

Migration Facilitation Hubs: A Plan to Manage Urban Migration in India

Conceptualized and Proposed by Disha Foundation, Nasik

Migration Overview in Indian Cities

Internal migration from rural to urban areas has become an important livelihood strategy and inevitable component of rapid economic growth and development in India. Though there is no official data existing, estimate by National Commission on Rural Labour is around 10 million migrants while National Sample survey Organizations' estimate is 30 million, but various estimates based on micro-level studies (Deshingkar 2006) suggest that the figure is close to 100-120 million. (10-12 corers or roughly 10% of India's population). It is estimated that migration is going to increase in coming years.

In spite of the fact that internal migrants have contributed and are essential for the economic growth of India, they are often neglected or excluded from the various welfare schemes or health programs at destination cities during their migration period. On the contrary, they are subjected to inadequate/poor living and working conditions, minimum wages and discrimination, lack of social support, exploitation and harassment, and out of pocket expenses on health care. This increases the vulnerabilities of the migrants and leads to their poor health status, which has significant public health implications for Indian cities.

Evidences suggests that internal migration can play an important role in poverty reduction, economic and social development, hence positive facilitation of safe migration should be specially emphasized which includes access to basics public services mainly adequate housing, health, education and livelihood. Further, the high volume of migration and inter-linkages of the health needs of migrants with all Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) means that success in meeting these needs can help support the achievement of the MDGs. Hence increased emphasis is required to address the special health needs of the migrant population, which can help to improve their health indicators as well the overall experience of migration. (Borhade 2011, Usher 2005)

Administrative issues for cities while dealing with migrants/urban poor

Generally urban local bodies consider migrants as extra burden on the cities and deny providing basic amenities during their migration period. They do not have budget provisions for addressing housing and other needs of these populations. While it is fact that cities are run by migrants, they are foundations for informal economies of Indian cities. As per Supreme Court's latest order, now it is mandatory for municipal corporations to set up 24X7 shelters for urban migrants/poor's.

Problems associated with urban migration

- Housing/environmental hygiene /health
- Employment
- Education
- Identity/ security
- Food Security

The impact of migration can be both positive and negative depending on the commensurate policy measures adopted by the respective Governments. In practice, it is observed that internal migration is not matched with corresponding policy measures and requires more coordinated efforts on the part of policy-makers to ensure the well being of the vulnerable internal migrants (Zimmerman 2011). The community and region is not realizing the full potential of

internal migration in the backdrop of inadequate understanding of the process, trends, determinants, impacts, structural, institutional and policy barriers, discriminatory attitude and social exclusion of internal migrants.

To ensure full utilization of the potential of internal migration in equitable economic and social development with positive health consequences for migrants in particular and society in general, the protectionist approach (Deshingkar 2006, Hu 2008) usually adopted by India needs to be replaced by migrant inclusive and inter-sectoral policies to avoid further worsening of already marginalized and vulnerable situation of the internal migrants.

About Migration Facilitation Hubs

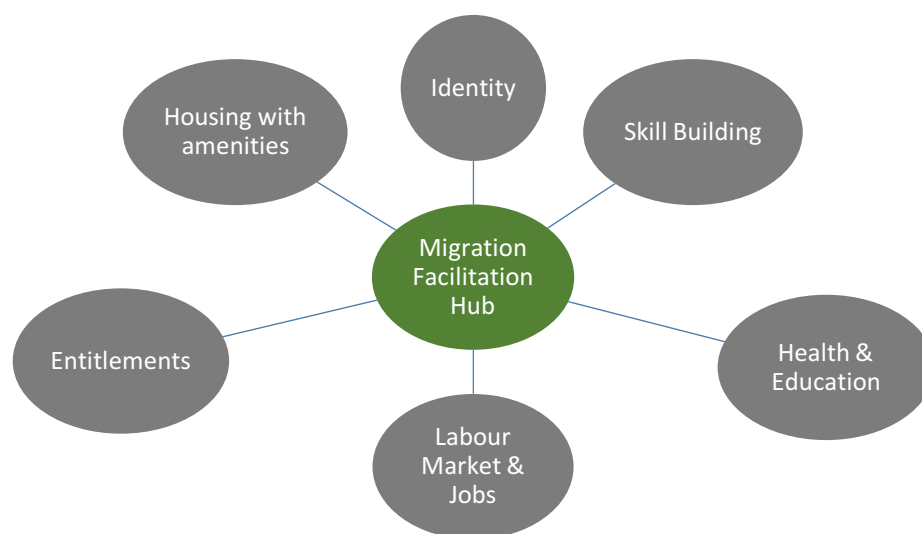
With reference to recent order of Supreme Court, Disha proposes to set up migration facilitation hubs for migrants in cities with all basic amenities. These hubs will be temporary or transit residential areas for urban migrants. They will also provide other key services to migrants such as livelihood skill building trainings, facilitation for job linkages, health services, education for children, food security, financial inclusion and other need based assistance. User charges will be applied for these services. This will be convergence-based model engaging various government agencies such as local Municipal Corporation, urban development, Health, education, public distribution, and banking sector (Figure 1).

Outcomes of Proposed Hubs: Potential Solutions for Problems Associated with Urban Migration

Key outcomes of these hubs will be-

- Formalization of informal habitats of migrants
- Organized and designated housing for migrants
- Controlled environmental hygiene in cities
- One stop shop for various development activities such as identity, skill building and jobs linkages, health, education etc for urban migrants
- Check on criminal behaviors
- Organized labour markets that suits needs of various urban industries

Figure 1. Proposed Migration Facilitation Hubs – a vision



These planned hubs will help to overcome burning problem of urban housing, encroachment on private/government/ municipal corporation's land, environmental sanitation, and criminal behavior in Indian cities. Added value would be organized labour markets of skilled workers for different industries in the cities and co-ordination for job linkages with these industries; hence unemployment will be controlled to larger extent in cities.

These hubs have potential to provide systematic approach to manage urban labour migration, which will be win-win situation for all - to the migrants, cities and the administrations. Such hubs must become important feature of upcoming smart cities in India

Building Evidence: A Pilot in Nasik

Disha Foundation has been advocating with Nasik Municipal Corporation (NMC) and other local government authorities to set up such kind of hubs in Nasik city. Recently NMC has agreed to set up 6 such shelters and Migration Facilitation Hubs. Disha would be technical agency to support NMC for implementation of these hubs. Tribal Development Department is also on board, as majority of migrants are tribal's in the city. The project will provide temporary shelter to migrants with all basic amenities; proper identification and registration would be done before the admission. There would some user charges for their stay, and other services provided at the hub (revenue model yet to be developed and decided).

Besides stay, these hubs will offer need based/market driven skill building, job linkages services. It has potential to provide systematic approach to manage urban labour migration, which will be beneficial to migrants as well to the city and the administration.

Plans for scale-up

This pilot in Nasik city would be implemented in next 1-year period. Disha plans to upscale this model simultaneously in other states mainly Jharkhand, Haryana (Gurgaon), and Maharashtra (Pune and Thane)