

Indian Migrant Workers: Understanding the Dynamics of Migration in India

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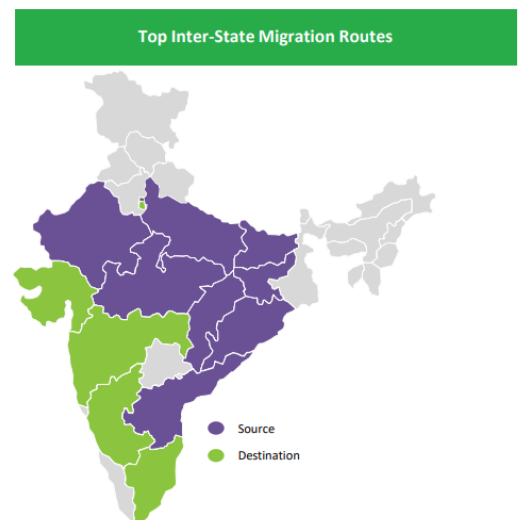
Introduction:

The report delves into the landscape of migration in India. Migration is a phenomenon driven by economic aspirations, socio-economic challenges, and urbanization. With over 140 million migrant workers contributing significantly to the GDP, the study outlines the multifaceted challenges faced by this crucial workforce and also presents the existing and possible supportive ecosystems.

Key Findings:

1. Migration Landscape in India

- i) **Drivers:** Economic mobility aspirations, socio-economic challenges, and urban-led growth encourage migration.
- ii) **Characteristics:** Migrant workers have diverse characteristics, including various types such as semi-permanent, predominantly male, and those contributing remittances.
- iii) **Trends:** The report indicates substantial migration from northern states to southern and western states and a significant increase in intra-district movements.



Source: Indian Migrant Workers: Understanding the Dynamics of Migration in India, Sattva Knowledge Institute

2. Overview of Challenges

- i) **Casual Labour Market:** Migrant workers face challenges such as low wages, absence of social security benefits, and limited job contracts. 62% of wage workers lack a written job contract, and 53% have no social security benefits.
- ii) **Vulnerabilities:** The pandemic made it worse, rendering migrant workers invisible in the welfare system, limiting skilling opportunities, and restricting socio-economic agency. Over 11 million migrants experienced a mass exodus back to their home states during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- iii) **Worksite Challenges:** Occupational hazards, wage disparities, and dependence on contractors compound the struggles of migrant workers. 82.3% of casual workers in India are employed in the construction sector.

3. Ecosystem Interventions

- i) **Comprehensive Policy Framework:** Initiatives such as the All-India Survey on Migrant Workers and NITI Aayog's Draft on Migrant Policy aim to estimate the number of migrant workers and coordinate schemes for their welfare. The E-Shram Portal registers over 280 million unorganized workers, fostering the portability of benefits. Over 1.2 lakh households are surveyed in the All-India Survey on Migrant Workers.
- ii) **Enhancing Social Security:** ONORC ensures the portability of ration benefits, mitigating challenges faced by migrant workers. Affordable Rental Housing Complexes target urban migrants, providing low-cost accommodation. 57.4% of the female workforce comprises migrant workers, emphasizing the need for housing solutions.
- iii) **Skill Development:** 80.5% of workers in the 15-59 age group have not received vocational training. DESH aims to revolutionize skill training, linking workers with formal employers, thereby reducing dependence on contractors.

4. Call for Action

- i) **Enumerating Migrant Workers:** Collaborative efforts are urged for accurate enumeration at source and destination locations. Only 52.5% of construction workers were registered with the Construction Workers Welfare Board in 2017.
- ii) **Enhancing Social Security Coverage:** Philanthropy is encouraged to support inclusive schemes for insurance, pensions, and provident funds. 62% of the Building and Other Construction Workers (BOCW) cess remains unutilized for worker welfare.
- iii) **Enforcing Safe Working Conditions:** Strict enforcement and higher liability through employers are emphasized to ensure suitable working conditions. 1 in 3 workers does not receive minimum wages, indicating wage disparities in the informal sector.
- iv) **Ensuring Access to Vital Welfare Services:** Investment is needed in affordable housing, financial inclusion, health, and skilling interventions. 79 million small traders and daily wage laborers lost employment during the pandemic.

Conclusion

The report highlights the many challenges that Indian migrant workers deal with, stressing the importance of thorough policies and teamwork. Since migration plays a vital role in our economy, it's crucial to address these challenges and make sure migrant workers are taken care of for lasting and inclusive growth.

Read More: <https://www.sattva.co.in/ski/indian-migrant-workers-understanding-the-dynamics-of-migration-in-india/>

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