සංක්‍රමණිකයන් සඳහා වෘත්තීය

පුහුණුව සහ ව්‍යාපාර පුහුණුව ලබා දීමේදී ක්‍රියාකාරී භූමිකාවක් ඉටු කරති. මෙම වැඩ සටහන් ක්‍රියාත්මක වුවද සමීක්ෂණ දත්ත විග්‍රහයේ දී පෙනී යන්නේ කිසියම් ආකාරයක ආයතනික සහායක් ලැබී ඇත්තේ ආපසු පැමිණි සංක්‍රමණිකයන්ගෙන් සියයට 10 කට පමණි යන්නයි. විදේශ සේවා නියුක්තියේ සියලුම අවධීන්: පිටත්ව යෑමට පෙර, වැඩ කරන ස්ථානය සහ ආපසු පැමිණීම ඇතුළත්වන පිලිපිනයේ නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණ වැඩ සටහන අධ්‍යයනය කිරීමෙන් සවිස්තරාත්මක නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණ වැඩ සටහනක් සැලසුම් කිරීමේ දී ශ්‍රී ලංකාවට බොහෝ දේ ඉගෙන ගත හැකිය.

සමස්ත විග්‍රහයකදී ප්‍රතිපත්ති නිර්දේශ ගණනාවක් හඳුනා ගත හැකිය. ආපසු

පැමිණෙන සංක්‍රමණිකයන් ගේ නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණ ක්‍රියාවලියට සහායවීම සඳහා රජය මූලපිරීම් ගණනාවක් දියත් කර ඇති නමුත් ඒවා තවමත් පවතින්නේ සවිස්තරාත්මක නොවන ආරම්භක අවස්ථාවේය. සංක්‍රමණිකයන්ගේ නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණය වැඩි දියුණු කිරීම සඳහා සංක්‍රමණ ක්‍රියාවලිය මුළුල්ලේම සංක්‍රමණිකයන් සමග සම්බන්ධතා පවත්වන, සංක්‍රමණිකයන්ගේ මූල්‍ය සාක්ෂරතාව වැඩි දියුණු කිරීම කෙරේ යොමු වූ වඩාත් හොඳින් සම්බන්ධීකරණය වූ සවිස්තරාත්මක නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණය කිරීමේ වැඩ සටහන් මෙම අධ්‍යයනයෙන් නිර්දේශ කෙරේ. ආරක්ෂිත සංක්‍රමණය සමාජයට සාර්ථකව නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණය කිරීමට මූලික වේ. එමනිසා සංක්‍රමණයවීමේ ආරක්ෂාකාරී තත්වය වැඩි

දියුණු කිරීමද මෙම අධ්‍යයනයෙන් නිර්දේශ කෙරේ. අවසාන වශයෙන් ආපසු පැමිණෙන සංක්‍රමණිකයන් නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණයේදී මෙන්ම විදේශ වලදී ඔවුන් අත්කර ගත් කුසලතා හා ඉතිරුම් තුළින් ආර්ථිකයට ඔවුන්ට ලබා දිය හැකි දායකත්වය හඳුනා ගැනීමටත් ඔවුන්ගේ අවශ්‍යතා හඳුනා ගැනීමටත් වඩාත් හොඳ තොරතුරු පවත්වා ගැනීම වැදගත්ය. එවැනි තොරතුරු අවශ්‍යතාවයන්ට අනුව නැවත අන්තර්ග්‍රහණය කිරීමේ වැඩ සටහන් සකස් කිරීමටද ඉවහල් වේ.

நிறைவேற்றுச் சுருக்கம்

ஒவ்வொரு வருடமும் 250,000 இலங்கையர்கள் வெளிநாட்டு வேலைவாய்ப்புக்காக நாட்டைவிட்டு வெளிச்செல்கின்றனர். இப்புலம்பெயர்வானது காலத்தால் படிப்படியான அதிகரிப்பைக் காட்டியுள்ளதோடு, 1986 இலிருந்து 2012 வரை 20 மடங்கிற்கால் அதிகரித்துள்ளது. புலம்பெயர்வோரை விட நாடு திரும்புவோர்களினால் நாட்டின் பொருளாதாரத்திற்கு அதிக அனுகூலம் கிடைக்கக் கூடியதாகவுள்ள போதிலும், வெளிநாட்டில் பணி புரிந்த பின்னர் நாட்டிற்கு மீளத்திரும்புவோர் பற்றிய சில கடினமான சந்தர்ப்பங்களும் இடம்பெறுகின்றன. இவர்களின் அர்ப்பணிப்புகள் பொருளாதாரத்திற்கும் மற்றும் தாய் நாட்டிலுள்ள சமுதாயத்திற்கும் ஏற்ற முறையில் நெறிப்படுத்தப்பட்டு ஒருங்கிணைக்கப்படும் பட்சத்தில், புலம்பெயர்ந்தோர் நாடு திரும்புகின்ற வேளையில் மேலதிக பெறுமதி சேர்க்கக் கூடியதும் மற்றும் புதிய தொழில்வாய்ப்பு வசதிகளை ஏனையோருக்கும் வழங்கக் கூடியதுமான புதிய திறன்களையும் மூலதனங்களையும் நாட்டிற்குள் கொண்டுவர முடிகிறது. இருப்பினும், தனது தாய் நாட்டிற்கு அப்பால் ஒரு நீண்டகால பணி புரிதலின் பின்னர், நாடு திரும்பக்கூடிய அனேகமானோர் சமூக மற்றும் பொருளாதார ரீதியிலான ஒருமைப்பாட்டினை பேணுவதில் பல சவால்களையே எதிர்கொள்கின்றனர். தொழில்வாய்ப்பினை தேடிப்பெறுதல், சேமிப்புகள் இன்மை, வாய்ப்புமிக்க வியாபார நடவடிக்கைகள் குறித்தான அறிவின்மை போன்றன அத்தகையோர் எதிர்கொள்கின்ற சில பிரதான பொருளாதார ரீதியான சவால்களாகக் குறிப்பிடலாம். மற்றொருபுறம் குறிப்பிடுவதாகவிருந்தால், தனது வாழ்க்கைத்துணை, பிள்ளைகள் மற்றும் குடும்பத்தினரைக் கொண்ட பலவீனமானோருக்கு சமூக மீள் ஒருமைப்பாடு மிகவும் கடினமாகன-தாகவேயுள்ளது. மேலும் இவர்களின் ஒருமைப்பாட்டின் அளவைப் பாதிக்கக்கூடிய தனிப்பட்ட மற்றும் கட்டமைப்பு சார்ந்த ஏனைய காரணிகளும் காணப்படுகின்றன.

இவ் ஆய்வானது இலங்கையிலுள்ள நாடு திரும்பிய புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்களின் மீள் ஒருமைப்பாட்டு அனுபவம் தொடர்பில்

கற்றறிந்து கொள்வதை இலக்காகக் கொண்டதாகும். மேலும் இது நாடு திரும்பிய புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்களில் திறன் மிக்கவர்களுக்கு மீள் திறனற்றோர்களுக்கு இடையிலான மீள் ஒருமைப்பாட்டு அனுபவத்திலுள்ள வேறுபாட்டினையும் மதிப்பிடுகிறது. இது தரம் சார்ந்த ஆய்வு ஒன்றைப் பயன்படுத்தி, இவர்களை சமுதாயத்திலுள்ள மீள் ஒருமைப்படுத்துவதற்கான உதவியை நல்குவதில், தற்போதுள்ள நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டங்கள் மற்றும் நிறுவனங்கள் ஆகியவற்றின் விளைத்திறனைப் பரிசீலிக்கிறது.

சர்வதேச தொழில் அமைப்பின் (ILO) நிதியுதவியுடன் கொழும்பு பல்கலைக் கழகத்தின் சமூக கொள்கை பகுப்பாய்வு மற்றும் ஆராய்ச்சி மையத்தினால் (SPARC) 2012 இல் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்ட “நாடு திரும்பிய புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்களின் வாழ்க்கை குறித்த உள்நாட்டு சமூகப் பார்வையுடனான மீள் ஒருமைப்பாடு” எனும் ஆய்வுத் தரவு இவ் ஆய்வில் பயன்படுத்தப்படுகிறது. இவ் ஆய்வானது உறுதியான நோக்கமிக்கதொரு மாதிரியாக்க உபாயத்தைக் கொண்டு நாடு திரும்பிய 2000 புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்களை நேர்காணல் செய்துள்ளது. புள்ளிவிபரம் சார்ந்த சீராக்கல்களின் பின்னர், நாடு திரும்பிய புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்களில் மொத்தமாக 1981 மாதிரி நபர்கள் இவ் ஆய்வில் பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டனர். நாடு திரும்பியோர்களுடன் 10 நேர்காணல்கள் உள்ளிட்ட, தரம் சார்ந்த நேர்காணல் தொடர் ஒன்றும் மற்றும் 21 பிரதான தகவலாளி நேர்காணலும் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்டன. இவை தரம் சார்ந்த பகுப்பாய்வுகளின் கண்டறிதல்களை செயலாக்கம் செய்வதற்கும் மற்றும் நாடு திரும்பிய புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்களின் மீள் ஒருமைப்பாட்டு அனுபவங்கள் பற்றியதொரு ஆழமான புரிதலைப் பெற்றுக்கொள்வதற்குமான நோக்கோடு இடம்பெற்றது.

புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்களின் குடும்ப பொருளாதார நிலையிலான முன்னேற்றமானது, குறித்த நபர்கள் புலம்பெயர்வதற்கு முன்னரும் மற்றும் அதன் பின்னரும் அவர்களது பொருளாதார நிலைமை தொடர்பான தனிநபர் சுய-கணிப்பீடு ஒன்றின் அடிப்படையிலும் மற்றும்

குறித்த நபர் கொண்டுள்ள உற்பத்தித்திறன் மிக்க சொத்துக்களிலான முன்னேற்றத்தின் அடிப்படையிலும் முறையே விடயம் சார் அளவீடு மற்றும் குறிக்கோள் சார் அளவீடு ஆகிய அளவீடுகளைப் பயன்படுத்தி கணிப்பிடப்பட்டது. நாடு திரும்பிய புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்களை வெற்றிகரமான முறையில் சமுதாய ரீதியில் மீள் ஒருமைப்படுத்துவதற்கான திறமையானது அவர்களது நெருங்கிய உறவு மற்றும் தூர உறவுக் குடும்பத்தினருடன் வெற்றிகரமாக வாழ வைக்கும் திறமையினாலேயே உறுதிசெய்யப்படுகிறது. மேலும், தற்போதுள்ள நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டங்கள் மற்றும் நிறுவனங்களின் விளைத்திறனானது, இலங்கை வெளிநாட்டு வேலைவாய்ப்புப் பணிப்பகத்தின் அல்லது ஏதேனும் ஏனைய ஒருமைப்படுத்தும் நிறுவனத்தின் உதவியை, நாடு திரும்பிய புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர் பெற்றுள்ளாரா என்பதனடிப்படையில் ஆய்வுசெய்யப்பட்டது. நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டத்தின் விளைத்திறன் நாடு திரும்பியோருடனும் மற்றும் நிறுவனங்களுடனும் இடம்பெற்ற நேர்காணல்கள் மூலமும் மதிப்பிடப்பட்டது.

புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்களில் அனேகமானோர் நாடு திரும்பிய பின்னர் தமது பொருளாதாரத்தில் முன்னேற்றம் அடையும் ஆற்றலோ அல்லது சமுதாயத்துடன் வெற்றிகரமாக ஒருமைப்படுவதற்கான ஆற்றலோ இன்றியவர்களாகவே காணப்பட்டனர் என்பதையே இவ் ஆய்வின் பெறுபேறுகள் காட்டுகின்றன. நேர்காணப்பட்ட புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்களில் 20.6 சதவீதமானோர் தமது குடும்ப பொருளாதார நிலைமையினை முன்னேற்றுவதற்கான திறமையினைக் கொண்டு காணப்பட்ட அதேவேளை, முன்னைய புலம்பெயர்வுடன் ஒப்பிடுகையில் 6.3 சதவீதமானவர்கள் சொந்தமான உற்பத்தித் திறன்மிக்க சொத்துக்களை தற்போது அதிகம் கொண்டவர்களாகவும் உள்ளனர். மேலும், 47 சதவீதமானவர்கள் மாத்திரமே நாடு திரும்பிய பின்னர் தொழில்வாய்ப்பைப் பெற்றுள்ளனர். திறமை மட்ட அடிப்படையிலான பகுப்பாய்வின் பிரகாரம் நோக்கும் பட்சத்தில், திறமையற்ற பணியாளர்களுடன் ஒப்பிடுகையில் திறன்மிக்க பணியாளர்கள் பொருளாதார முன்னேற்றத்தில் மேம்பட்டிருப்பதை அறிய

முடிகிறது. இருப்பினும், திறமைமிக்க பணியாளர்களின் பொருளாதார முன்னேற்றம் கூட 28 சதவீதம் எனும் வரையறையுடனேயே காணப்படுகிறது. வெற்றிகரமான சமுதாய மீள் ஒருமைப்பாட்டின் பிரகாரம் நோக்கினால், 25.9 சதவீதமானவர்களுக்கு மாத்திரமே தமது நெருங்கிய குடும்ப உறவுகளோடு வெற்றகரமாக வாழக்கூடியதாகவுள்ள அதேவேளை, தமது தூர உறவுகளுடனேயே அவ்வாறு வாழ முடிவதாக 5.1 சதவீதமானவர்கள் தெரிவித்துள்ளனர். மேலும் இவ் ஆய்வானது குடும்ப பொருளாதார நிலைமை மற்றும் சிறந்த சமுதாய ஒருமைப்பாடு ஆகியவற்றிலான முன்னேற்றங்களோடு அதிகம் பிணைப்பிணைக்கொண்ட காரணிகள் யாவை என்பதையும் கணிப்பீடு செய்கிறது.

நாடு திரும்பிய புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்களுக்கான நிறுவன ரீதியான உதவிகளின் அடிப்படையில் நோக்குமிடத்து, இலங்கையின் தேசிய தொழில் ரீதியான புலம்பெயர்வுக் கொள்கையானது (2008) நாடு திரும்பிய பணியாளர்களுக்கான மீள் ஒருமைப்பாடு ஒரு முன்னுரிமையளிக்கப்பட்ட அம்சமாகவிருக்க வேண்டுமெனக் கருதுவதோடு, மீள் ஒருமைப்பாடு குறித்தான பல்வேறு குறிப்பான நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டங்கள் அன்று முதலே பல்வேறு அரச மற்றும் அரச சார்பற்ற அமைப்புகளால் நடைமுறைப்படுத்தப்பட்டுள்ளதையும் குறிப்பிடுகிறது. அரச

உதவியுடனான அனேக பொருளாதார மீள் ஒருமைப்பாட்டு நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டங்கள் சுய தொழில் முயற்சிகளுக்கான அல்லது வீடு கட்டுவதற்கான கடன்கள் வழங்குவதையே இலக்காகக் கொண்டுள்ளது. அதேவேளை, அரச சார்பற்ற செயற்பாட்டாளர்களும் புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்களுக்கான கிராமிய பயிற்சிகள் மற்றும் வியாபார அபிவிருத்தி சார் பயிற்சிகள் ஆகியவற்றை வழங்குவதிலும் தமது பங்களிப்பை வழங்குகின்றனர். இவ்வாறு நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டங்கள் இடம்பெறினும் கூட, நாடு திரும்பிய பணியாளர்களில் 10 சதவீதத்தையும் விடக் குறைவானோரே நிறுவன ரீதியான ஏதேனும் ஆதரவினைப் பெற்றுள்ளார்கள் என்பதையே இவ் ஆய்வுத் தரவுகளின் பகுப்பாய்வு காட்டுகிறது. இவ் ஆய்வானது வெளிநாட்டு வேலைவாய்ப்பு தொடர்பில் புறப்பாட்டிற்கு முன், பணியின் போது மற்றும் நாடு திரும்பல் ஆகியன உள்ளிட்ட விரிவானதும் சம்பந்தப்பட்ட அனைத்துக் கட்டங்களையும் உள்ளடக்கியதுமான பிலிப்பைன்ஸ் நாட்டின் மீள் ஒருமைப்பாட்டு நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டம் தொடர்பிலும் தனது கற்கையினைச் செலுத்துகிறது. ஒரு விரிவான மீள் ஒருமைப்பாட்டு நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டத்தை வடிவமைக்கும் போது, இதிலுள்ள பல அம்சங்களை இலங்கை பெற்றுக்கொள்ளக்கூடியதாகவும் இதுவுள்ளது.

அனைத்து ஒட்டுமொத்த பகுப்பாய்வுகளும் பல்வேறு கொள்கை ரீதியான பரிந்துரைகளுக்கே வழியமைக்கின்றன. நாடு

திரும்பிய புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்களின் மீள் ஒருமைப்பாட்டுச் செயல்முறைக்கு உதவும் நோக்கில் அனேக முன்னெடுப்புக்களை அரசாங்கம் மேற்கொண்டுள்ள போதிலும், அவை இன்னமும் தொடக்க கட்டத்திலேயே காணப்படுவதோடு, அவை முழுமை பெறுவதிலிருந்து வெகு தொலைவிலேயே உள்ளன. நாடு திரும்பிய புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்களை முன்னேற்றுவதற்கு, புலம்பெயர் செயல்முறையுடான இடைத்தொடர்பினைக் கொண்டதும் மற்றும் அம்மக்களின் நிதி சார் அறிவினை மேம்படுத்துவதற்கான மைய அவதானத்தைக் கொண்டதுமான சிறப்பாக ஒருங்கிணைக்கப்பட்ட முழுமையான மீள் ஒருமைப்பாட்டு நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டத்தின் அவசியத்தை இவ் ஆய்வு பரிந்துரைக்கிறது. பாதுகாப்பான புலம்பெயர்வு சமுதாய மீள் ஒருமைப்பாட்டிற்கு இன்றியமையாததாகும். எனவே, பாதுகாப்பான புலம்பெயர்வினை முன்னேற்றுவதற்கான கொள்கைகளையும் இவ் ஆய்வு பரிந்துரைக்கிறது. இறுதியாக, நாடு திரும்பிய புலம்பெயர் பணியாளர்கள் குறித்தான துல்லியமான தகவல்கள், அவர்களை மீள் ஒருமைப்படுத்தலின் போதான அவர்களின் தேவையை இனங்காண்பதற்கும் அதேபோல் வெளிநாட்டில் அவர்கள் பெற்ற திறமைகள் மற்றும் சேமிப்புகள் ஆகியன மூலம் பொருளாதாரத்திற்கு அவர்கள் வழங்கக் கூடிய பங்களிப்புக்களை இனங்காண்பதற்கும் இன்றியமையா அம்சமாகத் திகழ்கிறது.

1. Introduction and Background¹

1.1 Introduction

With a long history of labour migration and with 'contract migration'² being a feature of out-migration in the country, reintegration of return migrants is a national concern for Sri Lanka. Reintegration includes but is not limited to 'a re-inclusion or re-incorporation of a migrant into the society of his/her country of origin' (Ochi, 2005 cited in Gunasinghe 2011), and socio-economic reintegration forms an integral part of the reintegration process. Successful reintegration of return migrants is crucial from both the migrants' and home country perspectives. With workers generally returning with accumulated savings and even new skills, and given that the economic implications of migration for the home country depends vitally on how these savings and new skills are utilized, return migration is in some ways more significant than out-migration for the home country for policy purposes (Athukorala, 1990).

However, the process of reintegration entails challenges. Economic reintegration may be especially difficult for those who have been prematurely terminated or forcibly repatriated, forcing them into further debt and with no financial means to sustain their basic needs in the re-entry period (Tornea, 2003). Others may be forced to stay out of the job market for extensive periods of time and have difficulties in finding employment. Likewise, difficulties in

social integration may arise due to extended periods of separation from family and community; many are not able to return to social networks weakened by the migration process (Tornea, 2003). A number of other structural and individual factors too may affect a returnee migrant's ability to successfully reintegrate into his/her home country.

Studies carried out on returnee migrant workers in Sri Lanka show that returnees face a number of economic and social challenges upon return. Finding employment, lack of savings, and lack of information on potential business activities and related information are some of the key economic challenges they face while social challenges rise due to especially, weakened family ties with spouse and children. With a majority of the existing studies focusing on the return experience of female domestic workers and unskilled workers, this study aims at analysing the reintegration experience across all skill categories while also attempting to capture any variations in the experience between the skilled and the unskilled. More specifically, the study attempts to find out how migration has affected the economic and social standing of migrants, the characteristics of returnee migrants who are economically better-off and have successfully reintegrated into society, and the effectiveness of existing programmes and institutions in assisting returnee migrants

integrate into their society and economy in the Sri Lankan context.

1.2 Overview of Migration in Sri Lanka

The reintegration experience of individuals can vary depending on aspects such as gender, age, country of work, type of work performed and others. This section provides a brief overview of the migration patterns in Sri Lanka and some key features.³

It is estimated that over 1 million Sri Lankans are employed abroad with over 250,000 Sri Lankans leaving for foreign employment every year in the past five years (2008-2012). The outflow of migrants has increased steadily with the numbers showing a 20 fold increase in the 1986-2012 period. 2012 recorded the highest number of departures with 282,331 people leaving the country for employment. In other words, on average around 771 people left the country daily for foreign employment.

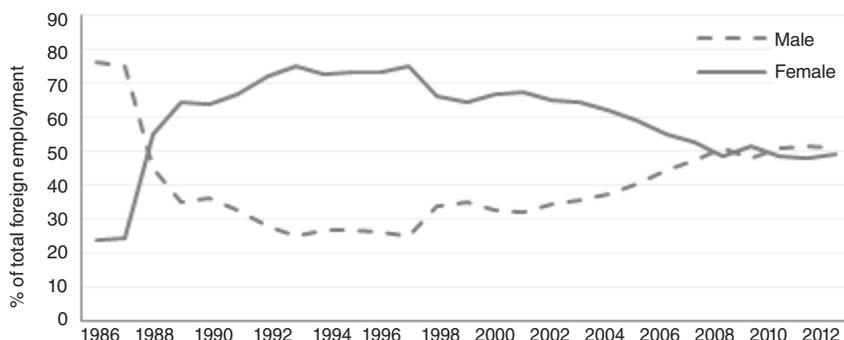
Feminization of migration was a feature of migration in the country since the late 1980's, with the number of females outnumbering that of males for almost 2 decades, from 1988 to 2007 (see Figure 1). For instance in 1997 there were three women migrants for every male migrant worker. However, the share of females has fallen gradually over the years, from 73 per cent in 1995 to 49 per cent in 2012. Further, in the last 3

¹ The authors would like thank Fathima Maryam Noordeen for her excellent research assistance.

² Contract migrants or "guest workers" refer to those who cross international boundaries in securing employment with no initial intention of permanently settling in the country of employment (Athukorala 1990, p. 323).

³ Statistics in this section are quoted from Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (2013) unless otherwise specified.

Figure 1
Percentage Share of Foreign Employment Departures by Sex, 1986-2012



Note: 2012 figures are provisional.
 Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (2013).

years (2010-2012), male migration outnumbered that of females and accounted for 50.93 per cent of the total departures. This can have important implications on future reintegration programmes, especially in terms of economic integration given that males are traditionally considered to be the breadwinners of families in the country.

In terms of manpower level, a majority of emigrants still migrate for work in the category of housemaids: on average, 42.8 per cent in the past five year period (2008-2012) migrated to work as housemaids (also see Figure 2). Unskilled workers

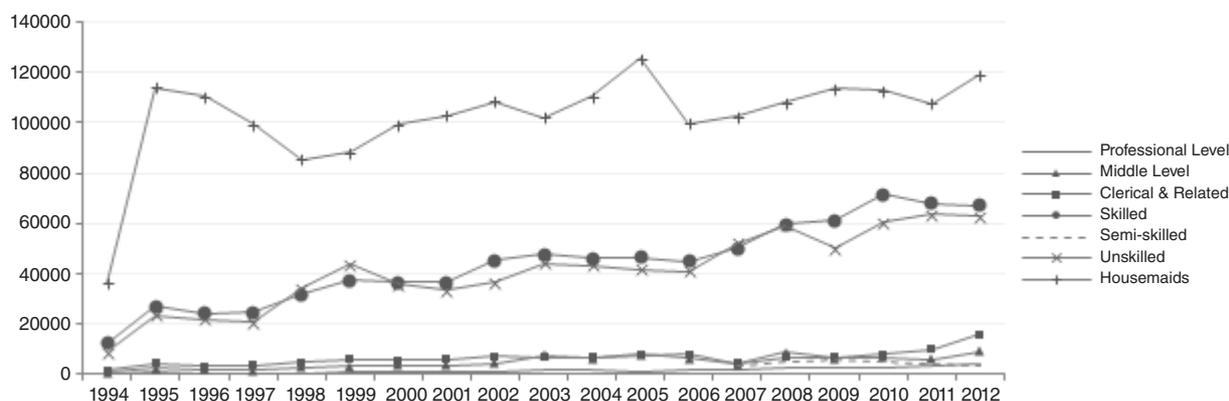
accounted for 22.6 per cent of the total departures during this period. The largest increase in migrants leaving for work in the past five year period has been in the category of 'Clerical and Related' - 138 per cent increase in the numbers migrating in this category in 2012 compared to that of 2008. The next highest increase has been in the category of professionals (57 per cent) but the increase has come from a low base. Migrants for skilled jobs have increased by 12 per cent, housemaids by 12 per cent, middle-level by 1 per cent and unskilled jobs by 6 per cent. On the other hand, the

number of those migrating in the semi-skilled category has reduced by 35 per cent in 2012 compared to the level in 2008. While close to 86 per cent of the female departures in 2012 were to work as housemaids, a majority of the males migrate for skilled and unskilled work.

A large proportion of the migrants (19.6 per cent) are in the 30-34 age group. A further 18.5 per cent are in the 25-29 category. Most female workers are of the 30-34 age group while a large proportion of the males are in the 25-29 age category. Furthermore, most housemaids that migrate are in the age groups 30-34 and 40-45 - 36 per cent of the total that migrate to work as housemaids. On the other hand, most who depart for semi-skilled level jobs are in the 25-29 and 30-34 categories (Also see Figure 3).

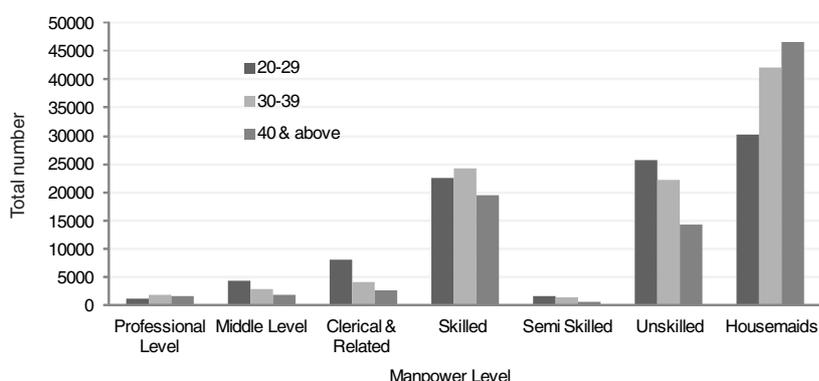
In terms of geographical locations, Colombo, Kurunegala, Gampaha, Kandy and Batticaloa are the top five districts of departures (see Figure 4). If compared to 2 years back, the largest increases in departures in 2012 have come from Nuwara Eliya, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Mannar and Ampara districts. While a majority of the housemaids come from

Figure 2
Total Departures for Foreign Employment by Manpower Level, 1994-2012



Note: 2012 figures are provisional.
 Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (2013).

Figure 3
Departures for Foreign Employment by Age, 2012



Note: 2012 figures are provisional.
Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (2013).

Kurunegala (13,572), Colombo (10,560), Kandy (10,303) and Anuradhapura (7,942), the most number of departures for semi-skilled jobs and higher are from Colombo (14,771), Gampaha (11,218), Kandy (8745), Ampara (7782) and Batticaloa (7477). For a majority of the migrant workers, Middle Eastern countries have been the major destinations with 95 per cent of Sri Lankans presently employed in 8 Middle Eastern countries. Saudi Arabia attracts the largest number of Sri Lankan migrants (34 per cent)⁴ followed by Qatar (20 per cent), Kuwait (16 per cent) and the UAE (13 per cent).

The above brings forth a few striking features of migration that would be key to consider in any reintegration programme in the country. The key features include,

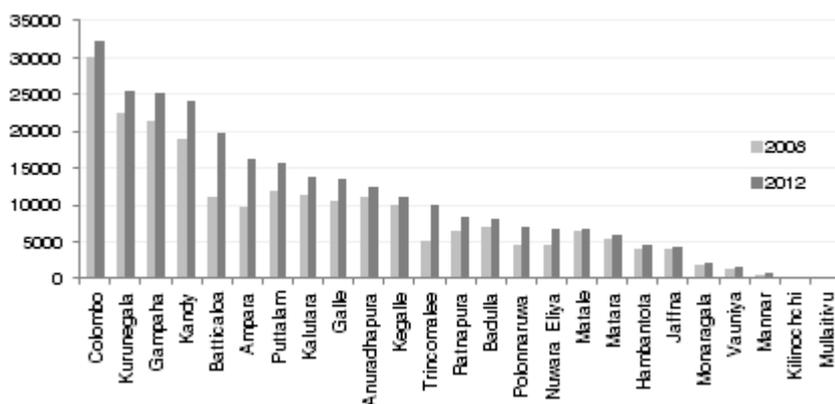
- a significant number of females migrating for work
- an increasing share of male migrant workers (in total departures) in recent times
- over 65 per cent migrating to work as housemaids or as unskilled workers
- large growth in the numbers migrating for clerical and related jobs in the past 5 years
- largest proportion of the migrants being in the age

groups 30-34 and 25-29. Most housemaids are in the age groups, 30-34 and 40-45.

Although detailed information on out-migration is available, statistics on returnees (i.e., the number of returnees, number of years spent abroad, acquired skills, etc.) which are also key elements in planning and designing reintegration programmes are not available publicly in Sri Lanka. This lacuna in data needs to be addressed if reintegration programmes are to effectively address the reintegration needs of migrant workers.

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Figure 4:
Departures for Foreign Employment by District, 2008 and 2012



Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (2013).

⁴ Based on 2012 values (SLBFE 2013).

1.3 Institutional Support: Reintegration Programmes Available

1.3.1 Government Assistance

Acknowledging the lack of specific programmes that target returnee migrant workers to ensure their successful integration into society and recognizing the need to harness the benefits of return migration, the 2008 National Labour Migration Policy for Sri Lanka considers reintegration of returnee migrant workers as a priority area.⁵ In this context, several government organizations/programmes have been instituted with the aim of providing reintegration support for returnee migrants.

The Rata Viruwo organization established by the Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare together with SLBFE, aims at establishing a Rata Viruwo organization in every District Secretariat division in the country. The Rata Viruwo organization works towards improving migrant welfare during all three stages of migration - pre-departure, in-service and upon return, and has implemented several reintegration specific programmes to improve the socio-economic well-being of returnee migrants. Introduction of housing and self-employment loans under the Rata Viruwo programme have been some of the most significant developments in this regard.

The Samurdhi bank upon approval by the SLBFE provides housing loans up to Rs.300,000/- to migrants registered with the SLBFE. The loan scheme is

open to migrants who are currently in-service and to those who have returned and been in the country for less than two years. As at June 2014, Rs.1113.55Mn was released for this programme, while a total of 4609 loans were disbursed and 1699 and 2910 houses were completed and half-built, respectively.⁶ Moreover, the SLBFE self-employment loan scheme provides up to Rs.50,000 for returnee migrant workers to develop self-employment ventures and as at 30th June 2014, there were 718 projects implemented under the loan scheme.⁷

The SLBFE has also initiated a programme to place Development Officers in 331 DS divisions to look into migrant related issues, of which reintegration is one of the key areas covered. The Development Officers work at the grass root level with communities to look into the needs of aspiring, in-service and returnee migrants and their families, with the aim of assisting them in improving their socio-economic well-being.

The provision of technical and vocational education training, and business development training to returnee migrants is yet another important requirement of a comprehensive reintegration policy package. However, training offered to returnee migrants by government institutions in Sri Lanka seems to be limited to pre-departure training, while vocational training programmes directly targeting returnee migrants seem to be scarce.

1.3.2 Assistance Provided by Non-state Institutions

A host of non-state actors including INGOs, NGOs, Banks and financial institutions provide reintegration

support for returnee migrants in Sri Lanka. Reintegration support provided by INGOs such as ILO and IOM include vocational training, training of trainers, etc. Projects such as the ILO's "Safe Migration" project provide training to local level officers. They have also published a standard guide to help migrants at the ground level prior to migration. ILO has carried out pilot studies in the Kurunagala and Ampara districts to develop an initial needs assessment for returnees who are keen on starting businesses. The IOM Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programme which provides a tailor-made in-kind assistance package including vocational training, job placement, business development training etc., are some of the more significant reintegration programmes carried out by INGOs in Sri Lanka.

Moreover, Caritas Sri Lanka-SEDEC⁸ provides reintegration support in the form of psycho-social support, grievance support, counselling, vocational training and other forms. Caritas provides reintegration support

A host of non-state actors including INGOs, NGOs, Banks and financial institutions provide reintegration support for returnee migrants in Sri Lanka.

⁵ Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare (2008).

⁶ Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE).

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Social arm of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Sri Lanka and is affiliated to Caritas Internationalis.

in 9 dioceses which cover 18 districts in Sri Lanka (Colombo, Galle, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Kandy, Anuradhapura, Kurunegala, Badulla and Ratnapura). It carries out skill development and business development training programmes among 'Migrant Groups' formed in each diocese consisting of about 20 aspiring and returnee migrants. Migrant Groups also have the opportunity of accessing a special financial aid scheme/ a revolving fund which gives out loans to the members of the migrant group for purposes like starting their own businesses or building houses.

Institutions such as Action Network for Migrant Workers (ACTFORM) focus primarily on female migrant workers. They provide assistance in the form of self-employment loans, and training and skill development programs to increase female empowerment and well-being.

Assistance in the form of financial support provided for returnee migrant workers by banks and financial institutions in Sri Lanka is limited to general loans available for low income generating households. There is a lack of schemes which specifically target migrants/migrant

families. Apart from the Rata Viruwo Housing and self-employment loan schemes provided through Samurdhi Banks and the Saranee Housing Scheme offered by National Savings Bank (NSB), loan schemes designed to provide reintegration support for returnee migrants in particular is limited.

Some of the key institutions with programmes catering specifically for Returnee migrant workers in Sri Lanka have been summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Summary of Institutional Support Available for Returnee Migrants

Institution	Assistance programmes available
Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE)	<p><i>Rataviruvo Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing loans up to Rs. 300, 000 are offered for returnees who have been in the country for less than 2 years after return Self-Employment loans up to Rs.50,000 are available for SLBFE registered returnees from the Samurdhi Bank, facilitated by the SLBFE. Negotiations currently underway to increase this amount <p><i>Development Officers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiated over a year ago, (DOs) have been placed in 331 DS divisions to look into migrant related issues
Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 33 TVEC accredited SLBFE training centres provide pre-departure training in Sri Lanka
International Labour Organization (ILO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot projects have been carried out in a few districts to develop an initial needs assessment for those returnees who are keen on starting businesses "Safe Migration" project: training and a standard guide provided to local level officers to disseminate information and to help migrants prior to migration Training for trainers Vocational training
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) Unit supports and facilitates the voluntary return home of Sri Lankans including irregular and stranded migrants. Vocational training; Job placement, Referral services; Business development training; Assistance to set up small businesses; Trainings to improve businesses; Training of Trainers
Caritas Sri Lanka-SEDEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training programmes are carried out, aimed at skill development for returnee migrants. Vocational training programmes: preference provided to engaging in industry/occupation where resources & raw materials could be easily accessed within the area Assistance with developing business plans, develop project plans, networking Loans available for members of migrant groups to start their own businesses/building house. Grievance support: psycho-social support
Action Network for Migrant Workers (ACTFORM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with women migrant workers to increase their well-being, increase women empowerment, increase awareness on social issues etc. Self-employment loans, organizing of skills development programmes, and entrepreneurship programmes

Source: Compiled by authors.

2. Economic and Social Challenges of Reintegration in Sri Lanka: Literature Review

A bulk of the literature indicate that the primary reason for migration in Sri Lanka is economic: poverty, unemployment and underemployment have driven international migration in the country (Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare, 2013). More specifically, studies have identified factors such as the lack of access to regular and substantial income, rising cost of living, and high indebtedness as reasons for migration. Those in the poorest strata of the Sri Lankan society are encouraged to migrate due to the vast difference between the wages they would earn within the country as opposed to those offered abroad (Samarasinghe, 1989). Other push factors for Sri Lankan women migrant workers include domestic violence, alcohol addiction of spouses and abdication of male responsibilities (SEDEC, 2013). Moreover, aspirations of building a house or educating children have also instigated migration among people (Ibid). For instance, a study carried out on domestic workers by (Caritas Sri Lanka - SEDEC, 2013) with 122 respondents show that for 83 per cent of the respondents, the main reason for migration was inadequate income; for 61 per cent, building a house of their own was the priority while for 24 per cent, the second priority of migration was the education of children or siblings.

However, contract migrant workers can face significant economic and social challenges upon return, making successful reintegration a challenge. Literature identifies some key economic and social challenges of Sri Lankan migrant worker

returnees, among which a major challenge is the need to find employment in a short-time after returning to the country. The economic background of most migrant workers are characterized by mortgages and loans to recover, and hence even those who have saved successfully are forced to find employment soon after their return in order for them to maintain the family's economic status (International Labour Organization, 2013). For most families, the maintenance of family cash flow is essential to prevent them from going back into debt. Therefore, finding employment in a short-time after returning is crucial.

Skills mismatch between that of the returnees and demand in the job market is another major challenge. The skill requirements of the Sri Lankan job market and those possessed by the returnee migrant workers are seemingly different (International Labour Organization, 2013). In order to effectively make use of the skills obtained abroad, there should be a market for such services. For example, in the case of housemaids, while the urban returnees have better opportunities to cater to the urban middle class, bringing to use their enhanced skills, this is not the case with those in the peripheries. Moreover, a majority of the women who seek work abroad are from disadvantaged families with low levels of marketable vocational skills (Caritas Sri Lanka - SEDEC, 2013).

Some studies find that the squandering of remittances and lack of savings also create economic

problems for returnees. For example, Gunasinghe (2011) finds that rural migrant families often tend to spend remittances with little consideration for future economic plans. A majority of the remittances are often used to meet the daily needs of the workers' families, especially where women determine how the money is spent, i.e. to improve family nutrition, education and health. However, other studies have come up with differing conclusions. A study carried out on out-migration of members of the rural agricultural sector of Sri Lanka (Samaratunga, Jayaweera, & Perera, 2012) shows that remittance income is used mainly for education, health and improving lifestyles through the purchase of consumer durables rather than on productive investment opportunities. The study finds that the share of families investing in productive assets is higher in the remittance receiving group compared to those not receiving any remittances, albeit only slightly. Alcohol and drug abuse by spouses also result in squandering of remittances (Gunasinghe, 2011).

Even though some workers migrate to ease their financial strain, the decision itself puts migrants in even greater debt and financial difficulty due to taking loans, pawning jewellery and mortgaging lands and houses to find the necessary funds. In many cases, the migrant workers' income and savings are not sufficient to pay off these debts resulting in multiple migrations abroad (Gunasinghe, 2011) and making reintegration difficult. Furthermore, many return migrants lack entrepreneurial skills and linkages to

develop a business. They also lack information on potential economic activities, legal and other assistance (SEDEC, 2013).

In terms of social integration, existing literature suggests that returnee migrants find social reintegration to be both a positive and negative experience, with returnee migrants finding themselves better off in terms of empowerment and social status but worse off in terms of relations with spouse and children. For example, Hettige, Ekanayake, Jayasundere, Rathnayake, & Figurado (2012) finds that many migrant workers attain a sense of self-worth and independence owing to the newfound decision making power and financial freedom. Especially women, to whom this elevated position in their family and social spheres happens to be a new phenomenon, are said to find the process of reintegration a positive and desirable experience (Hettige, Ekanayake, Jayasundere, Rathnayake, & Figurado, 2012). However, the same study finds that power dynamics within families of female migrant workers owing to the elevated position in society upon return, though found to have made a positive impact on the personal development of female migrants, is also found to have a negative impact on their ability to reintegrate into their family as some spouses are found to be incapable of coping with a more independent partner (Hettige, Ekanayake, Jayasundere, Rathnayake, & Figurado, 2012).

The difficulties in social reintegration are often associated with broken marriages and weakened family ties. Incidence of divorce among migrants is found to be above average (Gunatileke, 1986) due to several factors such as breakdown in communication and trust, migrant worker's disenchantment with spouse, refusal by female migrant

workers to be confined to a housewife's role etc. making it difficult for returnee migrants to settle back into their lives upon return. Moreover, a study (Perera & Rathnayaka, 2013), which features 395 key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders including returnee mothers, children/extended families/neighbours of migrant mothers and key officials attached to government and non-government organizations dealing with migrant mothers in Sri Lanka, finds that respondents characterize husbands of migrant women to engage in extramarital affairs, enter into second marriages, abandon their children or engage in child abuse.

Furthermore, though the impact of migration on the well-being of families left behind by migrants is found to be positive for women in terms of empowerment and social status (Khalaf, 2009 and Kumari & Shamim, 2010), the impact of migration on the psychological status of migrant spouses' is found to be undesirable with most spouses suffering from depression and loneliness during separation, making it difficult for migrants to reintegrate into their families upon return.

A study by Silver (2006) which uses Mexican Family Life Survey (MxFLS-1) to analyze the effects of migration on the well-being of migrants' families, finds that migration of close family members, especially spouses and children significantly increases the depressive symptoms and feelings of loneliness reported by family members. Additionally, a study which explores the impact of migration on the families of rural migrants left behind in Pakistan, finds that women feel more burdened, lonely and psychologically distressed owing to escalated responsibilities in the absence of their spouse (Farooq, Javed, & H, 2009).

This situation seems to be the same for Sri Lanka. Wickramage & Siriwardhana (2014) through a survey covering 1990 respondents including migrant/non-migrant families, institutions dealing with migrants etc., highlight that prevalence of depression and Somatoform among left-behind spouses is higher compared to spouses of non-migrant groups, while suicidal ideations are twice as high in migrant-spouses compared to the non-migrant group. Moreover, the same study finds that spouses of migrant workers were found to have a less than average quality of life in all domains with mental health less than physical health compared to non-migrant groups, while female spouses are found to cope better than males (Wickramage & Siriwardhana, 2014).

Migrant children are often found to be neglected with the lack of attention from migrant parents (mainly female), leading to several issues such as resentment from children upon return with children often not knowing how to react to the returning parent (Hettige, Ekanayake, Jayasundere, Rathnayake, & Figurado, 2012). Additionally, studies done on the well-being of children of migrant families across several developing countries highlight that children of migrant families are more likely to suffer from depression and low self-esteem which results in behavioural problems and increased risk of poor academic performance (Bakker, Elings-Pels, & Reis, 2009, Salah, 2008 and Kumari & Shamim, 2010); due to which returnee migrants who have been separated from their children during employment abroad may face several difficulties when reintegrating into their families.

Kottegoda, Jayasundere, Perera, & Atapattu (2013) through a qualitative study focusing on 30 case studies of

returnee migrant workers from Kurunegala, Sri Lanka, underscores that all migrant children included in the study seem to have received some level of education with only three children out of 35 having dropped out of school and all others having sat and the majority of them having passed GCE O/L examination, while they seem to excel better in education compared to their mothers. However, a qualitative study by Perera & Rathnayaka (2013) through key informant interviews and focus group discussions covering 395 key informants including returnee migrants, children, youth, villagers and other community representatives and representatives of community based organizations etc. in 12 districts of Sri Lanka, highlight that the children of migrant women are much more likely than their peers to have trouble in school, fare worse in basic, foundational subjects such as maths and reading, have emotional outbursts and be incapable of interacting with classmates and teachers in a positive manner. Save the Children Sri Lanka (2006) through a study done in Kurunagala and Colombo covering 1200 households of migrant mothers, affirms that the absence of the mother has resulted in a negative impact on educational performance of migrant children with poor attendance and lower performance rates of boys in relation to girls, while these children have also been found to demonstrate considerable emotional and behaviour changes including loss of appetite in under-fives, and temper tantrums in all age groups, specifically adolescent age groups.

The separation of the mother from the family is found to be especially difficult for children with children of migrant mothers feeling lonely and abandoned (Ukwatta, 2010). Children of migrant mothers have been found

to be more likely to have some form of psychopathology and behavioural problems (Wickramage & Siriwardhana, 2014) and more prone to sexual and physical abuse (Perera & Rathnayaka, 2013).

Studies have found that migration leads to a strengthening of the role played by extended families with members from extended families taking up the role as primary care givers (Kottegoda, Jayasundere, Perera, & Atapattu, 2013; Save the Children Sri Lanka, 2006; Hettige, Ekanayake, Jayasundere, Rathnayake, & Figurado, 2012; D'Emilio, et al., 2007). However, Save the Children (2006) indicates that migrant relationships with extended family members have been strained due to difficulties encountered when taking care of migrant children in their absence.

Many returnee migrants though coming back after a good experience abroad find it difficult to settle back into their local setting due to the envy of family and friends who are bitter towards the returnee migrant due to the elevated status achieved by migrants (Hettige, Ekanayake, Jayasundere, Rathnayake, & Figurado, 2012).

Though migration has often been associated with migrants achieving a heightened level of self-esteem and status in society, their participation in community and social activities upon return seems to be limited.

Kottegoda, Jayasundere, Perera, & Atapattu (2013) highlights that a majority of returnee migrants included in the study have not engaged in social activities and do not hold membership in community level organizations, societies or groups upon their return, while their social participation has been confined to religious activities and to activities of children still in school.

The discussion above highlights some of the key challenges that migrants face upon return and also the need for additional support and assistance on return. Successful reintegration is important both from the migrant's perspective as well as from the home country perspective because unsuccessful reintegration can result in having destabilizing effects and in multiple migrations. The ability of returnees to impact a country's development is dependent on the conditions of return and the reintegration experiences (Maastricht University, 2011). Returnees can have a positive impact on the home country through the skills and capital acquired abroad (International Organization for Migration, 2013). They may start new businesses, introduce and pass new knowledge and technical know-how. This can foster innovation in a country and trigger learning processes (ibid) thereby contributing to a country's economic growth. Macro-economic benefits can be also realized through the savings brought in and their productive investments. Given that they are private funds, higher savings and development impacts of these can be enhanced by providing incentives such as the creation of solid opportunities and providing vehicles for investment (International Organization for Migration, 2013). A country can also benefit from the establishment of economic, trade, political, social and cultural networks and exchanges (ibid).

However, there are a number of factors that may influence a returnee migrant's ability to reintegrate which can be broadly categorized as structural factors and individual factors. Structural factors include policies undertaken by the returnees' home country toward returnees; the local government's receptiveness; local communities attitudes towards

returnees; and the number of people returning at a particular time (Rogge, 1994). IOM identifies the central actors of the return process to be (i) valuing the migrants' contribution, (ii) support structures, (iii) incentives, (iv) options, and (v) partners not resources. Some of the individual factors that may affect reintegration are, the duration of migration, age, gender, conditions of the country of migration, conditions of return, and the social networks a returnee has in the country of return (ibid).

Nevertheless, government assistance is identified to be vital, because migrants may lack the financial and organizational skills necessary to plan their economic and social reintegration (International Organization for Migration, 2013). Furthermore, the nature and extent of the impact of return on development would depend on a number of factors including social, political, legal and economic settings in which it happens (ibid). Literature identifies some of the key areas of support to

be, financial support, dissemination of information on job opportunities and support programmes, promotion of entrepreneurship and psychosocial support including counselling. It also highlights the importance of vocational training, providing access to professional equipment and extending support for micro-enterprise development. Studies also recognize the importance of having carefully-tailored reintegration programmes in the case of emergency situations (International Organization for Migration, 2013).

3. Rationale and Research Questions

As discussed in the previous section, studies show that returnee migrant workers of Sri Lanka are confronted by several socio-economic challenges upon return which make the experience of reintegration difficult. Returnee migrants who often come back without substantial savings and skills, find themselves lacking access to information on potential economic activities and access to manageable loans for self-employment upon return which results in a majority of them finding access to only low paid casual work (Caritas Sri Lanka - SEDEC, 2013). Moreover, returnee migrants are also known to often find themselves overwhelmed by family related and personal problems increasing their socio-economic vulnerability (Caritas Sri Lanka - SEDEC, 2013), making smooth reintegration nearly impossible. Hence, Sri Lankan migrants who go abroad to overcome their socio-economic vulnerabilities (Perera & Rathnayaka, 2013); Caritas Sri Lanka - SEDEC, 2013), return more vulnerable than before, imposing severe strains on poverty and vulnerability in the country.

Returnee migrants in countries where governments have made continuous efforts to promote effective return and reintegration have been able to make remarkable contributions to their local economies upon return. For example, returnee migrants of China as a special group, have been found to make an immense contribution towards the nation's development through participation in education, science, culture, health, journalism, politics and entrepreneurial movement (United Nations, 2013).

Thus, given that reintegration of returnee migrants can result in either increased vulnerability and poverty or enhanced economic development, facilitating an effective reintegration mechanism in the country is crucial from a development perspective. The structural approach to return migration which argues that return is not solely analyzed with reference to the individual experience of the migrant, but also with reference to social and institutional factors in countries of origin, implies that return and reintegration is a matter of context (Cassarino, 2004), thereby placing much emphasis on the need

for governments to work towards creating a business-friendly smooth local setting in which returnee migrants can reintegrate easily.

Recognizing the importance of reintegration as an important element of migration and development, the 2008 National Labour Migration Policy of Sri Lanka focuses on developing and implementing a comprehensive return and reintegration plan for migrant workers.

This will start at the departure stage and be implemented by proposed Migrant Resource Centres in Sri Lankan diplomatic missions in labour-receiving countries, while extending to Sri Lanka with the aim of promoting local employment, tapping their skills and promoting national and personal development (Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare, 2008). However, Gunasinghe (2011) highlights that though the National Labour Migration Policy of 2008 guaranteed a comprehensive reintegration programme, there has been no effective action on this component. Caritas Sri Lanka - SEDEC (2013) also highlights that

reintegration has been neglected to a certain extent despite being included in the 2008 policy. Hence, the need to focus on strengthening reintegration initiatives in Sri Lanka remains a timely and vital issue that needs due attention from a development perspective.

However, existing studies on reintegration of returnee migrant workers in Sri Lanka seems to be limited to domestic workers focusing primarily on reintegration of women,

while studies focusing on the reintegration of other skill categories such as semi-skilled and high-skilled workers seems to be limited in Sri Lanka. Hence, this study which analyzes the reintegration experience of returnee migrant workers in Sri Lanka across different skill levels, while also identifying differences in their reintegration experience, is much called for in order to provide policy prescriptions on improving the process of reintegration in Sri Lanka.

In this light, the study aims to answer the following research questions: (i) How has migration affected the economic and social standing of migrants?; (ii) What are the characteristics of returnee migrants who are economically better-off and have successfully reintegrated in society?; and (iii) How effective have the existing programmes and institutions been in assisting returnee migrants integrate to the society and the economy?

4. Data and Methodology

4.1 Data

The quantitative analysis has been done based on survey data of "Reintegration with the Home Community-Perspective on the Lives of Returnee Migrant Workers", conducted by the Social Policy Analysis and Research Centre (SPARC) of the University of Colombo in 2012. The survey has covered 2000 returnee migrants using a purposive sampling strategy. It includes demographic and socio-economic profiles of returnee migrants and their employment related information, both overseas and at home.

Summary statistics of the sample is given in Annex 1. The average age of the respondents in that sample was 38 years, and 76 per cent of the sample was females. Around three quarters of the respondents were currently married, while the rest consisted of equal shares of never married and previously married respondents. More than half of the respondents were with post-primary level education. Only about a fifth of the respondents have passed O-levels, A-levels or above. Around 94

per cent have migrated to the Middle East, and around 81 per cent of the respondents have worked abroad in elementary occupations. On average, the returnees have spent just above two years abroad.

Individuals with post-primary education represent the great portion of the sample as 56 per cent. Second largest sub-category under the education level is primary education which captures uneducated and individuals with up to grade 5 level of education.

4.2 Methodology

Empirical models

1. Correlation analysis of economically better off

The factors that affect returnee migrants to be economically better off are examined by a probit regression. Demographic, socio-economic, foreign employment, and institutional factors which may affect the economic betterment of migrants after they return to their home country are analysed.

Economic betterment has been captured through subjective and

objective methods: self-reported evidence of improvement in family economic situation and the possession of productive assets, respectively.

Model 1. j:

$$A_{ji} = f \{D_i, S_i, E_i, I_i\}$$

Where i indexes individuals, A_j is variable measuring family economic improvement, D represents demographic characteristics of the individual, S represents socio-economic characteristics of the individual, E represents characteristics of foreign employment and I represents the institutional involvement.

The family economic improvement is measured using two different variables in the analysis:

1) $j = 1$ (A1): Self-reported family economic improvement

2) $j = 2$ (A2) : Improvements in the possession of productive assets

The self-reported family economic improvement (A1) is a variable which captures an individual's self-assessment of their economic status pre and post-migration. This variable

is considered to be one when the answer to the question "Upon return what changes did you observe on the following indicators?" is 'Improved'. It is zero when the answer to the question is 'no change' or 'deteriorated'.

The improvement in the possession of productive assets (A2) is a dichotomous variable which summarizes the self-reported improvement in the possession of productive assets. In the survey, the respondents were asked a series of questions to determine whether their possession of productive assets has improved. The productive assets under consideration are the ownership of land, house, three wheeler, van or car. The improvements in productive assets (A2) is considered to be 1 if the respondents indicated the improvement in any of the productive assets listed above; A2 is considered to be zero otherwise.

2. Correlation analysis of successfully reintegrated, socially

Following is the model used to examine the social reintegration of respondent.

Model 2.j :

$$B_{ji} = f \{D_i, S_i, E_i, I_i\}$$

The successful reintegration of the respondent is measured using two different variables:

1) $j = 1$ (B1): successful reintegration with extended family

2) $j = 2$ (B2): successful reintegration with immediate family

Variable B1 is one if the individual stated "yes" to the following two questions and zero otherwise:

- a) Have you been able to establish relationships with relatives satisfactorily?

- b) Have you been able to establish relationships with neighbours satisfactorily?

For the second regression, only the returnee migrants who were married before migration have been considered. In this regression B2 is considered to be one if the respondent answered "yes" to the following two questions and zero otherwise:

- a) Following your return, have you been able to settle down with your spouse satisfactorily?
- b) Following your return, have you been able to settle down with your children satisfactorily?

3. Effectiveness of the existing programmes and institutions in assisting returnee migrants to re-integrate

The effectiveness of the existing programmes and institutions were studied using two methods. First, in the above mentioned regressions, a variable was included which indicates whether the returnee received any help from the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment or any other institution to reintegrate. The effectiveness of the programmes and institutions in helping returnees were also assessed through a qualitative study as described below.

Sample Selection

The total purposive sample of the SPARC survey consists of 2000 returnee migrants. However, individuals who are above 65 years of age and individuals who have reported as being disabled have been excluded from the sample (15 observations), as the interest of the current study is on prime age individuals. Individuals who represent the occupation category of armed forces too have been excluded due to a low number of observations (4

observations). After adjusting for all these, a total sample of 1981 returnee migrants have been used for the analysis. Since not all individuals were married, the social reintegration with immediate family could only be analyzed for married respondents. As such, the sample size for this regression is 1648.

Effectiveness of existing institutions and programs

The effectiveness of the existing institutions and programs in assisting migrants to reintegrate was assessed using a qualitative study. The qualitative component of the study included 10 semi-structured face-to-face interviews with returnee migrants. The interviews were done to validate the findings of the quantitative analysis and to obtain a deeper understanding of the reintegration experience of returnee migrants and the socio-economic challenges faced by returnees. The returnee migrants were chosen from Colombo, Gampaha, and Anuradhapura: which are known to be some of the districts with the highest proportion of migrants in Sri Lanka. The selection of returnee migrants was done in consultation with relevant key Government Officials belonging to each district including Grama Niladari/ Grama Sevaka/ Development officers of the SLBFE etc., who were at a better position to recommend returnee migrants with varying reintegration experiences. Interviews with returnee migrants were aimed at exploring the key socio-economic challenges faced by returnee migrants upon return, their experience in resuming employment upon return and the level of institutional support obtained by returnees when adopting back into the local setting.

The qualitative analysis also included 21 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

with relevant key officials attached to Government and Non-Governmental migration related institutions. A mapping of migration related institutions was done in consultation with key officials of main migration related institutions in order to identify the key informants. The key

informants covered in the study are summarized in Table 2. The KIs were conducted with the aim of identifying the level of institutional support available for returnee migrants, while the selection criteria of such reintegration programmes, the target groups that the programmes cater to

and the coverage of such programmes were also examined in detail. The KIs also sought suggestions on ways of improving the existing policy framework on reintegration of returnee migrant workers in Sri Lanka.

Table 2
Mapping of Key Informant Interviews

Government	INGOs and NGOs	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) • Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare • Divisional Secretariat (Negombo) • Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) • Sahana Piyasa • Bank of Ceylon (BOC) • National Savings Bank (NSB) • Regional Development Bank (RDB) • Sanasa Development Bank • Peoples Bank • Siyatha Foundation • SLBFE Training Centre (Ratmalana) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Labour Organization (ILO) • International Organization for Migration (IOM) • Women and Media Collective (WMC) : The Action Network for Migrant Workers (ACTFORM) • CARITAS Sri Lanka – SEDEC • Center for Women’s Research (CENWOR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good Shepherd’s Services Centre for migrant workers • Association of Licensed Foreign Employment Agencies (ALFEA) • Agro Micro Finance

Source: Compiled by authors.

5. Results and Analyses

5.1 Results of Economic and Social Reintegration

These results suggest that the majority of returnee migrant workers are economically not better off on their return. As shown in Table 3, 20.6 per cent of the respondents stated that their family economic situation has improved, while only 6.3 per cent of the respondents stated that they own more productive assets at

present, compared to before migration. Further, only 47 per cent of the respondents are employed after returning. Of those who are employed, about 76 per cent found employment within three months of returning, while 15 per cent took three to six months to find employment. About 9.5 per cent took more than six months to find employment.

The findings also show that returnee migrant workers are worse-off in terms of social reintegration. About a

quarter of the respondents state that they have successfully reintegrated with immediate family, while only 5.1 per cent say that they have successfully reintegrated with extended family.

Qualitative findings propose similar results as returnee migrants interviewed found the experience of reintegration to be challenging, with the majority of them being unable to find suitable work upon return (also see Case Studies 1 & 2). In most cases, the respondents interviewed

Table 3
Economic and Social Integration

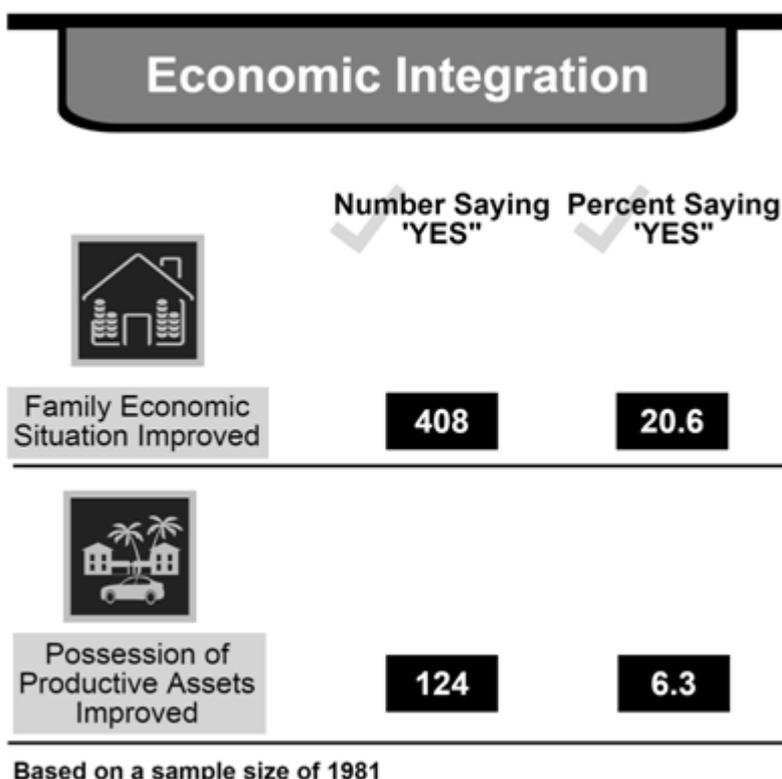
	Sample size	Number saying "yes"	Per cent saying "yes"
Economic reintegration			
Family economic situation improved (A ₁)	1981	408	20.6
Possession of productive assets improved (A ₂)	1981	124	6.3
Owns more land	1981	35	1.8
Owns more housing assets	1981	43	2.2
Ownership of three wheelers/vans/cars	1981	73	3.7
Currently employed	1981	930	47
Social reintegration			
Successfully reintegrated, with extended family (B ₁)	1981	100	5.1
Successfully reintegrated, with immediate family (B ₂)	1648	426	25.9

Source: Own calculations.

found themselves left with no other choice but to consider re-migrating owing to unsuccessful economic reintegration. The unattractive local job market with low wages being offered and the lack of an enabling business environment and necessary

financial assistance to commence any form of self-employment venture, were highlighted to be some of the most problematic challenges associated with economic reintegration. Furthermore, problems encountered at the receiving end in

relation to spouse and other family members misusing the remittances were also highlighted as key economic challenges faced by returnees.



20.6 per cent of the respondents stated that their family economic situation has improved, while only 6.3 per cent of the respondents stated that they own more productive assets at present.

Case Study 1

Nimal, a forty year old returnee migrant from Colombo who is currently employed in the government sector as a driver, spoke of his reintegration experience with both contentment and disappointment. Nimal, who had migrated to Dubai in 2007 to work as a driver in a private company, like many other migrant workers had migrated with the intention of building a house for his family. A look of contentment and pride comes over Nimal's face as he speaks of how he had been the only one in his neighbourhood who had succeeded in building his own house. Nimal states that he would not have been able to achieve this dream if he had remained in Sri Lanka. Prior to migration, Nimal had earned a basic salary of Rs.25,000 as a sales assistant in the private sector. However, the basic salary he had earned in Dubai had been twice as much as he had been earning in Sri Lanka, while it was nearly 380 per cent higher when incentives and overtime were taken into account. However, his smile fades away and disappointment crosses his face as he speaks of his experience in finding employment upon return to Sri Lanka. He states that he had started looking for a job as early as five days after his return. Each passing day had only brought him more disappointment as the jobs available in the local market had been temporary in nature and unattractive due to low wages. It had taken him nearly 5 months to find a job in Sri Lanka. He states that he did not receive any assistance or any form of Institutional support after he returned and that it was his own efforts that enabled him to find a job as a driver in the government sector. Nevertheless, Nimal's laments that the jobs available in Sri Lanka for semi-skilled returnee migrants like him are unattractive compared to the jobs available abroad and anxiously looks forward to re-migrate in the near future with the intention of securing a better future for his family.

Case Study 2

Nihal, a 58 year old male returnee migrant from Gampaha who returned to the country in February 2014, is an aspiring individual whose cycle of migration started in 1996 when he migrated to Italy to overcome indebtedness brought about by his failed gem business. Since then Nihal has worked in several places in Italy as a caretaker and had earned close to Rs.200,000 in his last job as a caretaker of a castle. Nihal, who has a sound educational background with Diplomas in Business Administration and Business English from several private institutions in Sri Lanka, proudly proclaims that his educational background helped him to make the right investment decisions for his remittances. Today Nihal owns a 22 perches land in Gampaha in which he has commenced a small-scale coconut plantation. Nihal has also managed to use his remittances to renovate his home and educate his 22 year old son, while also building up a considerable stock of savings for future use. However, Nihal claims that his attempts in reintegrating in Sri Lanka have been somewhat problematic with there being very limited scope in the country to start his own business. Nihal, explaining some of the attempts he had taken to resettle in Sri Lanka states that he had returned to the country in 2003 with the intention of becoming a tourist guide. He explains that despite the language skills he had obtained while working abroad, he had received a negative response from relevant institutions regarding his application, leaving him no other choice but to keep migrating. Nihal also claims that though he now has enough capital to start up a new business venture in Sri Lanka, he is reluctant to do so due to the lack of a conducive business environment in the country. Nihal states that though his only dream is to be reunited with his family, he is left with no other choice but to consider re-migrating in the near future as there seems to be very little scope to reintegrate economically in Sri Lanka.

Independent variables of the models consist of the individuals' demographic characteristics, socio-economic characteristics, nature of employment they engaged in overseas, and institutional support. A detailed analysis of the independent variables is given below.

1. Correlation of Economic Improvements with Independent Variables

As indicated earlier, both family economic improvement and possession of productive assets have been used as indicators to evaluate whether the returnee migrants are economically better off or not. In a univariate analysis, we first examined the differences in the sample between those who indicated economic improvements (using both self-reported family economic improvement and the possession of productive assets). Results show that females, previously married, those who returned from the Middle East, are significantly less likely to state on average that they improved economically, whether we use self-reported economic improvement or the improvement in productive assets to measure economic improvements. On the other hand, results indicate that, currently married, those with at least A-levels, those who worked as skilled craftsmen or plant operators while abroad, and those who invested in housing are on average, significantly more likely to state that their economic conditions improved (using both measures of economic improvement). But, some variables had mixed results across the two dependent variables. For example, individuals who were skilled craftsmen or plant operators in Sri Lanka, individuals who received assistance from different institutions, or individuals who faced serious issues while abroad, were significantly less likely to say that

their family economic condition improved after returning, but they are more likely to say that their possession of productive assets improved. It is likely that skilled craftsmen and plant operators receive good salaries while abroad, but on their return they find it difficult to find suitable employment. In the case of individuals receiving help and those who faced serious offences while abroad, they may possess more productive assets due to assistance they received upon their return.

The results of the multivariate analysis were not consistent across the two dependent variables. The respondents who stated that their family economic situation improved were significantly more likely to be currently married; somewhat educated (with O-levels but not A-levels or higher levels of education); had spent a longer time abroad; had gone abroad more number of times; and, are not working currently. On the other hand, those who worked in an elementary occupation abroad; those who went to the Middle East; those who didn't use their remittances on loans, investments or education (relative to those who spent on housing); those who received assistance from institutions; and, those who faced serious or minor issues while abroad were significantly less likely to state that their economic situation improved after returning.

Those with a primary education, those who worked abroad as skilled craftsmen or a plant operator are more likely to state that their possession of productive assets improved. Females, those from urban areas, are less likely to state that their possession of productive assets improved.

The positive correlation between the improvement in family economic condition, the duration abroad and

the number of episodes abroad, could be partly due the fact that individuals who experienced an economically positive experience repeatedly going abroad or stay longer abroad. Further, it is not surprising that individuals who are economically better off after migration are not working at present. Likewise, people who seek help from institutions may be those who had a negative experience abroad.

The results highlight the importance of secure migration for economic improvement. The results show that individuals who experienced either serious or minor issues abroad are less likely to report improvements in family economic situation. The evidence weakly suggests that skilled workers are slightly better off upon their return than elementary workers (those who worked as elementary workers are significantly less likely to indicate that their family economic situation improved, while skilled craftsmen and plant operators are more likely to say that their productive assets improved). The qualitative interviews revealed that many who were able to improve their economic situation after migrating want to migrate again. This partly explains the high correlation between those who are not migrating and those stating that their family economic situation improved. The negative correlation between the Middle East and economic improvement may also be because most workers who go to the Middle East are elementary workers, who are more likely to be vulnerable.

Correlation of Successful Social Reintegration with Independent Variables

In the univariate analysis, females, those with a post-primary level of education were more likely to integrate successfully with their extended family members; while, those with a primary education,

skilled craftsmen and plant operators, those who received assistance from SLBFE or other institutions and those who experienced minor or serious issues while abroad, were less likely to report that they reintegrated successfully with extended family. In terms of reintegration with immediate family, those with O-levels, and those working in administrative, professional or technical occupations, those who worked in administrative, professional or technical occupations while abroad, those in clerical service while abroad and those who had no issues while abroad are more likely to report that they reintegrated successfully with immediate family. On the other hand, females, those with primary education, those in urban areas, and those who did elementary occupations while abroad and those who faced serious issues while abroad, were less likely to reintegrate successfully with immediate family after returning.

As indicated earlier, the successful social reintegration of returnees was examined using two variables: successful reintegration with the extended family and successful reintegration with the immediate

family. In the multivariate analysis, only those who were in administrative, professional or technical occupations were significantly likely to reintegrate successfully with their extended family. Those with primary education, and those who did elementary occupations abroad, and those who faced serious issues aboard were less likely to integrate successfully after returning.

The reintegration with immediate family was positive and significant for those who are in administrative professional or technical occupations currently and those who invested their remittances. On the other hand, females, those from urban areas, those who stayed abroad longer and those who went abroad more number of times had difficulties reintegrating with their immediate families. It is possible that the last two results are due to the fact that those who were anyway having issues with their spouses or children may have opted to stay abroad longer and to go abroad more number of times. It is also possible that longer separations with the family may make it harder for individuals to reintegrate successfully.

These results suggest that less educated and those going for unskilled jobs may need more assistance for managing their social connections during and after migration.

Those with primary education, and those who did elementary occupations abroad, and those who faced serious issues aboard were less likely to integrate successfully.

Case Study 3

Sarojini is a 33 year old returnee migrant from Gampaha who is currently unemployed. Sarojini had migrated to Jordan in 2012 as a housemaid with the intention of building a house for her family. She had returned to the country nearly one and a half years later without any savings as she had been unpaid by her employer for her work abroad.

"I went abroad with the hope of building a house but in the end they had to send money for my ticket from home".

Burdened by the responsibility of having to take care of her newborn baby, Sarojini who is unable to work outside home anxiously looks forward to finding a suitable self-employment opportunity that she can engage in while staying home. Having an interest in sewing, Sarojini claims that she would like to start her own sewing business at home. However, she has not been successful in obtaining any assistance in starting her own self-employment venture. Even though Sarojini is happy to be back in the country, she is still challenged by the inability to raise initial funds for a suitable self-employment opportunity which has made her reintegration experience problematic.

Table 4
Summary Statistics for Total Sample

Variable	Family economic improvement			Economic			Possession of productive assets			Social		
	Improved	Not improved	Sig. level	Improved	Not improved	Sig. level	Yes	No	Sig. level	Yes	No	Sig. level
Demographic characteristics	408	1573		124	1857		1881	100		1222	426	
Current age (decades)	3.83	3.80	***	3.83	3.80	***	3.80	3.84		3.93	4.01	***
Gender	0.70	0.78		0.51	0.78		0.77	0.67	**	0.76	0.88	
Marital status												
Currently married	0.81	0.75	**	0.82	0.75	*	0.76	0.70		N.A	N.A	
Never married	0.09	0.12		0.11	0.12		0.11	0.14		N.A	N.A	
Previously married	0.10	0.13	*	0.06	0.13	**	0.12	0.16		N.A	N.A	
Education												
Primary education	0.20	0.23		0.39	0.22	***	0.22	0.34	***	0.22	0.29	***
Post-primary education	0.53	0.57		0.40	0.57	***	0.57	0.47	*	0.59	0.57	
G.C.E. O/L passed	0.20	0.16	**	0.13	0.17		0.17	0.14		0.15	0.10	***
G.C.E. A/L passed and above	0.07	0.04	**	0.08	0.04	*	0.05	0.05		0.03	0.04	
Socio-economic characteristics												
Residential sector												
Urban	0.56	0.58		0.31	0.59	***	0.58	0.54		0.59	0.64	*
Current occupation												
Admin., professional, technical	0.03	0.01	**	0.02	0.02		0.02	0.03		0.02	0.00	**
Clerical service	0.07	0.06		0.12	0.06	**	0.07	0.07		0.05	0.07	
Skilled, craft, plant	0.03	0.06	**	0.12	0.05	***	0.05	0.15	***	0.05	0.05	
Elementary	0.17	0.24	***	0.20	0.22		0.22	0.24		0.23	0.27	
Not classified	0.11	0.07	**	0.14	0.08	**	0.08	0.05		0.09	0.07	
Not employed	0.58	0.52	**	0.37	0.54	***	0.54	0.42	**	0.53	0.53	
Foreign employment characteristics												
Foreign occupation												
Admin., professional, technical	0.04	0.02	**	0.04	0.03		0.03	0.01		0.02	0.01	**
Clerical service	0.08	0.05	**	0.09	0.06		0.06	0.03		0.05	0.03	**
Skilled, craft, plant	0.06	0.03	***	0.13	0.04	***	0.04	0.05		0.05	0.02	**
Elementary	0.73	0.83	***	0.65	0.82		0.81	0.84		0.83	0.88	***
Not classified	0.07	0.05		0.09	0.05		0.06	0.07		0.05	0.06	
Country												
Middle East	0.91	0.95	***	0.90	0.95	**	0.94	0.95		0.95	0.95	
Duration (years)	2.52	2.28		2.47	2.32		2.34	2.28		2.28	2.49	
Number of times migrated	1.75	1.71		1.69	1.72		1.72	1.71		1.64	1.98	
Remittances used back home												
Loans	0.42	0.38	*	0.35	0.39		0.39	0.38		0.41	0.39	
Investment	0.00	0.01		0.02	0.01		0.01	0.01		0.01	0.00	
Education	0.04	0.04		0.03	0.04		0.04	0.03		0.05	0.05	
Housing	0.24	0.18	***	0.25	0.19	*	0.19	0.16		0.19	0.21	
Other	0.29	0.39	***	0.35	0.37		0.37	0.42		0.35	0.35	
Institutional involvement												
Assistance from SLBFE	0.03	0.03	***	0.01	0.03	**	0.03	0.07	**	0.03	0.04	
Assistance from other institutions	0.03	0.07	***	0.11	0.06	**	0.06	0.11	*	0.07	0.06	
Issues faced at overseas work												
Serious issues	0.12	0.24	***	0.24	0.22	**	0.21	0.32	**	0.19	0.23	*
Minor issues	0.11	0.11	***	0.12	0.11	**	0.11	0.15	**	0.11	0.14	**
No Issues	0.74	0.60	***	0.59	0.63		0.64	0.48		0.65	0.59	**

Note: Significant levels compare the significance of the mean difference of two responses. Significant levels: *, **, *** represents 10%, 5%, 1% respectively. Source: Authors' calculations using survey data of reintegration with the home community-perspective on the lives of returnee migrant workers.

Case Study 4

Mahinda, a successful entrepreneur and owner of vehicle service/filling stations in Thabuththegama, Eppawala and Anuradhapura is a returnee migrant who commenced his business with the remittances he had earned abroad while working as a driver in Saudi Arabia during 2002-2003. Mahinda, who had returned to Sri Lanka with savings of Rs.90, 000/-, had invested the entire amount on commencing his own business in his home town.

"I started my business on my own. I didn't bring back a lot of money. I brought about Rs.90,000/= and spent all of it on the business.....My mother had purchased a land with the money I sent. I put up a small building to start the business. I put up a concrete slab and bought two machines and that's how I started".

Mahinda had initially started by opening a small service centre to wash and repair machines that were used in fields. Working hard to expand his business, Mahinda had been successful in introducing several new field equipment and machines to his local market and had even been awarded the Best Young Entrepreneur in Anuradhapura in 2004. When questioned about his successful reintegration experience in Sri Lanka, Mahinda claims that the experience he had gained while working abroad had helped in shaping him into a more hardworking and determined individual.

"Working abroad was a great learning experience....we learnt how to work according to a timetable and how to follow foreign rules.....it was the experience I gained abroad that was more valuable to me than money.....Going abroad changed my life. It made me complete".

Drawing lessons from his own experience abroad, Mahinda claims that successful reintegration should start at the pre-migration stage. He states that migrants need to have a clear objective to achieve while working abroad.

"When a person migrates they should have a clear target as to why they are going abroad".

Commenting on institutional support, he states that he had not maintained any links with government institutions after returning. Expanding further on institutional support, he states that it is important for government officers to assist migrants in setting objectives for migration.

"They should appoint at least five officers in each district to find out the reasons for migrating, your background, your profession, the country to which you are going, how you were recruited and your targets. If this happens migrants will be better off".

Results of the economically better off and successfully reintegrated models for Sub-samples; Unskilled and Skilled

The current government policy encourages the migration of skilled workers. In the following analysis we examine the differences between economic improvements and social integration for skilled and unskilled workers separately.

1. Family economic improvement (see Annex 2)

Low skilled returnees who are currently married (compared to never married), are more likely to state that they are economically better off. Further, unskilled returnees who have spent longer duration overseas and migrated several times are more likely

to state that they are economically better off. As stated earlier, this could be perhaps due to the fact that individuals who had a positive experience abroad are more likely to stay abroad longer or migrate repeatedly abroad. Unskilled returnees, who have spent their remittances on repayment of loans rather than housing, are more likely to be economically better off. However, unskilled elementary workers are less likely to state that they are economically better off than non-elementary workers.

Regardless of being highly skilled, those who faced minor issues (compared to returnees with no issues) during overseas employment, are less likely to say that they are economically better off.

The results suggest that safe migration is important for economic improvement. Both unskilled and skilled returnees, who faced serious issues while working abroad, are less likely to state that they are economically better off compared to returnees who did not face any issues. Whereas, both skilled and unskilled returnees who obtained assistance from institutions other than SLBFE, are less likely to say that they are economically better off. This is perhaps due to the fact that those who are not economically better off are more likely to seek assistance from institutions.

2. Improvement in possession of productive assets (see Annex 3)

Regardless of whether a returnee is skilled or unskilled, females and

Table 5
Probit model results of the economically better off and successfully reintegrated models for full sample

Variables	Family economic improvement	Possession of productive assets	Successfully reintegrated (with extended family)	Successfully reintegrated (with immediate family)
Current age (decades)	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.02
Female	0.00	-0.04***	0.02	-0.13***
<i>Marital status (base = never married)</i>				
Currently married	0.06**	0.00	0.02	N.A.
Previously married	0.04	-0.02*	0.00	N.A.
<i>Education (base = post primary education)</i>				
Primary education	-0.03	0.04***	-0.03*	-0.04
G.C.E. O/L passed	0.06*	-0.01	0.00	0.04
G.C.E. A/L passed and above	0.05	0.01	0.00	-0.10
Socio-economic characteristics				
<i>Residential sector</i>				
Urban	0.01	-0.03***	-0.01	-0.05**
<i>Current occupation (base =clerical service)</i>				
Admin., professional, technical	0.11	-0.01	-0.06	0.17**
Skilled, craft, plant	-0.03	0.00	-0.06	-0.08
Elementary	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.01
Not working	0.09***	-0.02	0.01	0.07
Foreign employment characteristics				
<i>Foreign occupation (base =clerical service)</i>				
Admin., professional, technical	0.00	0.03	0.03*	-0.10
Skilled, craft, plant	0.07	0.08*	0.02	0.03
Elementary	-0.09*	0.02	-0.03*	-0.06
<i>Country</i>				
Middle East	-0.07*	-0.02	0.00	0.07
Duration (months)	0.02**	0.00	0.00	-0.02***
Number of times migrated	0.02*	0.00	0.01	-0.05***
<i>Remittances used back home (base = housing)</i>				
Loans	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	0.02
Investment	-0.10	0.06	0.00	0.17**
Education	-0.05	0.01	0.00	0.03
Other	-0.06***	-0.02	-0.01	0.02
Institutional involvement				
Assistance from SLBFE	0.03	-0.02	-0.06	-0.02
Assistance from other institutions	-0.09***	0.02	-0.02	0.02
Issues faced at overseas work				
Serious Issues (base = no issues)	-0.12***	0.00	-0.02*	-0.02
Minor Issues	-0.06**	-0.01	-0.03	-0.05

Note: Significant levels: *, **, *** represents 10%, 5%, 1% respectively. The regression also controlled for occupation not classified, the ethnic background of respondents, and a control for missing information on 'issues faced at overseas work'. The results for these are not shown.

Source: Authors' calculations using survey data of Reintegration with the home community-perspective on the lives of returnee migrant workers.

those from urban areas were less likely to state that their possession of productive assets improved upon returning. This result for females could be partly due to the lower salaries earned by females abroad and partly issues with managing their finances due to limited financial literacy as well as due to lack of authority in the family for making financial decisions. The result for urban is perhaps due to the fact that assets such as land and housing is more costly in urban areas, and the savings from a short spell abroad is

not sufficient for purchasing such assets.

In addition to the above in the unskilled sample, the primary educated were more likely to state that their productive assets improved.

3. Successfully reintegrated with immediate family (see Annex 4)

Regardless of skill level, females and those who have migrated abroad more number of times, found it harder to reintegrate with their immediate families. The second results could be possibly due to the fact that migrants

who had issues with their immediate family choosing to go abroad to avoid problems back home. Other than these variables that were significant across both skilled and unskilled workers, some variables were significant only in one sample. For example, in the skilled returnee sample, urban residents, those who are employed in elementary occupations in Sri Lanka and while abroad were less likely to state that they reintegrated with their immediate family upon their return. In the unskilled returnee sample, those who

The results suggest that safe migration is important for economic improvement. Both unskilled and skilled returnees, who faced serious issues while working abroad, are less likely to state that they are economically better off compared to returnees who did not face any issues.

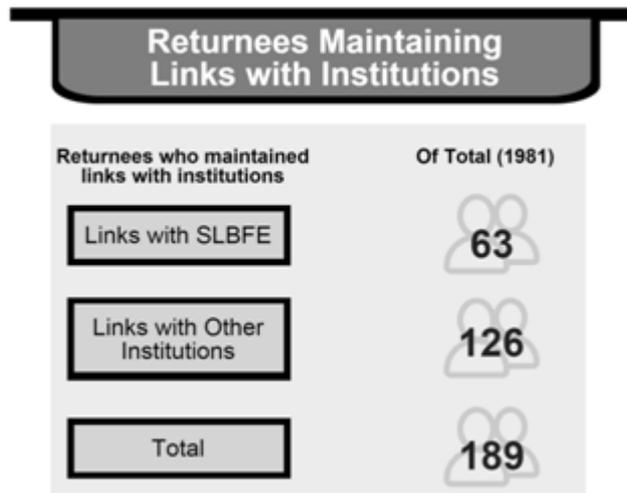
were more mature, those who have passed O-levels, were more likely to state that they reintegrated successfully with their immediate family.

Institutional Support: Analysis

The findings of the quantitative analysis highlight that only 63 of the returnees out of 1981, managed to maintain links with the SLBFE upon return, while 126 of the total sample managed to maintain links with other institutions, suggesting that there was limited involvement with institutions upon return (see Table 6).

Some of the possible reasons for limited involvement with migration related institutions, as highlighted in the interviews carried out with returnees and institutions are:

- Lack of awareness on existing government assistance programmes:



Despite recent government attempts in introducing several programmes to assist returnee migrants in reintegrating into the local setting such as the introduction of the Rata Viruwo housing and self-employment loan schemes (refer section 1.2 for more information on the Rata Viruwo programme), qualitative interviews found that the level of awareness among returnee migrants on government assistance programmes seems to be limited, while concerns were also raised on the size of the self-employment loans and housing loans, which were stated to be insufficient.

- Lack of Technical and Vocational Education programmes catered specifically for returnee migrants: Trainings offered to returnee migrants by government institutions in Sri Lanka seem to be limited to pre-departure training, while vocational training programmes directly targeting returnee migrants seem to be scarce. Furthermore, returnee migrants may also face difficulties in accessing available programmes

Table 6
Returnees Maintaining Links with Institutions

Returnees who maintained links with institutions	Of Total (1981)
Links with SLBFE	63
Links with other institutions	126
Total	189

Source: Own calculations.

offered by private TVET providers, as they appear to be open to applicants within ages 16-24.

- Lack of loan schemes offered by banks and financial institutions catering specifically to assist returnee migrants reintegrate economically: Financial assistance provided for returnee migrant workers by banks and financial institutions in Sri Lanka is limited to general loans available for low income generating households, while schemes targeted specifically for migrants/migrant families is lacking. Apart from the Rata Viruwo Housing and self-employment loan schemes provided through Samurdhi Banks and the Saranee Housing Scheme provided by the National Savings Bank (NSB), loan schemes designed to provide reintegration support for returnee migrants in particular is limited.
- Majority of reintegration programmes available in the country provided by both state and non-state actors are catered for housemaids and low-skilled categories of migrants, while programmes targeting semi-skilled and high-skilled workers is limited.
- There is no coordination among related state and non-state service providers that provide reintegration services.

Institutional Support in the Philippines

Philippines has a comprehensive reintegration programme from which Sri Lanka can draw, in designing a national level reintegration programme. The reintegration programme in the Philippines covers all phases of overseas employment: pre-departure, on-site and return (De Vries, 2011). Planning for the eventual return of the migrant is done prior to the departure for work. For example, in the pre-departure phase each worker and their family are guided to set up a common goal to be achieved while the worker is abroad (Go, 2012). Upon return, the programme encourages returnees to engage in productive and sustainable activities while providing different types of assistance to help returnees reintegrate economically and socially.

The Republic Act 8042, or the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995 govern Filipinos overseas, particularly Filipino workers. Support to returnee migrants has been made a policy priority under this law. The Department of Labour and Employment (DOLE) has two agencies, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) involved in the deployment and welfare of migrant workers.

The reintegration programme in the Philippines has two major components: (i) Psychosocial needs: this includes the organizing of Family Circles which consist of overseas workers' family members and returnees and also the provision of services such as family counselling and stress debriefing. (ii) Economic needs: includes preparation programmes for livelihood projects/ community-based income-generating projects, skills training and credit programmes.

There are two main loan programmes offered by the OWWA. *The Livelihood Development Programme for Overseas Filipino Workers* is a joint undertaking between OWWA and the National Livelihood Support Fund, designed to improve workers' access to entrepreneurial development opportunities and also to provide credit to overseas workers and their families. 198 livelihood projects were approved in 2006, with 34,102 million pesos provided in loans (Go, 2012). The loan ceiling is 200,000 pesos for individuals and 100,000 pesos for groups (*ibid*). A 100 per cent collateral is now required in the form of property, motor vehicles, equipment, etc.

The Overseas Filipino Workers Groceria Project aims at improving the socio-economic situation of overseas workers and their families by providing livelihood and self-employment opportunities through the establishment of cooperative grocery stores nationwide (Go, 2012). An interest-free loan assistance package in the form of merchandise goods worth 50,000 pesos is extended to each qualified Family Circle or overseas worker organization. The loans have a two year maturity and the beneficiaries are expected to provide equity (i.e. in the form of a building for the store, its construction or by taking care of the renovation costs). By the end of 2008, 496 such grocery stores had been set up.

Further, in partnership with the Land Bank and Development Bank of the Philippines, the OWWA launched the P2 billion Reintegration Programme for returnees, where beneficiaries can borrow up to a maximum of P2 million to start livelihood projects or invest in businesses. Since its implementation in 2011, 648.44 million pesos has been given out as loans to 876 OFW businesses which have generated over 4,800 jobs (Philippine Information Agency, 2014).

Trainings at Foreign Worksites

Activities such as skills training and business forums are arranged at foreign worksites as part of reintegration preparedness for returnees. Business forums are used to inform workers of the business and investment opportunities available to them in the Philippines, upon return (i.e. forum on aquaculture investment opportunities held in Saudi

Arabia in 2006). Further, in 2008, 1,797 skills and livelihood training sessions (including financial literacy and entrepreneurship training) had been conducted for workers overseas as well as for Family Circle members through the regional welfare offices located in the Philippines.

Recognition of Outstanding Returnee Migrants

Achievements of workers as well as their families in managing the impact of overseas employment in family life are recognized through awards such as the Model OFW Family of the Year Awards. It is used as a strategy to exemplify the best practices adopted by families to optimize the benefits of migration. In 2013, 34 such families were given awards. In addition, special awards were also given to the 'Best OFW Family Circle', 'OFW Family for entrepreneurship' and 'Model OFW for Civic Work'.

One-Stop Centre for All Reintegration Services

The National Reintegration Center for Overseas Filipino Workers was established in 2007 with the objective of developing, implementing and evolving progressive and responsive reintegration programmes for OFWs and their families in order to maximize the benefits of migration for development (Department of Labour and Migration, 2012). It acts as a "one-stop centre" for all reintegration services and a "service networking hub" which coordinates and facilitates the delivery of services by all service providers.

The Centre has three main programme units which address *personal reintegration* - providing assistance in job search, technical assistance for self-employment, credit and micro-finance for livelihood programmes and business counselling among others; *community reintegration* - encouraging foreign workers and returnees to share their expertise, skills and to invest in their communities or to get involved in SME development/high-impact community based projects (*ibid*); and *economic reintegration* - working with financial institutions and others to encourage savings and increase earnings, to encourage service providers to provide faster and price competitive remittance schemes, and to develop investment portfolios among others (*ibid*).

Referrals to Agencies for Redeployment

As part of the employment facilitation services, referral assistance is provided for local and foreign employment. The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration had referred 2,646 overseas workers to various agencies for redeployment as of August 2009 (ILO, 2012).

Training and Scholarships

Training and scholarships are awarded through OWWA as well as through institutions such as the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). The OWWA offers up to PHP 14,500 per course for short-term vocational or technicians courses for OWWA members and their dependents/beneficiaries under the Skills-for-Employment Scholarship Programme (World Economic Forum, 2014). The course fee is paid directly to the training institution and areas of training include agriculture and fisheries, processed food and beverages, tourism, decorative crafts and ceramics, furniture and fixtures, construction, etc. (WWW.OFLAYF.COM, 2014).

Retirement protection scheme for overseas workers

The Social Security System has established an OFW Flexi-Fund programme (SSS-Flexi Fund), a voluntary provident fund in addition to the Regular Coverage Programme. This provides a more comprehensive coverage to returnees. Members are entitled to net-guaranteed earnings from their contributions which are tax-free.

6. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The analyses of the study show that a majority of the returnee migrants have not successfully reintegrated upon return. Close to 80 per cent of the sample of 1981 respondents had not been able to improve their family economic situation while 94 per cent had not been able to improve the possession of productive assets. Only 47 per cent are currently employed. In other words, 1051 of the 1981 respondents are not employed. Similarly, in terms of reintegrating with their families, only 26 per cent have been able to successfully reintegrate with their immediate families and 5 per cent with their extended families. Hence, the analyses show that for a majority of returnees, economic and social reintegration has been challenging. Interviews with returnees show that some of the key challenges included finding employment, lack of funds for self-employment, and lack of information and documentation required to access loans and other business opportunities.

In terms of the characteristics of returnee migrants who are better off or not, some of the other key findings include, (i) Gender: the less probability of females in improving the ownership of productive assets and in reintegrating with their immediate families; (ii) Urban/Rural locality: the lower chance of returnees living in urban areas to improve their productive assets and in settling down with their immediate families; (iii) Country of Migration: returnees from the Middle East are less likely to be economically better off compared to returnees from other countries; (iv) Duration: longer the time spent abroad, the more likely it is for returnees to be economically better

off but lower the probability of successfully settling down with their immediate family; (v) Institutional Support: returnees who have a link with institutions tend to be returnees who have not experienced family economic improvement or have not successfully reintegrated with their extended families.

Further analyses by skill level show that economic improvement is higher for skilled workers (includes both semi-skilled and skilled workers) compared to that of unskilled workers (includes housemaids). Nevertheless, the economic improvement of skilled workers is also limited, with only 28 per cent reporting family economic improvement.

In terms of institutional support only a very few maintain any links with institutions - less than 10 per cent of the sample. However, the number seeking assistance from institutions may be higher especially with the recent introduction of Development Officers who are based in the Divisional Secretariats, and maintain links with female migrant workers and their families.

In terms of institutional support, a number of initiatives have been undertaken through the Government's 'Rata Viruwo Programme' to assist the reintegration

process of returnee migrants while also recognizing the significant contributions made by migrant workers to the Sri Lankan economy. However, these initiatives are still at the initial stages and are far from being a comprehensive reintegration programme. There are also a number of INGOs and NGOs that provide reintegration support to returnee migrants. Though providing much needed assistance and support, these are mostly ad hoc in nature with no coordination between the different agencies. While reintegration is a process that needs the support of many institutions and agencies, it is vital that the government takes the lead in developing a policy document that would provide clarity on the main institutional responsibilities of stakeholders at the district, provincial and national levels. Also, the country should learn from the successful reintegration programmes of other countries. For example, in the Philippines, migrants are trained and assisted in all stages of migration to ensure successful reintegration. Also, the reintegration programmes look into not only the economic aspects of reintegration, but also the more social aspects of reintegration. They also work with not only the migrants themselves but also the families of migrants.



In terms of institutional support only a very few maintain any links with institutions – less than 10 per cent of the sample.

Some of the other policy recommendations stemming from the findings of the study including the discussions carried out with relevant stakeholders are as follows,

Need for an Information Database

Analysis showed that only a very small proportion of returnees have received assistance for reintegration. There should be a better mechanism to reach out to returnees and make them aware of existing reintegration programmes. In order to achieve this, Sri Lanka needs to have a mechanism in place to collect information on returnees at the pre and post-migration stages of the migration cycle. The vacuum of statistics on returnees let alone information on other relevant areas (i.e. purpose of migration), needs to be addressed as such information can be used as a guideline to develop a comprehensive reintegration policy for the country. Loan and other assistance programmes can be developed to meet the numbers returning as well as the specific needs of the returnee migrants.

Post-arrival information on the skills of returnees and their preferences of employment will enable the relevant agencies to direct returnees to the existing livelihood programmes. More importantly, it will assist in identifying those returnees with new and specialized skills who will be able to make a dynamic contribution to the country's development through positive spill-over effects, if directed to productive avenues.

Identifying Returnees as a Distinct/Special Group

Interviews with credit institutions and training institutes showed that there are only a very limited number of programmes available for returnee migrants per se. Most programmes are general ones available to the wider public and are not targeted specifically to meet the needs of returnee migrants. A few institutions like the Bank of Ceylon and Samurdhi offer limited credit facilities for housing, self-employment and leasing facilities. However, many of the schemes require professional and legal documentation as well as collateral like any other regular loan scheme available in the market.

Creating and Improving Economic Activities Back at Home

Analysis showed that many who are successful abroad stay abroad or repeatedly go abroad for work. This is partly due to lack of opportunities back home. Initiatives to create/improve existing local industries (e.g. coconut industry in Kurunegala, Masks in Ambalanthota etc.) by creating a market for local entrepreneurs (e.g. through Laksala, Export Development Board) together with facilities such as credit facilities for self-employment will discourage migrants from re-migrating and show an interest in reinvesting and expanding the local economy.

Improving Accessibility and Awareness among Returnees on Available Programmes

Improving awareness among returnee migrants on the support programmes, technical/vocation training programmes available, and the relevant institutions that need to be visited and documentation necessary for example, in starting a business would enable returnees to make use of the facilities already available for them.

Further, interviews illustrated accessibility issues for returnee migrants in accessing vocational training from vocational training centres, due to factors such as age limitations imposed by vocational training centres. Typically, vocational training centres (government and private), provide vocational training to applicants only within the ages of 16-24. As a majority of returnee migrants are over this age limit, they are prevented from accessing such vocational training/skills enhancement programmes.

The Need for the Reintegration Programmes Catering to Semi-Skilled and Skilled Returnees

While a majority of the reintegration programmes that are available cater to low-skill categories (i.e. housemaids), there is a dearth of reintegration programmes offered by both government and non-government agencies for the semi-skilled or the skilled returnees. Given the role that semi-skilled and skilled-returnees can play in terms of their contribution to the economy and to development, it is important that future reintegration programmes incorporate programmes that are attractive to these skill categories as well.

Better Financial Literacy

Analysis suggests those who didn't invest their earnings were less likely to report improvements in their economic situation. Better training on how to invest their money during the pre-migration phase may result in

better economic outcomes for the returnees.

Safe Migration

Individuals who have experienced adverse impacts while abroad, such as harassments and non-payment of

wages were less likely to successfully reintegrate economically and socially. The government should study the patterns of such adverse impacts and take action to minimize those, i.e. through safe migration programmes.

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Annex 1: Description of Summary Statistics

Variables	Description
Demographic characteristics	
Current age	Age in decades
Gender	= 1 if female
Marital status	
Currently married	= 1 if currently married
Never married	= 1 if never married
Previously married	= 1 if divorced, separated, widowed
Ethnicity and religion	
Sinhala Buddhist	= 1 if ethnicity is Sinhala and religion is Buddhist
Tamil Hindu	= 1 if ethnicity is Tamil and religion is Hindu
Muslim Islam	= 1 if ethnicity is Muslim and religion is Islam
Other	= 1 if other
Education	
Primary education	= 1 if no primary education or grade 1-5
Post-primary education	= 1 if grade 6-10
G.C.E. O/L passed	= 1 if G.C.E. O/L passed
G.C.E. A/L passed and above	= 1 if G.C.E. A/L passed or degree or above
Socio-economic characteristics	
Residential sector	= 1 if urban
Current occupation	
Admin., professional, technical	= 1 if current occupation is admin. and management worker or Professional or technical and associate professional
Clerical service	= 1 if current occupation is clerical and related worker or service and sales worker
Skilled, craft, plant	= 1 if current occupation is skilled agriculture/fisheries/forestry or craft & related trade worker or plant & machine operator
Elementary	= 1 if current occupation is elementary occupation
Not classified	= 1 if current occupation is not classified
Not working	= 1 if current occupation is 0
Foreign employment characteristics	
Foreign occupation	
Admin., professional, technical	= 1 if current occupation is admin. and management worker or Professional or technical and associate professional
Clerical service	= 1 if current occupation is clerical and related worker or service and sales worker
Skilled, craft, plant	= 1 if current occupation is skilled agriculture/fisheries/forestry or craft & related trade worker or plant & machine operator
Elementary	= 1 if current occupation is elementary occupation
Not classified	= 1 if current occupation is not classified
Country	
Middle East	= 1 if country is a Middle East country
Duration	Duration in years
Number of times migrated	Number of times migrated
Remittances used back home	
Loans	= 1 if remittances used for loan/debt settlement
Investment	= 1 if remittances used for investment
Education	= 1 if remittances used for education
Housing	= 1 if remittances used for housing
Other	= 1 if remittances used for other recurrent expenses
Institutional involvement	
Assistance from SLBFE	= 1 if there is a link with SLBFE
Assistance from other institutions	= 1 if there is a link with any other institution
Issues faced at overseas work	
Serious Issues	= 1 if issues as not paying, employing by force, physical and sexual harassments, not providing food, etc.
Minor Issues	= 1 if issues as working longer hours with overtime payments, performing other activities than agreed, working in other location than agreed, working for other employee than agreed, etc.
No Issues	= 1 if no issues
Missing	= 1 if missing

Table A1. Summary Statistics of Variables

Variables	No. of Observations - 1981
Demographic characteristics	
Current age	38.03
Gender-female	0.76
Marital status	
Currently married	0.76
Never married	0.12
Previously married	0.13
Ethnicity and religion	
Sinhala Buddhist	0.58
Tamil Hindu	0.11
Muslim Islam	0.21
Other	0.11
Education	
Primary education	0.23
Post primary education	0.56
G.C.E. O/L passed	0.16
G.C.E. A/L passed and above	0.05
Socio-economic characteristics	
Residential sector-urban	0.57
Current occupation	
Admin., professional, technical	0.02
Clerical service	0.07
Skilled, craft, plant	0.06
Elementary	0.22
Not classified	0.08
No occupation	0.53
Foreign employment characteristics	
Foreign occupation	
Admin., professional, technical	0.03
Clerical service	0.06
Skilled, craft, plant	0.04
Elementary	0.81
Not classified	0.06
Skill level	
skilled	0.15
Country	
Middle East	0.94
Duration (years)	2.33
Number of times migrated	1.72
Remittances used back home	
Loans	0.39
Investment	0.01
Education	0.04
Housing	0.19
Other	0.37
Institutional involvement	
Assistance from SLBFE	0.03
Assistance from other institutions	0.06
Issues faced at overseas work	
Serious issues	0.22
Minor issues	0.11
No issues	0.63
Missing	0.04

Annex 2: Economically Better Off in terms of Family Economic Improvement for Sub-samples

Variables	Economically Better Off: Family Economic Improvement	
	Unskilled	Skilled
Demographic characteristics		
Current age (decades)	0.00	0.03
Gender	0.02	-0.03
<i>Marital status (base = never married)</i>		
Married	...	0.03
Currently married	0.09***	...
Previously married	0.06	...
<i>Education (base = post primary education)</i>		
Primary education	-0.02	-0.18**
G.C.E. O/L passed	0.04	0.08
G.C.E. A/L passed and above	0.10	0.03
Socio-economic characteristics		
<i>Residential sector</i>		
Urban	0.02	-0.07
<i>Current occupation (base =clerical service)</i>		
Admin., professional, technical	...	...
Skilled, craft, plant	...	...
Elementary	-0.06***	0.05
No occupation	...	...
Foreign employment characteristics		
<i>Foreign occupation (base =clerical service)</i>		
Admin., professional, technical	...	...
Skilled, craft, plant	...	...
Elementary	-0.04	-0.19***
Not classified	...	...
<i>Country</i>		
Middle East	-0.10	-0.12
Duration (years)	0.02**	0.03
Number of times migrated	0.02**	-0.01
<i>Remittances used back home (base = housing)</i>		
Loans	0.04**	-0.03
Investment	...	...
Education	...	...
Other	...	...
Institutional involvement		
Assistance from SLBFE	-0.00	...
Assistance from other institutions	-0.07**	-0.22***
Issues faced at overseas work		
Serious Issues (base = no issues)	-0.11***	-0.223***
Minor Issues	-0.04	-0.165***
Missing	-0.11***	0.18

Note: Significant levels: *, **, *** represents 10%, 5%, 1% respectively. The regression also controlled for occupation not classified, the ethnic background of respondents, and a control for missing information on 'issues faced at overseas work'. The results for these are not shown.

Source: Own calculations.

Annex 3: Economically Better Off in Terms of Improvement in Possession of Productive Assets for Sub-samples

Variables	Economically Better Off: Possession of Productive Assets	
	Unskilled	Skilled
Demographic characteristics		
Current age (decades)	0.01	0.01
Gender	-0.05***	-0.07*
<i>Marital status (base = never married)</i>		
Married	...	0.00
Currently married	0.01	...
Previously married	-0.01	...
<i>Education (base = post primary education)</i>		
Primary education	0.04***	0.01
G.C.E. O/L passed	0.00	-0.05
G.C.E. A/L passed and above	0.00	0.01
Socio-economic characteristics		
<i>Residential sector</i>		
Urban	-0.02**	-0.10**
<i>Current occupation (base = clerical service)</i>		
Admin., professional, technical	...	...
Skilled, craft, plant	...	...
Elementary	-0.01	0.09
Not employed	...	...
Foreign employment characteristics		
<i>Foreign occupation (base = clerical service)</i>		
Admin., professional, technical	...	...
Skilled, craft, plant	...	...
Elementary	0.01	-0.04
<i>Country</i>		
Middle East	-0.04	-0.01
Duration (years)	0.00	0.01
Number of times migrated	-0.01	0.01
<i>Remittances used back home (base = housing)</i>		
Loans	0.00	-0.02
Investment	...	...
Education	...	...
Other	...	...
Institutional involvement		
Assistance from SLBFE	0.00	...
Assistance from other institutions	0.03	-0.03
Issues faced at overseas work		
Serious Issues (base = no issues)	0.00	-0.02
Minor Issues	0.00	-0.03

Note: Significant levels: *, **, *** represents 10%, 5%, 1% respectively. The regression also controlled for occupation not classified, the ethnic background of respondents, and a control for missing information on 'issues faced at overseas work'. The results for these are not shown.

Source: Own calculations.

Annex 4: Successfully Reintegrated with the Immediate Family for Sub-samples

Variables	Successfully Reintegrated: with Immediate Family	
	Unskilled	Skilled
Demographic characteristics		
Current age (decades)	-0.01	0.02***
Gender	-0.07*	-0.20**
<i>Marital status (base = never married)</i>		
Married	...	...
Currently married	...	...
Previously married	...	...
<i>Education (base = post primary education)</i>		
Primary education	-0.03	0.01
G.C.E. O/L passed (& above)	0.03	0.09*
G.C.E. A/L passed and above	-0.12	-0.01
Socio-economic characteristics		
<i>Residential sector</i>		
Urban	-0.05*	-0.01
<i>Current occupation (base =clerical service)</i>		
Admin., professional= technical	...	...
Skilled, craft, plant	...	...
Elementary	-0.06*	0.02
Not employed	...	...
Foreign employment characteristics		
<i>Foreign occupation (base =clerical service)</i>		
Admin., professional, technical	...	...
Skilled, craft, plant	...	...
Elementary	-0.06*	-0.07
<i>Country</i>		
Middle East	-0.03	0.09
Duration (years)	-0.02**	-0.03
Number of times migrated	-0.04***	-0.05**
<i>Remittances used back home (base = housing)</i>		
Loans	-0.02	0.03
Investment	...	...
Education	...	...
Other	...	...
Institutional involvement		
Assistance from SLBFE	-0.03	...
Assistance from other institutions	0.02	-0.17
Issues faced at overseas work		
Serious Issues (base = no issues)	-0.03	0.03
Minor Issues	-0.07	0.04

Note: Significant levels: *, **, *** represents 10%, 5%, 1% respectively. The regression also controlled for occupation not classified, the ethnic background of respondents, and a control for missing information on 'issues faced at overseas work'. The results for these are not shown.

Source: Own calculations.



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