

## **Aging and the International Migration Governance The Indian Scenario**

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### **Abstract**

Aging poses a more formidable challenge than one can imagine. The aging population has already exerted significant impacts on the social, political, and economic landscapes of numerous countries and regions. International migration has both direct and indirect connections with the aging population, making it imperative to incorporate it into migration governance. The global population of people aged 65 and above was recorded at 703 million by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in 2020. Projections indicate that this figure will double to 1.5 billion by 2050. Globally, the proportion of the population aged 65 or older increased from 6 per cent in 1990 to 9 per cent in 2019. Against this background, the present study intends to: (i) provide a broad perspective on aging and how it impacts the international migration, (ii) the challenges and opportunities unfolding for India at present and for future, considering its demographic position, and iii) the policy challenges arising from independent female migrants to various sectors and countries. This study is based on secondary sources such as data from UN as well as various official reports and studies. The study concludes that migration is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by a myriad of factors, including economic conditions, supply of and demand for labour, migration policies, climate change, and technology among others. It also cautions about heightened importance of demographic considerations in the coming decades.

**Keywords:** Aging, Migration, Governance, Global North and Global South

### **1.0 Introduction**

Global demographic trends and international migration are closely correlated and linked to human mobility (De Haas 2010). The recent global scenario reflects a significant demographic shift, moving from high birth and death rates to lower rates in many regions across the world. This transition is expected to impact the character, composition and direction of migration in both Global North and Global South. Broadly, Global North represents the industrially

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developed countries which are high in capital but low in labour; while Global South represents the industrially under developed or developing countries which are low in capital but surplus in labour. For instance, Japan's population is expected to decrease from 127 million in 2015 to 88 million by 2065. The primary causes of this population decline are attributed to low fertility rates and an aging population (World Economic Forum 2022; also see Think Tank, European Parliament, n.d.). On the other hand, India's population is projected to reach 1.64 billion by 2050 (Asia Media Centre 2022). The report also mentions that India's population stood at 1.42 billion in 2023 and is projected to reach 1.5 billion by 2030 (ibid.). This surge in India's population exerts pressure on migration dynamics, as the population increase is linked with challenges related to resource scarcity, job availability, and many other challenges. Of course, there are possibly some opportunities, if they are measured rightly.

The present study engages in issues relating to migration and associated factors. It is based on secondary sources such as data from UN as well as various official reports. The primary objective of this study is to (i) provide a broad perspective on aging and how it impacts the international migration, (ii) the challenges and opportunities unfolding for India at present and for future, considering its demographic position, and (iii) the policy challenges arising from independent female migrants to various sectors and countries.

## **1.1 Phenomena Crucial to International Migration**

Let's examine important phenomena that are very closely interrelated while discussing international migration, i.e., aging and global fertility, at a macro level; how they impact the Global North and Global South; and what the issue of or need for migration governance is.

### ***1.1.1 Aging***

The increase in life expectancy is leading to an aging population in many parts of the world (Howse 2006). This phenomenon is not limited to developed regions; but it is also evident in the developing regions across the globe. Consequently, the number of working-age population is decreasing while the number of dependent populations requiring care is increasing in these countries. To bridge the gap between the working-age population and the dependent population, these countries often have to rely on immigrants (Cangiano 2014).

Taking Europe as an example, studies have projected the demographic and economic consequences of various migration scenarios for the European Union. They have noted that population aging results in a decline in the labour force in European countries. The labour shortage issue apparently needs to be addressed through a significant increase in immigration in European nations (Bloom et al. 2001).

Europe's population is aging rapidly due to a decline in the fertility rate on one hand and an increase in life expectancy on the other. This aging population leads to a decrease in the working-age population and an increase in the old-age dependents. The combination of aging and fertility obviously poses more significant challenges for the future of migration governance.

Studies on migration have examined the demographic factors driving international migration in Asia. In addition to aging, fertility and mortality rates also affect demographic pattern. It reported that the overall population growth in Asia, a change associated with

mortality and fertility rates, has slowed down (Gu et al. 2021). It has been observed that the Asian region is undergoing a demographic transition, moving from high fertility and mortality rates to low fertility and mortality rates. However, this transition is not uniform across all parts of Asia. Some countries, such as China and Japan, are experiencing population decline, while countries like India are still reporting rapid population growth (United Nations 2019).

### ***1.1.2 Fertility***

The global decline in fertility rates from 4.9 in 1960 to 2.4 in 2019, as documented by the World Bank (2022), reflects a complex interplay of factors including increased female workforce participation, higher education levels, economic considerations such as the rising cost of raising children, and advances in reproductive health technologies. Additionally, cultural shifts in attitudes towards family size and environmental concerns over sustainability and resource depletion also play significant roles. This multifaceted phenomenon has profound implications, influencing everything from demographic trends to economic structures and societal norms, necessitating adaptive strategies to address the evolving challenges and opportunities it presents.

On the positive side, declining fertility rates have been linked to enhanced gender equality and the ability for parents to invest more in their children's health and education, leading to potentially more prosperous and healthier future generations. However, these benefits come with their own set of challenges, particularly the issue of an aging population paired with a diminishing workforce. This demographic change not only strains the labour market but also increases the proportion of dependents, escalating the demand for healthcare services. Consequently, countries may find themselves relying more on immigration to sustain their labour force and support the burgeoning needs of an older population, highlighting the need for comprehensive strategies to balance these demographic shifts.

## **1.2 Global North and Global South**

The current trend in demographic shifts, particularly the aging population in both OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries and across the globe, is leading to a reconfiguration of labour market dynamics. As the projections indicate that by 2050, more than a quarter of the population in OECD countries will be over 65 years of age, compared to the current 15 per cent (OECD 2012). Furthermore, the EU and American populations in the age group of 15-64 are expected to decline. This significant demographic shift is likely to have an impact on the labour market in these nations over the coming decades. An aging population will necessitate increased reliance on foreign-born workers. It appears that in the near future, there will be a growing demand for both skilled and unskilled labour to address the shortages in the workforce. Developing countries will provide skilled workers to fill gaps in sectors such as IT and healthcare, while unskilled workers from these countries will play a crucial role in household tasks.

It appears that not only the Global North but also the Global South are poised to be affected by an aging population. A rapidly aging population is expected to result in a high demand for labour to bridge the gap in the working-age population in Asian countries. Japan, for instance, has nearly 28 per cent of its population aged above 65. (United Nations 2019). Similarly, other countries such as South Korea and Singapore may also struggle with the challenge of an aging population. South Korea's population is projected to age rapidly

(Ramstad & Stephen 2019), and by 2030, individuals above 65 years of age would make up nearly 25 per cent of Singapore's population, as opposed to 14.4 per cent in 2019 (Asian Development Bank 2021).

The rapidly aging population may shrink the workforce and initiate labour migration from countries with a surplus of labour to those with a demand for workers. Importantly, many developing nations, such as India, may be able to bridge the gap by providing both skilled and unskilled workers. Indian migrants could help fill the void in sectors experiencing a labour shortage due to an aging population there. It seems that labour-intensive industries such as healthcare, elder care, agriculture, manufacturing, and construction may require a significant workforce to address the labour shortage.

On a positive side, migration can yield significant socio-cultural and economic benefits for both sending and receiving countries. The movement of people is not isolated; instead, it is accompanied by their culture, beliefs, language, and traditions. Migration can result in the diffusion of culture and society, fostering exchanges between different cultures and traditions. Emigration also impacts the economic, demographic, and cultural aspects of sending societies. The outflow of migration diminishes the labour supply and productivity of the sending country. However, this can work positively for a population surplus country by reducing unemployment, contributing to national income, supporting families through remittances, networking, and investing in infrastructure development. Furthermore, it fosters the exchange of ideas and enhances socio-cultural changes.

### **1.3 Female migration**

In the current scenario, women are increasingly migrating to secure employment rather than assuming the role of a dependent family member. (Ruis-Alvarado 2022). This trend is a consequence of several factors, with a notable one being the rising demand for female labour. In fact, millions of women from developing and underdeveloped countries are now seeking employment as caregivers. According to global estimates, female migration accounted for nearly 135 million individuals or 48.1 per cent of international migration in 2020. Interestingly, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) reported that there were approximately 66.6 million female international migrant workers in 2013, making up 44.3 per cent of the total (Migration Data Portal n.d.).

It appears that the process of globalisation has fostered a new lifestyle, offering lucrative employment opportunities and enticing more people to aspire for a decent career and an improved standard of living (Bhattacharya 2005). This trend has also seemed to encourage the migration of individuals from developing regions to developed ones in search of employment, education, healthcare, and a better lifestyle. Furthermore, a notable repercussion of globalisation is the widespread adoption of neoliberal policies by numerous countries. These policies have played a crucial role in facilitating large-scale privatisation, especially in the Global South, as documented by Leopold and McDonald (2012). Neoliberalism, emphasising market freedom and minimal state intervention, has initiated an extensive wave of privatisation across these regions. Such economic restructuring, purportedly aimed at fostering economic growth and efficiency, has been associated with profound social and economic ramifications. Empirical research has shed light on the significant shifts in social structure attributable to the implementation of neo-liberal policies (King & Sznajder 2006; Kotz & McDonough 2010; and Leopold & McDonald 2012). One of the most concerning outcomes of these policies is the exacerbation of wealth disparities. As

neo-liberalism champions deregulation, privatisation, and a reduction in government spending on social services, it inadvertently widens the gap between the rich and the impoverished. This growing disparity undermines social unity and exacerbates economic inequalities. Moreover, the neoliberal agenda has inadvertently facilitated the expansion of the informal economy. Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson (2016) highlight how this expansion has opened opportunities for women to participate in the workforce.

Frequently, women from developing countries migrate as workers to support their families (Zlotnik 1995). The expectation of earning higher income, often driven by economic pressures, compels women from these countries to seek employment opportunities abroad.

In the contemporary context, women are often perceived as primary migrants rather than mere companions. Data from the 1960s typically suggested that there were fewer female migrants compared to males (Ruis-Alvarado 2022). However, the 2013 report “World Migration in Figures” by UN-DESA revealed that the proportion of female migrants ranged from 52 per cent in the Global North to 43 per cent in the Global South (United Nations 2013). The 2020 UN migration report indicated an increasing and “gender-specific” demand for migrant workers, highlighting a significant rise in the number of female migrants. According to the report, female migrants now constitute 48 per cent of all international migrants. It’s important to note that the flow of female migration varies considerably depending on geographical location, sector, and demand. Some sectors, such as care giving, hospitality, and teaching, exhibit a higher demand for female workers. In general, women from developing countries tend to migrate for roles in care giving or domestic work (Madhumathi 2013). Major sender countries include India, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

The demand of and supply for both men and women differ in the global economy. Men often work in jobs that need a lot of skill, while women are more likely to be in less skilled jobs, including care giving roles (World Economic Forum 2023).

On one end of the spectrum, men are often found in the technology sector, while on the other end, women tend to cluster around roles in the emotional and care giving sectors, such as nursing, housekeeping, and domestic work. Additionally, teaching is another significant sector where the concentration of female workers is higher.

### ***1.3.1 Occupation and Vulnerability of migrating women***

Women who migrate as labourers typically find employment in limited occupations. Among these, one of the most prominent is domestic work. This sector attracts a significant number of female migrant workers from low-income countries. The increasing demand for domestic helpers, especially from developing nations, contributes to the growth of this sector (Sassen 2002). The availability of labour from underdeveloped or developing countries plays a pivotal role in its expansion. Low skill levels and limited educational criteria are also noteworthy, as they are prevalent among women engaged in this sector, who primarily hail from low-income countries.

#### ***1.3.1.1 Domestic sector***

Domestic work is a type of employment that typically offers an easy entry point into the labour market. Both men and women are recruited as domestic workers without

discrimination (Tomei 2011). However, according to the IOM report, there are approximately 67 million domestic workers worldwide, with 80 per cent being women and 11.5 million being migrant workers (Tayah 2016). In this line of work, migrant workers provide essential services to their employers, indirectly benefiting the host country. (ibid.). This sector appears to offer accessible employment opportunities to women with lower skills and education levels, enabling them to earn income and contribute to their families. The remittances they send back home also contribute to the development of their regions (World Bank 2023).

The money they send back home helps their family members invest in children's education and family members' healthcare. Many times, their earnings are used to pay off debts. In addition to the financial remittances, the social remittances of working women serve as motivation for other women in their homes and communities (Curran & Saguy 2001). The ideas they share with other women in their homes and communities can have a positive impact. Moreover, the skills and knowledge they acquire while working outside may lead to changes in their attitudes and self-management.

The plight of domestic workers often goes unnoticed. As previously discussed, the hidden nature of their work renders them susceptible to exploitation (Murphy 2013). Existing literature indicates that only a minuscule percentage of domestic workers fall under the protection of general labour laws, leaving the majority entirely devoid of such safeguards. A primary contributing factor to this exclusion is the lack of awareness among these workers, stemming from their limited access to education and information about their rights. Additionally, the literature highlights the discrimination faced by migrant domestic workers (Cherubini et al. 2018). Furthermore, policies restricting the movement of people can sometimes impede opportunities for female migrant workers.

The vulnerability is also generally linked to the opportunities that people have to migrate freely from one destination to another. Despite the freedom of movement, many individuals find themselves ensnared by fake recruiting agents and exposed to trafficking. Low levels of education and knowledge often compel many female migrants to accept low-paying jobs (Awumbila et al. 2008).

The vulnerability of women migrant domestic workers is also associated with the precarious recruitment process, which involves applying for a passport, obtaining a visa, submitting a contract, and paying the associated fees. Unfortunately, many women migrants fail to thoroughly review these agreements and end up being exploited. In the Gulf region, numerous countries adhere to the "Kafala System", where either individuals or companies hold sponsorship permits to employ foreign labour. This system grants legal status to private citizens rather than the state (Qadri 2020). Critics have likened this system to modern slavery, arguing that it is exploitative. Under such a system, women are more vulnerable to exploitation than men, often staying at the sponsor's house for extended periods and being at a higher risk of sexual exploitation (Armstrong et al. 2006).

Indeed, changes in language, social, and cultural differences isolate many migrant workers. The absence of a mechanism for advocacy protection makes these workers more vulnerable. Their isolation hinders their access to accurate information. The invisibility of their work exposes these workers to additional vulnerabilities. This invisibility leads to violations of their human and labour rights. Moreover, the absence of labour law coverage denies them fundamental rights (Manseau, 2007), such as minimum wages, sick and annual leave, the right to organise and form a union, and the right to change jobs or resign. Migrant

workers living in their employer's households are often denied fixed working hours (Kapiszewski 2017). In many cases, these workers do not receive overtime pay for their extra work (Armstrong et al. 2006). Apart from the domestic service sector, a large number of migrant women engage in various other service sectors.

### *1.3.1.2 Service Sector*

The primary drivers compelling women to engage in the service sector revolve around the escalating demand for female care workers from developed nations (Razavi & Staab 2010). While both women and men participate in the service sector, women predominantly secure employment within the care services sphere. Health and care workers acquire essential professionalism skills, which not only bolster their confidence but also open doors to continuous learning. This expansion of expertise broadens their prospects for employment, both on a national and international scale. Within the ambit of care services, women often find themselves offering home-based personal services or working as nurses in healthcare facilities. In the realm of home-based care, their responsibilities extend to tending to the needs of children, especially those with special requirements, elderly individuals, individuals with disabilities, and those afflicted by illness. Hospitals, conversely, predominantly employ migrant women workers to undertake nursing duties and provide assistance. The initial category of care work bears resemblances to domestic labour, with the key distinction being that individuals in care roles are exclusively tasked with catering to the specific categories of individuals mentioned above.

Care work often provides employment opportunities for migrant women, such as domestic work. These job opportunities enable migrant women to earn an income. The earnings they send back home are crucial for meeting the essential needs of their family members. However, migrant workers constitute a vulnerable group. As discussed in the section on domestic work, care workers also encounter many similar challenges. They may fall prey to fraudulent recruiting agents, often forced to pay additional fees to secure job opportunities abroad. Although care workers are typically hired in accordance with their country's regulations, they are often recruited through private agencies or informal channels to work in households.

The vulnerability of healthcare workers has been a subject of significant concern in recent research (Rogers 1997). This vulnerability is closely tied to their skill levels, with variations observed among care providers. While some women excel in nursing work, others may not possess the same level of proficiency. This study examines how the devaluation of skills, underpayment, and exploitation of healthcare workers, particularly migrant workers, occur within the context of private households. When skilled healthcare workers are denied opportunities to practise their trade, they often resort to working in private households. Unfortunately, this shift in employment can result in the devaluation of their skills and lower remuneration compared to their capabilities. Conversely, unqualified individuals, who lack the ability to interpret contracts or possess nursing expertise, sometimes, find employment as care workers in private residences. Consequently, these discrepancies in skill levels further contribute to the vulnerability of the workforce. Numerous studies have shed light on the substandard working conditions endured by migrant care workers, who are frequently exposed to verbal and physical violence (Rosenfeld 2021). Such instances often arise due to their inability to fulfil professional tasks efficiently. To compensate for their employment, employers often subject them to harsher conditions and demand overtime work. Regrettably, the contributions of these workers often go unrecognised, exacerbating their vulnerability

within the care sector. Migrant care workers are often deprived of social security benefits, leaving them economically vulnerable. Despite facing exploitation, many refrain from filing complaints (ibid.). This reluctance to voice concerns is prevalent among low-educated migrant workers who lack the resources to advocate for their rights. Additionally, the absence of adequate legal support in host countries further hampers their access to justice. In certain countries, the "Kafala system" places migrant workers at the mercy of their sponsors (Shihada 2016). Studies have highlighted the dependence of these workers on their sponsors for various forms of support, which further underscores their vulnerability. Moreover, those not employed in private households endure extensive overtime work with minimal or no leave entitlements. High turnover rates within the care sector are a direct consequence of these conditions, driven by an ample supply of labour, which depresses wages. The lack of diplomatic presence in host countries presents a major obstacle to protecting the rights of migrant workers (Henderson 2020). This deficiency often leads to insufficient cooperation between foreign missions and a failure to adequately safeguard the welfare of these workers. The vulnerability of healthcare workers, especially migrant care workers, is a multifaceted issue influenced by disparities in skills, working conditions, and legal protections. Addressing these challenges necessitates comprehensive measures to ensure the dignity and rights of all care workers in the healthcare sector.

#### **1.4 International Migration and the Indian Scenario**

In the current scenario, international migration is on the rise. Several factors contribute to this increased mobility among people. On the positive side, one can attribute this trend to the influence of globalisation, the widespread use of modern technology, and the evolving national, international, multilateral, and bilateral relationships between countries. However, on the negative side, one must acknowledge the surge in conflicts and the impact of climate change. According to the United Nations (2020), the number of international migrants worldwide reached 281 million in 2020, a significant increase from the 221 million recorded in 2010.

The majority of international migrations receiving countries are high-income countries. The United States alone hosts over 50 million migrants, followed by Germany, Saudi Arabia, Russia, and the United Kingdom. The increase in the aging population and the dependent population can be seen as one of the reasons for the large-scale migration toward developed countries. The shortage of labour is filled by immigrants. Nonetheless, migration patterns are becoming increasingly diverse, with South-South migration now nearly as common as South-North flows (Bakewell 2009). There could be many reasons for this trend, including the diverse demographic transition in which several Asian countries are reported to be experiencing a decrease in population and an increase in their dependent population. Climate change is another factor that intensifies the flow of migration, particularly of a large chunk population who are displaced by natural disasters, droughts, and rising sea levels.

India boasts a substantial diaspora population worldwide, a number that continues to grow. According to data from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), there were more than 32 million non-resident Indians (NRIs) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) across the globe. Notably, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, and Saudi Arabia hosted the largest numbers, with approximately 3.5 million, 2.7 million, and 2.5 million, respectively (Ministry of External Affairs 2021). Several factors drive the outward migration from India. These factors include rapid economic development, which has led to increased employment



opportunities, as well as globalisation and the global market's demand for skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers from developing countries such as India.

The out-migration flow from India can be traced back to British rule, when a large number of people were forced to migrate to work in plantations and other sectors by the British (Solomon 2022). Importantly, the recent migration flow from India is not restricted solely to labour or limited to a specific sector, country or gender. The dynamics of female migration from India have undergone significant transformations, reflecting broader socio-economic trends and policy shifts. According to Chanda and Gupta (2018), there has been a notable increase in the participation of female migrants in the global labour market, with the stock of Indian female migrants experiencing a substantial rise over the years. This trend is corroborated by data indicating that the number of international Indian migrants has more than doubled in the past 25 years, growing at a pace that outstrips the expansion of the world's total migrant population (Pande 2022). Specifically, the total stock of Indian emigrants is estimated to be 13,885.1 thousand, representing 1.1 per cent of India's total population (*ibid.*). This increase in migration is particularly significant given that it includes a nearly constant percentage of female migrants, which stood at 48.8 per cent by 2019 (*ibid.*).

The policy landscape surrounding the migration of Indian women has evolved in response to these trends, aiming to safeguard the rights and well-being of female migrants. The Emigration Act of 1983 outlines specific requirements for Emigration Check Required (ECR) category passport holders, including valid documentation and adherence to employment contracts attested by the Indian Embassy (Potnuru 2015). Furthermore, in a bid to protect young women from potential exploitation and abuse, the Government of India imposed restrictions on the emigration of women below 30 years of age to 17 ECR countries for economic reasons since 2009 (*ibid.*). Additionally, employers are mandated to deposit a security amount to ensure the protection and contractual fulfilment for the female migrant workers, illustrating the government's proactive stance on mitigating the risks associated with economic migration (*ibid.*). These policy measures reflect a comprehensive approach to addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by the feminisation of migration, underscoring India's commitment to the welfare of its migrant population abroad.

Indeed, the outflow of migrants from India is visible across all sectors and on all continents. Skilled migration is reported to occur mainly in developed countries, while unskilled and semi-skilled migration is reported to occur in the Gulf and other developing countries (Khadria 2004). Migration of females needs urgent policy attention, especially in the context of India, as a growing number of independent emigrants, such as students, professionals, care workers, etc., are going to various destination countries and have enumerable challenges such as human trafficking, workplace challenges, socio-cultural challenges, etc.

### **1.5 Challenges and Policy Concern**

At first glance, it appears that the labour shortage resulting from an aging workforce can potentially be addressed through the employment of migrant workers. This situation has the potential to benefit both the sending and host countries. However, the process of individuals moving from one region to another is far from straightforward and is fraught with vulnerabilities and insecurities. The phenomenon of outmigration presents numerous challenges, impacting not only the migrants themselves but also the sending and host nations.

One of the most pressing challenges that policymakers may confront is the issue of human trafficking and labour exploitation. The issue is briefly discussed in above paragraphs. The increased demand for labourers may expose many individuals, particularly those from developing countries, such as women, the illiterate and unskilled, and children, to the risk of trafficking. Additionally, labour exploitation is a significant concern. Migrants can fall victim to middlemen who provide false documentation, deceiving them into embarking on journeys under fraudulent pretences. A lack of accurate information and, at times, adverse financial circumstances may compel many individuals, especially women, unskilled labourers, and children, to resort to illegal migration routes. The use of counterfeit documents further exacerbates their vulnerability to exploitation.

Language and cultural barriers can pose significant challenges for migrants in host countries. Key concerns include access to education for their children, healthcare services, as well as political participation and representation.

Economic and social challenges are matter of concerns. Migrants may encounter wage discrimination, leading to lower earnings when compared to local workers. Furthermore, they may experience difficulties securing promotions or salary increases. In informal sector, migrant workers might work longer hours than their native counterparts. Domestic workers, among them, may have to contend with subpar working conditions. Limited career prospects may be a result of the combination of high living costs and lower standards of living. Additionally, migrants would face social exclusion from the native population.

## **1.6 Five areas of action**

The above discussion points to the need for interventions. In this section five areas have been identified for action pertaining to international migration and this is a short blue print of migration governance.

### **1.6.1 *Newer destination countries***

Language and cultural barriers are an important area of concern, especially in non-English-speaking countries. Many non-English-speaking European countries in Europe and countries such as Japan, which have an increasing aging population, are emerging as new destination countries. The migrants are often unfamiliar with the socio-cultural milieu and legal matters in these countries. There is a need for proper pre-departure orientation for the migrants to have a safe migration.

### **1.6.2 *Independent Female Migration***

The challenges for independent female migrants are different from those for other female migrants who are going as spouses or as family members with support from their family and community. The independent female migrants that constitute students, care giver, healthcare workers, etc. estimate a significant proportion of migrants. These aspects are crucial elements in the formulation of migration governance.

### **1.6.3 *Re-skilling, Rehabilitation, and Integration***

Re-skilling, Rehabilitation, and Integration are important areas of concern for countries like India, as many migrants will always be returning home and may need up-gradation of skills

and knowledge from time to time. The technological advancement and use of AI (artificial intelligence) and robotics are taking the skill level to a new height in many sectors. Hence, creation of new skills, which will involve cost and other things, demands priority.

#### **1.6.4 *Preparedness to address emergencies***

Emergencies and other sudden occurrences having international dimension impact migration policy. Migration and emerging complexities during COVID-19 are eye openers. Migration policy needs to consider emergencies during war and conflict situations such as on-going Indo-Canada tension.

#### **1.6.5 *Robust Information Management***

This is necessary to make informed choices for migrant as well as policy. Information gap can lead to the policy failure as there are many complexities involved relating to migrants.

Considering the size, spread, diversities, and dynamics of migrants from India, it is important to have comprehensive policy measures. The future of humanity depends on sustainable migration management, and hence, a comprehensive measure such as the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) is very important.

### **1.7 Conclusion**

The global economy is entering a new era characterised by labour shortages in some regions and labour surpluses in others. This shift can be largely attributed to an aging population and declining fertility rates. Many developing countries continue to experience high birth rates and have large youthful populations. These demographics have the potential to fill the workforce gaps arising from low birth rates, particularly in developed nations. These demographic changes drive both temporary and permanent migration from countries with high birth rates to those experiencing labour shortages, both in the global north and south. India stands out as one of the largest sources of overseas workers, with emigrants dispersed across both the global north and south. A growing proportion of these migrants are women seeking opportunities in domestic work and the service sector abroad. The demand for labour in these domestic and service sectors is on the rise, especially in countries grappling with aging populations, such as the United States, the European Union, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore. However, these migrant workers often encounter numerous challenges, including exploitation, abuse, discrimination, isolation, and a lack of legal protections, despite their significant contributions. In their host countries, they may be relegated to a second-class, non-citizen status. Overseas migrant workers contend with issues such as low wages, subpar working conditions, discrimination, exploitation, and inadequate social protection. Evidently, it is crucial to promote the rights and welfare of migrant workers and to foster cooperation and dialogue among countries of origin, transit, and destination. Therefore, migration governance needs to focus on gender-sensitive and sustainable measurement. India's case is very crucial as it has simultaneous challenges of overpopulation, unemployment, and brain drain. Successful management of international migration governance is the need of the hour.

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