

Sri Lanka Country Report

*Migration
Governance
in Sri Lanka*

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE MIGRATION GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

2018



International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The UN Migration Agency

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Publisher: International Organization for Migration (IOM) – Mission to Sri Lanka and the Maldives

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This publication has not been formally edited by IOM.

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Acknowledgements

This report is the result of collective work by many individuals and organizations operating in the broader spectrum of migration, within and outside Sri Lanka, without whose assistance and support the preparation of this report would not have been possible. We take this opportunity to thank them for their valuable contributions.

In particular, we wish to express our sincere gratitude to the MoFE for its leadership and direction throughout the MGI process. Whilst participating in various meetings, including the national symposium, the ministry was supportive in providing substantive inputs for the preliminary research findings and thereafter in convening key government and non-government interlocutors who have an important stake in the country's migration governance framework.

We further acknowledge the work carried out by the team of authors and contributors from EIU in undertaking research and analysis of country-specific migration policies and practices that set the basis of this report. We would also like to thank all those who validated the initial findings, provided additional inputs and participated in the National MGI Symposium, including government officials, civil society, non-governmental organizations, research and policy institutions, academia and our partner UN agencies for their valuable contributions.

Thanks go to Mr. Shantha Kulasekara, Head of Migration Governance Unit, IOM Sri Lanka, and his team for overseeing the preparation of this report and to the EIU and IOM Headquarters, Multilateral Processes Division, for their contributions to the successful roll-out of MGI in Sri Lanka.

Abbreviations

ALFEA	Association of Licensed Foreign Employment Agencies
BLAs	Bilateral Labour Agreements
BOI	Board of Investment
CCI	Chamber of Construction Industry Sri Lanka
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
EIU	Economist Intelligence Unit
EU	European Union
GCM	Global Compact on Migration
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
GoSL	Government of Sri Lanka
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
ICRMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MCOF	Migration Crisis Operational Framework
MGI	Migration Governance Indicators
MICIC	Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative
MiGOF	Migration Governance Framework
MoFE	Ministry of Foreign Employment
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOUs	Memoranda of Understanding
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
RCPs	Regional Consultative Processes
RTI	Right to Information
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SLBFE	Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USD	United States Dollar

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Preface

Commissioned by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) - the UN Migration Agency, in collaboration with the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) - the research arm of The Economist Group and publisher of *The Economist*, the Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) was developed and launched in 2016. The MGI provides a consolidated framework to evaluate country-specific migration governance structures and act as a potential source to inform implementation of migration-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The MGI aims to support governments to identify gaps and good practices in the field of migration, thereby assisting countries to prioritize areas of intervention when building institutional capacity, developing new policies and programmes. The first phase of the MGI was conducted in 15 pilot countries in 2016. Phase two of the MGI was rolled out in 2017 covering 14 countries.

At the request of the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE), under the purview of the Ministry of Foreign Employment (MoFE), Sri Lanka was included in the MGI phase two. Subsequently, following a desk review of the country's migration governance framework, the EIU gathered data by conducting interviews with government officials on six policy domains identified as building blocks for effective migration governance as articulated in the IOM's Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF). These six domains are: 1) Adhering to international standards and fulfillment of migrants' rights, 2) Formulating policy using evidence and a "whole of government" approach, 3) Engaging with partners to address migration and related issues, 4) Advancing socio-economic well-being of migrants and society, 5) Effectively addressing the mobility dimensions of crises and 6) Ensuring that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner.

Preliminary research findings were discussed at a national symposium convened by the MoFE in collaboration with IOM on 12 December 2017 in Colombo. The symposium brought together key migration stakeholders from government, non-government and civil society organizations (CSOs), with the objective to initiate a national multi-stakeholder dialogue to advance discussions around migration governance in Sri Lanka.

In May 2018 the IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre published the Migration Governance Snapshot for Sri Lanka on the Migration Data Portal¹. This report follows the publication of the MGI country snapshot. This report provides a more detailed analysis of the strengths, challenges and gaps of the migration governance of Sri Lanka and presents possible priority areas for follow up as discussed at the national symposium.

It is hoped that this report will serve as the foundation to strengthen the migration governance framework in Sri Lanka through sustained dialogue on migration and development and act as a key source for informing and reporting on the progressive implementation of migration-related SDGs.

¹ <https://migrationdataportal.org/snapshots/mgi/sri-lanka#0>

Executive Summary

This report is structured in two main sections: 1) Research findings and stakeholders' inputs; and 2) Way forward. Research findings are presented for each of the six domains of the country's migration governance as articulated in IOM's MiGOF and evaluated by the EIU during the MGI process. The findings under each domain are complemented by a summary of the feedback provided by stakeholders attending the National MGI Symposium on 12 December 2017, in Colombo. Detailed justification for scoring applicable to Sri Lanka is included in Annex 2.

The section on "Way forward" follows the presentation of the MGI assessment and stems from IOM's analysis of current and future migration trends in Sri Lanka, as presented during the National MGI Symposium. This section attempts to identify priority areas for Sri Lanka and follow up mechanisms that may be adopted to improve its migration governance framework.

An overview of well-developed areas and areas with potential for further development under each domain as assessed by the MGI and included in the MGI country snapshot² is presented as follows:

Domain 1: Adhering to international standards and fulfillment of migrants' rights

Well-developed areas

Sri Lanka's National Migration Health Policy stipulates the importance of access to essential preventive and public health services for all immigrants, irrespective of their status or country of origin. Immigrant children and youth, including refugees and asylum-seekers, also have the right to attend primary and secondary education regardless of their legal status in the country. There are no restrictions on immigrants for working in the private sector provided they hold valid work visas. Furthermore, immigrants have equal access to social security schemes such as the Employee Provident Fund and the Employee Trust Fund, and Sri Lanka has social security portability agreements with some OECD countries and the Republic of Korea. Immigrants applying visas through the Resident Guest Scheme are eligible to apply for citizenship under specific circumstances. Sri Lanka ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1993, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in 1996, and the UN Trafficking Protocol in 2015.

Areas with potential for further development

Voting rights in Sri Lanka are reserved solely for Sri Lankan citizens. The election commission of Sri Lanka explicitly states that citizenship is one of the basic qualifications required to vote in both national and municipal elections. At the same time, Sri Lankan nationals are not able to exercise their voting rights overseas. There are no visas offered by Sri Lanka specifically for family reunification, but dependent visas are available for family members of residence visa holders. There is no pathway for immigrants to obtain permanent residency. Immigrants can extend their residence permits for a limited period, and renew these permits multiple times depending on the visa category. The Public Service Commission states that non-citizens of Sri Lanka are not eligible for public service employment, although this does not apply if non-citizens serve in an advisory capacity as consultants. Refugees and asylum-seekers are not permitted to work in Sri Lanka, as the country is not party to the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

² <https://migrationdataportal.org/snapshots/mgi/sri-lanka#0>

Domain 2: Formulating policy using evidence and “whole of government” approach

Well-developed areas

The responsibility for implementing migration policies is shared among several government ministries. The Department of Immigration and Emigration under the Ministry of Internal Affairs is responsible for managing the movement of people to and from the country, including the issuance of visas and travel documents. The Ministry of Foreign Employment implements labour emigration policies and coordinates its work with, among others, the Sri Lankan Overseas Missions under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for the provision of consular protection and assistance services to Sri Lankan migrant workers. Sri Lanka has several inter-ministerial coordination bodies that deal with different migration issues, and in doing so, enhance horizontal policy coherence and reduce overlapping efforts. These coordination bodies include the National Border Management Committee, the National Advisory Committee on Labour Migration, the National Steering Committee on Return and Re-integration for Labour Migrants, the National Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force, the National Coordination Committee on Readmission and the Programme Advisory Committee on Safe Labour Migration. To enhance vertical policy coherence, the Ministry of Public Administration and relevant ministries operate with decentralized administrative structures on various migration issues. The National Labour Migration Policy is the official policy framework that guides emigration for Sri Lankans’ employment in other countries and associated processes. The Policy includes strategies to harness the benefits of labour migration with a view to accelerating development in the country while protecting migrant workers’ rights and well-being. A legislative framework is in place to regulate the foreign employment of Sri Lankans under the authority of a dedicated statutory body, the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, and the overall direction of the Foreign Employment Minister. The Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment publishes annual statistics on nationals who are employed abroad. Migration data are also produced by the Department of Census and Statistics through the Census of Population and Housing, which includes questions on the population living abroad temporarily by country of origin, age and sex, as well as the non-national population in Sri Lanka by country of birth, age and sex. The Department of Immigration and Emigration keeps a record of entries, transits and exits of Sri Lankan nationals and non-nationals.

Areas with potential for further development

Sri Lanka’s overarching national development strategy (“Vision 2025”) addresses limited aspects of migration, and thus does not fully recognize the developmental impact that migration may have on the country’s economy and society. There is no one Government entity in Sri Lanka responsible for designing and enacting emigration and immigration policies. The country has not yet adopted dedicated legislation to comprehensively regulate the employment of immigrants, which could help the Government meet the reported growing labour shortfalls in certain occupations. Regularly published migration data are limited to the results of the Census of Population and Housing.

Domain 3: Engaging with partners to address migration and related issues

Well-developed areas

Sri Lanka participates in Regional Consultative Processes such as the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, of which it is currently Chair-in-Office, and the Colombo Process, of which it was Chair until early 2017. The broad purpose of the former is to enhance bilateral and regional cooperation on temporary contract employment. Within the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, among other initiatives, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Sri Lanka are currently negotiating a pilot project which would systematize the certification of acquired skills and up-grade training for Sri Lankan workers’ in the construction industry. One of the key objectives of the Colombo Process is to optimize development benefits from organized overseas

employment and to enhance dialogue with countries of destination. Within this Process, Sri Lanka currently chairs the Thematic Working Group on Skills Qualification and Recognition. Sri Lanka is also an active member of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime. Sri Lanka has entered into multiple formal and semi-formal agreements with countries of destination for the benefit of its migrant workers. For example, formal bilateral agreements with Italy and Qatar, and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) signed with the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates, Libya, Jordan and Bahrain all aim to better regulate the recruitment processes and procedures for migrant workers in these countries of destination. Another MOU between Sri Lanka and Australia aims to prevent and combat the smuggling of migrants. Sri Lanka collaborates with civil society in agenda-setting and the implementation of migration-related issues. For example, its national multi-stakeholder consultations on a Global Compact on Migration included migration partners from non-governmental organizations, civil society, trade unions, academia and media. The country engages with the private sector on migration issues. The Association of Private Recruitment Agents represents the private sector on the board of directors of Sri Lanka's Bureau of Foreign Employment. The National Advisory Committee on Labour Migration and the National Steering Committee on Return and Re-integration for Labour Migration also formally include the private and social sectors.

Areas with potential for further development

The country has not signed nor ratified the UN Smuggling Protocol, Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons nor the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. Moreover, it has not ratified the ILO Migration for Employment Convention (1949) nor the ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention (1975). In addition, Sri Lanka is not part of any regional agreement promoting labour mobility.

Domain 4: Advancing the socio-economic well-being of migrants and society

Well-developed areas

Sri Lanka's Bureau of Foreign Employment has developed measures to promote the ethical recruitment of its nationals at the pre-departure stage. These measures include publishing the Code of Ethical Conduct for Licensed Foreign Employment Recruitment Agencies and the Operational Manual for Labour Sections of Sri Lankan Diplomatic Missions in Destination Countries, which covers handling migrant workers' grievances and repatriation procedures. The Government of Sri Lanka is actively involved in the promotion of formal remittance schemes. Incentives to use formal remittance transfer channels have been introduced including through foreign currency-denominated special savings accounts and exemptions on custom duties on goods brought into the country. International students have access to post-secondary education in Sri Lanka, although there are quotas for government institutions. Foreign education qualifications are recognized for some degrees by the Sri Lanka Ministry of Higher Education. Foreign professional qualifications are recognized for some professions by relevant industry bodies.

Areas with potential for further development

There are no systematic attempts to measure the effects of emigration on the domestic labour market. There is no clearly defined programme for managing labour migration into or out of Sri Lanka based on domestic labour market needs. A reported shortage of labour in some sectors, such as construction, is now prompting the Government to consider recruiting migrant workers in these sectors. However, there is no process in place to verify and validate foreign migrant workers' job-specific skills and competencies at the time of issuing employment visas. International students in Sri Lanka are not permitted to work during their studies and there are no formal schemes or incentive

mechanisms to absorb international students into the national workforce on completion of studies. The average cost of transferring remittances to Sri Lanka from major destination countries is around five per cent, which is relatively high.

Domain 5: Effectively addressing the mobility dimensions of crises

Well-developed areas

Sri Lanka has a National Disaster Management Plan in place with specific provisions to address the displacement impacts of disasters. The Government is currently developing a strategy for the relocation of people from high-risk, disaster-prone areas. Sri Lanka's Department of Meteorology and the Disaster Management Centre have information dissemination systems that provide information on the risk of floods, landslides and tsunamis. Humanitarian assistance is provided to all, irrespective of the status of migrants. Sri Lanka's National Policy on Durable Solutions for Conflict-Affected Displacement recognizes the right to protection from displacement and sets clear principles and parameters to assess whether durable solutions for Internally Displaced People are achieved. The National Labour Migration Policy includes a provision for the return and reintegration of Sri Lankan migrants in the aftermath of crises in other countries. Furthermore, the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment Act ensures the protection of assets of Sri Lankan migrants abroad through diplomatic missions.

Areas with potential for further development

The Government does not have a strategy with specific measures to provide assistance to immigrants in the event of an emergency. For example, Sri Lanka's current crisis communication system operates mainly in the national languages, Sinhala and Tamil. Sri Lanka does not maintain a database of all its nationals living abroad, which would help facilitate emergency assistance, including evacuations and repatriations in the event of crises. To date, there has been no empirical research into the extent to which internal migration or emigration is the result of natural disasters, reoccurring adverse weather conditions or climate change.

Domain 6: Ensuring that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner

Well-developed areas

Sri Lanka has developed mechanisms to encourage the return of nationals who have emigrated for foreign employment. For example, emigrants who return to Sri Lanka are eligible for low-cost bank loans. The Ministry of Foreign Employment's Sub Policy and National Action Plan on Return and Reintegration of Migrant Workers includes strategies for the social and economic reintegration of returnees. The country's Department of Immigration and Emigration allows foreign nationals to apply for tourist, business or transit visas online, while applications for other types of visas are paper-based. The Department of Immigration and Emigration manages the entry and exit of people at ports of entry. The Immigration Border Control System records every entry and departure electronically, enabling the identification of visa overstays. Moreover, border control staff are regularly trained in a variety of disciplines, such as international migration law, forgery detection, anti-human trafficking and smuggling, and identity management. These activities are undertaken by the Department of Immigration and Emigration in collaboration with other stakeholders. The newly established National Border Management Committee, under the Ministry of Defence, coordinates border control functions and relevant operations of other agencies, and has recently drafted and approved Sri Lanka's Integrated Border Management Strategy. Sri Lanka has criminalized trafficking in persons and is implementing a five-year national action plan to prevent and combat human trafficking through its

National Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force. Sri Lanka improved its position from “Tier 2 watch list” in 2016 to “Tier 2” in 2017 in the United States’ State Department’s Trafficking in Persons Report.

Areas with potential for further development

Intergovernmental coordination in the work against human trafficking could be enhanced to prevent exploitative labour practices during the entire migration cycle, and particularly during the foreign employment recruitment process. There is a general need to increase publicly available and up-to-date information on legal migration processes and government-funded services available to immigrants and emigrants to promote the safe and orderly migration.

1. Research Findings and Stakeholders' Feedback

Research findings are presented through the analytical framework used by the EIU to gather data for and evaluate each of the six domains of the MGI. Findings or scoring under each domain are highlighted in red in the table below and are complemented by a summary of feedback provided by stakeholders in attendance at the National MGI Symposium on 12 December 2017 in Colombo. Detailed justification for scoring applicable to Sri Lanka is included as Annex 2 to this report.

1.1 Domain 1: Adhering to international standards and fulfilment of migrants' rights

This domain assessed Sri Lanka's migration governance structure to ensure access to basic social services for migrants, family rights, right to work, long-term residency and paths to citizenship.

1.1.1 Research findings for Domain 1

	Domain	Sub-Domain	Question	Findings/Scoring
01	Access to basic social services and social security	Access to healthcare	Do all migrants have the same status as citizens in accessing government-funded health services?	-Yes, to all services regardless of their legal status -Yes, to all services depending on their legal status -Yes, to emergency health care services only -No
02	Access to basic social services and social security	Access to education	Do all migrants have the same status as citizens in accessing government-funded education?	-Yes, to all three levels of education -Yes, to two out of three levels of education -Yes, to less than two out of three levels of education -No access to any levels of education
03	Access to basic social services and social security	Access to social security	What categories of migrants have equal access to social security?	-All of them -Long-term residents and residents on family reunion permits and/or certain categories of residents on temporary work permits -Only long-term residents -None
04	Access to basic social services and social security	Access to social security	Does the government have agreements with other countries on portability of social security?	-Yes -No -Somewhat
05	Family rights	Family reunification	Family reunification is possible for (please consider the status of the migrant already living in the country)	-All types of migrants -Some types of migrants -Not regulated by migrant type
06	Right to work	Immediate access to labour market	What categories of foreign residents have equal access to employment as nationals? 1. Permanent residents 2. Residents on temporary permits (excluding seasonal) within a period of ≤ 1 year 3. Residents on family reunion permits (same as sponsor)	-All of them -Permanent residents and residents on family reunion permits or certain categories of residents on temporary permits -Only permanent residents -None

07	Right to work	Access to the private sector	Are foreign residents able to accept any private sector employment under the same conditions as nationals?	<p>-Yes, there are no additional restrictions beyond those based on the type of permit mentioned above in immediate access to labour market</p> <p>-No, other limiting conditions apply to foreign residents</p> <p>-No, certain sectors and activities are solely for nationals</p>
08	Right to work	Access to the public sector	Are foreign residents able to accept any public-sector employment under the same conditions as nationals (excluding exercise of public authority—e.g. police, defence, heads of units or divisions—but not excluding civil servants and permanent staff)?	<p>-Yes, the only restriction concerns exercise of public authority and safeguarding general State interests</p> <p>-No, there are other restrictions (please specify)</p> <p>-No, only for nationals</p>
09	Right to work	Immediate access to self-employment	<p>What categories of foreign residents have equal access to self-employment as nationals?</p> <p>1. Permanent residents</p> <p>2. Residents on temporary permits (excluding seasonal permits) within a period of ≤ 1 year</p> <p>3. Residents on family reunion permits (same as sponsor)</p>	<p>-All of them</p> <p>-Permanent residents and residents on family reunion permits or certain categories of residents on temporary permits</p> <p>-Only permanent residents</p> <p>-None</p>
10	Right to work	Access to self-employment	Are foreign residents able to take up self-employed activities under the same conditions as nationals?	<p>-Yes, there are no additional restrictions beyond those based on the type of permit mentioned above in immediate access to labour market</p> <p>-No, other limiting conditions apply to foreign residents (please specify)</p> <p>-No, certain sectors and activities are solely for nationals (please specify)</p>
11	Long-term residency and path to citizenship	Permanent residency access	Are temporary legal residents entitled to apply for an indefinite residence permit?	<p>-Yes</p> <p>-No</p> <p>-Partially</p>
12	Long-term residency and path to citizenship	Access to nationality	After how many years can migrants become nationals?	<p>-0-5 years</p> <p>-5-10 years</p> <p>-More than 10 years</p> <p>-There is no path to citizenship</p>
13	Civil participation	National-level elections	Can non-national foreign residents vote in national elections?	<p>-Yes: All of them</p> <p>-Yes: Permanent residents and residents on family reunion permits or certain categories of residents on temporary permits</p> <p>-Yes: Only permanent residents</p> <p>-No</p>

1.1.2 Summary of Stakeholders' feedback for Domain 1

- Sri Lanka has traditionally been a country of origin for migrant workers, hence rights of immigrants have not been a strong focus. This needs to be taken into consideration when analyzing the migration structures in place in Sri Lanka with regards to inward migration.
- Promoting and protecting the human rights of all migrants is a shared and collective responsibility of countries of origin, transit and destination.
- A large number of skilled and unskilled migrant workers leaving Sri Lanka eventually return home. In response, a comprehensive policy framework to address the needs and rights of migrant workers through the entire migration cycle, including return and reintegration, is needed.
- Migration trends and patterns are rapidly changing in Sri Lanka. Domestic policies must be revised through a holistic approach with due consideration to current migration patterns and strategic thinking in relation to potential migration scenarios.

1.2 Domain 2: Formulating policy using evidence and “whole of government” approach

This domain assessed Sri Lanka’s institutional frameworks, existence of migration strategies, presence of inward and outward migration governance legislation and data availability and transparency.

1.2.1 Research findings for Domain 2

	Domain	Sub-Domain	Question	Findings/Scoring
14	Civil participation	Local-level elections	Can non-national foreign residents vote in municipal elections where they legally reside?	-Yes: All of them -Yes: Permanent residents and residents on family reunion permits or certain categories of residents on temporary permits -Yes: Only permanent residents -No
15	Institutional framework	Institutional structure	Is there at least one dedicated government entity responsible for designing an overall migration policy	-Yes -No -Partially
16	Institutional framework	Institutional structure	Is there an inter-ministerial coordination mechanism on migration in place?	-Yes -No -Partially
17	Institutional framework	Operational structure for inward migration	Is there a dedicated government entity or agency responsible for enacting inward migration policy (e.g. a border agency)?	-Yes -No -Partially
18	Institutional framework	Operational structure for outward migration	Is there a dedicated government entity or agency responsible for enacting outward migration policy and diaspora (e.g. a “citizens abroad” agency or overseas employment agencies)?	-Yes -No -Partially

19	Institutional framework	Diaspora engagement	Does the country have an institution or body tasked with coordinating efforts to engage with its diaspora population?	-Yes -No -Partially
20	Migration strategy	National migration strategy	Is there a national migration strategy defined in a programmatic document or manifesto?	-Yes -No -Partially
21	Migration strategy	Strategy interconnectedness	Is this strategy aligned with national development strategies?	-Yes -No -Partially
22	Legal framework	Policy establishment: inward migration	Is there national migration legislation regulating inward migration?	-Yes -No -Partially
23	Legal framework	Policy establishment: framework sophistication	Are there encompassing provisions regulating migrant groups according to reason for migration or migrant characteristics such as age and gender?	-Some -None
24	Legal framework	Policy establishment: outward migration	Is there specific national legislation regarding outward migration?	-Yes -No
25	Legal framework	Policy establishment: outward migration	Are there institutions to assist nationals residing abroad (embassies or consulates, labour attachés, ministries/offices of diaspora)?	-In 100+ countries -In 100<x<50 countries -In 50- countries
26	Institutional transparency and coherence	Transparency	Does the country have a clear and transparent set of rules and regulations pertaining to migration (e.g. available, easy to consult, easy to understand)?	-Yes -No -Partially
27	Institutional transparency and coherence	Coherence	Is the country making efforts to enhance horizontal policy coherence (e.g. through inter-ministerial co-ordination bodies)	-Yes -No -Partially
28	Institutional transparency and coherence	Coherence	Is the country making efforts to enhance vertical policy coherence (e.g. through regular consultations with decentralized levels of governance)	-Yes -No -Partially
29	Data gathering and information availability	Migration data	Does the country collect and publish data on a regular basis (e.g. on a quarterly or annual basis) on migration? (outside the census)	-Yes -No -Partially
30	Data gathering and information availability	Migration data	Are there questions on migration in the national census?	-Yes -No -Partially

1.2.2 Summary of Stakeholders' feedback for Domain 2

- Lack of cooperation and coherence among stakeholders engaged in the migration sector in relation to data collection and analysis exercises are key issues that need to be addressed in Sri Lanka.
- Sri Lanka has a well-developed legal framework with regards to foreign employment of Sri Lankan nationals and this should be duly taken into account when analyzing the overall migration policy and legal framework of the country.
- Diaspora engagement is an area that needs to be improved in the Sri Lankan context. The heterogeneous nature of the Sri Lankan diaspora must be factored in the policy framework to encourage more meaningful and long-term diaspora engagement. A dedicated GoSL entity needs to be established to engage with the diaspora.
- Addressing the importance of return migration could enable the country to meet increasing demands for a skilled, youthful workforce.
- Participation of local government bodies is necessary to ensure vertical policy coherence, and thus link national/international with the local/community level.
- Ongoing revisions to the National Labour Migration Policy will be reflected in subsequent MGI assessments.
- The public has limited or no access to information about bilateral agreements signed by Sri Lanka with other countries. Information dissemination in this regard needs to be strengthened.

1.3 Domain 3: Engaging with partners to address migration and related issues

This domain assessed the regional and international dimensions of migration through an analysis of international conventions, treaties and laws, regional consultative processes and bilateral agreements.

1.3.1 Research findings for Domain 3

	Domain	Sub-Domain	Question	Findings/Scoring
31	Signature and ratification of international conventions	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW)	Is the country a signatory to the ICRMW?	-Yes -No
32	Signature and ratification of international conventions	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW)	Has the country ratified the ICRMW?	-Yes -No
33	Signature and ratification of international conventions	Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees	Is the country a signatory to the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees?	-Yes -No
34	Signature and ratification of international conventions	Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees	Has the country ratified the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees?	-Yes -No

35	Signature and ratification of international conventions	Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	Is the country a signatory to the CRC? If yes, when?	-Yes -No
36	Signature and ratification of international conventions	Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	Has the country ratified the CRC? If yes, when?	-Yes -No
37	Signature and ratification of international conventions	ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)	Has the country ratified the revised ILO Migration for Employment Convention? If yes, when?	-Yes -No
38	Signature and ratification of international conventions	ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)	Has the country ratified the Supplementary Provisions of the ILO Migrant Workers Convention?	-Yes -No
39	Signature and ratification of international conventions	Conventions on Statelessness	Has the country ratified the conventions on Statelessness?	-Yes -No
40	Regional co-operation	Regional consultative processes (RCPs)	Is the country part of any official RCPs?	-Yes -No
41	Regional co-operation	Regional consultative processes (RCPs)	Are there any reported instances of formal intra-regional mobility that have been achieved as a result?	-Yes -No -Partially
42	Bilateral agreements	Formal bilateral agreements	Does the country have any formal bilateral agreements with other sending/receiving countries?	-Yes -No
43	Bilateral agreements	Semi-formal bilateral agreements	Does the country have MOUs with other sending or receiving countries?	-Yes -No
44	Bilateral agreements	Bilateral migration consultation	Does the country participate in bilateral migration negotiations, discussions or consultations with corresponding sending or receiving countries?	-Yes -No
45	Global cooperation	Participation in the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)	Is the country a participant in the GFMD?	-Yes -No -Observer

46	Global cooperation	Country's degree of participation and engagement in IOM or UNHCR governing bodies (including chairing and membership of bureau)	Is the country represented in IOM/UNHCR governing bodies?	-Yes -No -Observer
47	Other partnerships	Partnerships with CSOs	Does the country formally engage CSOs in agenda-setting and implementation of migration-related issues (e.g. working groups)?	-Yes -No -Partially
48	Other partnerships	Partnerships with the private sector/social partners	Does the country formally engage with the private sector/social partners in agenda setting and implementation of migration-related issues?	-Yes -No -Partially
49	Other partnerships	Partnership with diaspora	Does the country formally engage members of diaspora and expatriate communities in agenda setting and implementation of development policy?	-Yes -No -Partially
50	Other partnerships	Regional agreements/economic communities that promote labour mobility	Is the country part of a regional agreement promoting labour mobility (e.g. the EU)?	-Yes -No -Partially

1.3.2 Summary of Stakeholders' feedback for Domain 3

- According to the Right to Information Act, the public shall have access to information regarding bi-lateral agreements between the GoSL and other States. Moreover, enhancing the participation of the public and private sector in government discussions pertaining bilateral agreements should be a priority.
- If bilateral agreements cannot be made accessible to the public, a strategy must be developed to provide at least a summary/key points of such agreements to the wider public. This is already the case in some countries (e.g. Bangladesh and Nepal).

1.4 Domain 4: Advancing the socio-economic well-being of migrants and society

This domain assessed Sri Lanka's policies for managing labour migration, skills and qualification recognition schemes, student migration regulations, bilateral labour agreements and remittance schemes.

1.4.1 Research findings for Domain 4

	Domain	Sub-Domain	Question	Finding/Scoring
51	Labour migration management	Labour demand and supply monitoring	Is there a national assessment for monitoring labour market demand for inward migrants (e.g. shortage occupation lists)?	-Yes -No -Partially
52	Labour migration management	Labour demand and supply monitoring	Is there a national assessment for monitoring the domestic labour supply and the effects of outward migrants on the domestic labour market?	-Yes -No -Partially
53	Labour migration management	Labour demand management	Is there an existing, defined programme for managing labour migration (i.e. adjusting visa awards based on labour market demand) into the country?	-Yes -No -Partially
54	Labour migration management	Labour demand management	Does the country have different types of visas to attract specific labour skills?	-Yes -No -Partially
55	Skills and qualifications on recognition schemes	Recognition of qualifications	Does the country account for labour migrants' skills and capabilities when deciding whether to admit them?	-Yes -No -Partially
56	Skills and qualifications on recognition schemes	Recognition of qualifications	Does the country have formalized criteria (accreditation) for recognizing foreign qualifications (degrees, skills and competencies)?	-For most professions -For some professions -No -Other (explain)
57	Skills and qualifications on recognition schemes	Recognition of qualifications	Does the country participate in international schemes with common qualification frameworks (e.g. the European Qualifications Framework)?	-Yes -No -Partially
58	Student migration regulations	Access to education	Does the country allow international students to access education?	-Yes -No -Partially
59	Student migration regulations	Equal opportunities for education	Does the country allow equal access to education for foreign students (e.g. fees, access to specific courses, etc.)?	-Yes -No -Partially
60	Student migration regulations	Equal opportunities for education	Does the country enforce quotas for the number of foreign students it can accept, based on the capacity of the labour market to absorb them?	-Yes -No -There are quotas, but they are not based on labour market demand

61	Student migration regulations	Access to labour	Does the country have a scheme for allowing international students to work in the country after graduation?	-Yes -No -Partially
62	Student migration regulations	Opportunities to work while studying	Are there provisions that allow students to work during the course of study?	-Yes -No -Partially
63	Bilateral labour agreements	Bilateral labour agreements	Does the country have any formal bilateral labour agreements (BLAs) in place?	-Yes -No
64	Bilateral labour agreements	Decent working conditions for migrant workers	Has the receiving country developed measures that promote ethical recruitment for migrants?	-Yes -No -Partially
65	Bilateral labour agreements	Decent working conditions for migrant workers	Has the country of origin developed mechanisms to protect the rights of its nationals working abroad?	-Yes -No -Partially
66	Migrant remittances	Remittance schemes	Is the government actively involved in promoting the creation of formal remittance schemes (e.g. G20 Plan to Facilitate Remittance Flows)?	-Yes -No -Partially
67	Migrant remittances	Remittance transfer costs	What is the average cost of transferring remittances to or from the country?	-Less than 3% -Between 3% and 7% -More than 7%

1.4.2 Summary of Stakeholders' feedback for Domain 4

- As Sri Lanka is traditionally a country of origin, some policy structures for inward migration considered under this domain may not be relevant in the Sri Lankan context, although inward migration is increasing.
- Access to health services is a valuable indicator to determine migrants' well-being in any country at pre-departure (i.e. health assessments), at destination (i.e. migrants covered by host country's health services) and upon return (i.e. migrant reintegration plan to include health services).
- Although bilateral agreements may be in place, they are sometimes not implemented nor functional.
- Focus should be placed both on changing trends (i.e. inbound migrant workers) and on traditional dimensions of Sri Lankan migratory patterns (i.e. outbound migrant workers).
- Sri Lanka has high-quality welfare programmes for outbound migrants and their dependents. Such policy tools should be further assessed.
- Socio-economic well-being of internal migrants should be prioritized in the future to provide a more comprehensive snapshot of State capacities on overall migration governance.

1.5 Domain 5: Effectively addressing the mobility dimensions of crises

Under this domain, the mobility dimensions of crises are assessed through an analysis of crisis preparedness and resilience policies, emergency response and post-crisis action.

1.5.1 Research findings for Domain 5

	Domain	Sub-Domain	Question	Finding/Scoring
68	Integration of a mobility dimension into national crisis prevention, preparedness and resilience plan	Crisis prevention and preparedness	The government has a strategy with specific measures on providing assistance to migrants in countries experiencing a crisis situation in the crisis and post-crisis phases?	-Yes -No -Partially
69	Integration of a mobility dimension into national crisis prevention, preparedness and resilience plan	Crisis prevention and preparedness	The government has a national Disaster Risk Reduction strategy with specific provisions for addressing the displacement impacts of disasters?	-Yes -No -Partially
70	Integration of a mobility dimension into national crisis prevention, preparedness and resilience plan	Crisis prevention and preparedness	The country has strategies in place for addressing migratory movements caused by the adverse effects of climate change (e.g., planned re-location)?	-Yes -No -Partially
71	Integration of a mobility dimension into national crisis prevention, preparedness and resilience plan	Crisis prevention and preparedness	The country has a contingency plan in place to manage large-scale population movements in times of crisis?	-Yes -No -Partially
72	Integration of a mobility dimension into national crisis prevention, preparedness and resilience plan	Consular assistance	Does the country keep records of nationals living abroad (countries of origin) or migrants in the country (destination countries)?	-Yes -No -Partially
73	Integration of a mobility dimension into national crisis prevention, preparedness and resilience plan	Consular assistance	Does the government have measures in place to assist nationals living abroad in times of crises (such as consular assistance)?	-Yes -No -Partially
74	Emergency response	Information dissemination	There are communication systems in place to receive information on the evolving nature of a crisis, to communicate their needs and on ways to access assistance?	-Yes -No -Partially
75	Emergency response	Information dissemination	Do these systems take into consideration the specific vulnerabilities migrants face (e.g., through information in multiple languages, information on visa and return processes, or information targeted at specific media channels)?	-Yes -No -Partially
76	Emergency response	Humanitarian assistance to all migrants irrespective of legal status	Is the humanitarian assistance provided by the country equally accessible to all, irrespective of legal status of migrants?	-Yes -No -Partially

77	Emergency response	Provisions to relax immigration procedures in times of crisis	The country has measures to make exceptions on the immigration procedures for migrants whose country of origin is experiencing a crisis?	-Yes -No -Partially
78	Emergency response	Displacement addressed in national development strategy	Does the national development strategy have measures regarding displacement (e.g., provisions on refugees or IDPs, or reintegration of returning migrants)?	-Yes -No -Partially
79	Post-crisis action	Post-crisis recovery strategy	Are migration issues included in recovery strategies and development planning?	-Yes -No -Partially
80	Post-crisis action	Post-crisis recovery strategy	Does migration policy (in the host country) in the aftermath of a crisis accommodate the return of migrants that have fled during the crisis (e.g., protection of assets and entitlements)?	-Yes -No -Partially

1.5.2 Summary of Stakeholders' feedback for Domain 5

- Assessing IDPs' access to humanitarian aid and collecting data on internal displacement in general needs greater attention.
- The GoSL's contingency plans for dealing with global financial crises (which may affect labour quota in countries of destination) need to be highlighted as an area of interest in this domain, especially in the Sri Lankan context, where migratory patterns and remittances influence the economic dimension of migration.
- Different levels of vulnerability among 'internal migrants' in Sri Lanka need to be identified to effectively address policy challenges which are unique to each group (i.e. conflict IDPs, disaster-displaced people, internal migrants, trafficked persons).

1.6 Domain 6: Ensuring that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner

This domain assessed Sri Lanka's border control, enforcement practices and measures to combat human trafficking and smuggling, and re-integration policies.

1.6.1 Research findings for Domain 6

	Domain	Sub-Domain	Question	Finding/Scoring
81	Border control and enforcement	Border monitoring	Does the country have a system to monitor visa overstays?	-Yes -No -Partially
82	Border control and enforcement	Border security	Is there a dedicated body tasked with integrated border control and security?	-Yes -No -Partially
83	Border control and enforcement	Border control staffing	Are border staff specifically and regularly trained (specific training as well as languages and cultural aspects)?	-Yes -No -Partially
84	Admission and eligibility criteria	Visa policy clarity	Does the government have a website clearly outlining visa options?	-Yes -No -Partially

85	Admission and eligibility criteria	Visa processing efficiency	Is there a formal system for applying for specific visa types prior to arrival?	-Yes, a fully online process - Yes, a mixed online and paper system -Yes, a paper-based process -Partially -No, visas can only be obtained on arrival
86	Return and reintegration policies	Reintegration policies for returning nationals	Is there a formal governmental programme or dedicated policy focused on attracting nationals who migrated from the country of origin (e.g. tax breaks)?	- Yes -No -Partially
87	Return and reintegration policies	Return and reintegration policies in host countries for migrants wishing to return	Is there a formal governmental programme that focuses on facilitating migrant reintegration in the home country?	- Yes -No -Partially
88	Measures to combat human trafficking and smuggling	National strategy to combat human trafficking	Does the country have an agency or strategy to combat human trafficking?	- Yes -No
89	Measures to combat human trafficking and smuggling	National strategy to combat human trafficking	Does the country regularly (e.g. on a quarterly or annual basis) publish information about its counter-trafficking activities?	-Yes -No - Partially
90	Measures to combat human trafficking and smuggling	National strategy to combat human trafficking	How does the country fare on the US State Department's annual Trafficking in Persons Report?	1 2 3

1.6.2 Summary of Stakeholders' feedback for Domain 6

- Outbound migrants' security must be captured in this domain to accurately assess safe and orderly migratory practices.
- Access to information on regular services available upon return must be enhanced to help people make informed decisions about migration.
- Internal migratory patterns and associated human security risks must be further analyzed to help GoSL in the long-run to adopt more evidence-based policies.
- Assessing the gender dimensions of current migration policy tools is necessary to understand their effectiveness.
- Policy coherence with regard to migration management issues identified in this domain should be a priority for GoSL in moving forward.

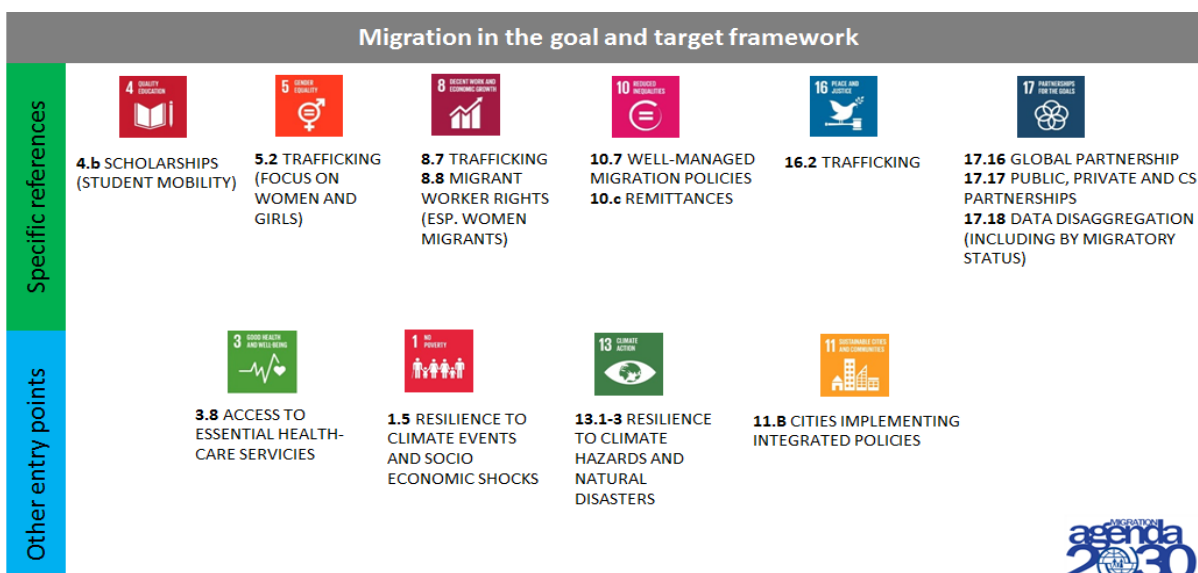
2. Way Forward

This section focuses on the areas of the migration governance framework of Sri Lanka that need to be further developed. These have been identified according to the MGI assessment and in light of IOM’s analysis of current and projected migration trends in Sri Lanka, as presented and discussed at the National MGI Symposium.

One of the MGI’s aims is to serve as a capacity-building tool by offering insights into existing good practices as well as areas where countries can strengthen migration governance. Furthermore, nations can make progress in migration-related SDGs by using the MGI for follow-up and review activities and to develop baseline assessments.

More specifically, SDG target 10.7 calls on governments to facilitate orderly, safe and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies. SDG indicator 10.7.2 refers to the “number of countries that have implemented well-managed migration policies”. The methodology for this indicator is currently being piloted and will be rolled out in the fall of 2018. The MGI can be used as a tool for governments to identify and use nationally relevant ‘proxy’ indicators³ that will help qualify and quantify what “well-managed migration policies” mean in specific country contexts. Migration also plays a key role in a variety of other SDGs and targets, including those concerning health (Goal 3), gender equality (Goal 5), labour migration and employment (Goal 8), reducing inequality (Goal 10), climate change (Goal 13), peaceful and inclusive societies (Goal 16) and global partnership (Goal 17). The SDGs clearly act as an engine for development, however, their potential will be limited without an appropriate migration governance structure. Hence, it is equally important to develop dedicated tools to measure progress.

Reflection of Migration in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



³ “Proxy indicators provide a solution to overcome data gaps on a certain common context indicator. In some cases, these data gaps may be only temporary whilst a data collection system is established or a required monitoring programme implemented.”- European Union, Defining Proxy Indicators for Rural Development Programmes, 2016

2.1 Potential Priority Areas in Sri Lanka

Five potential priority areas, with examples of proxy indicators⁴, were presented and discussed at the National MGI Symposium as follows: 1) Inward Migration, 2) Outward Migration, 3) Border Control, 4) Migration Crises, and 5) Migration Data.

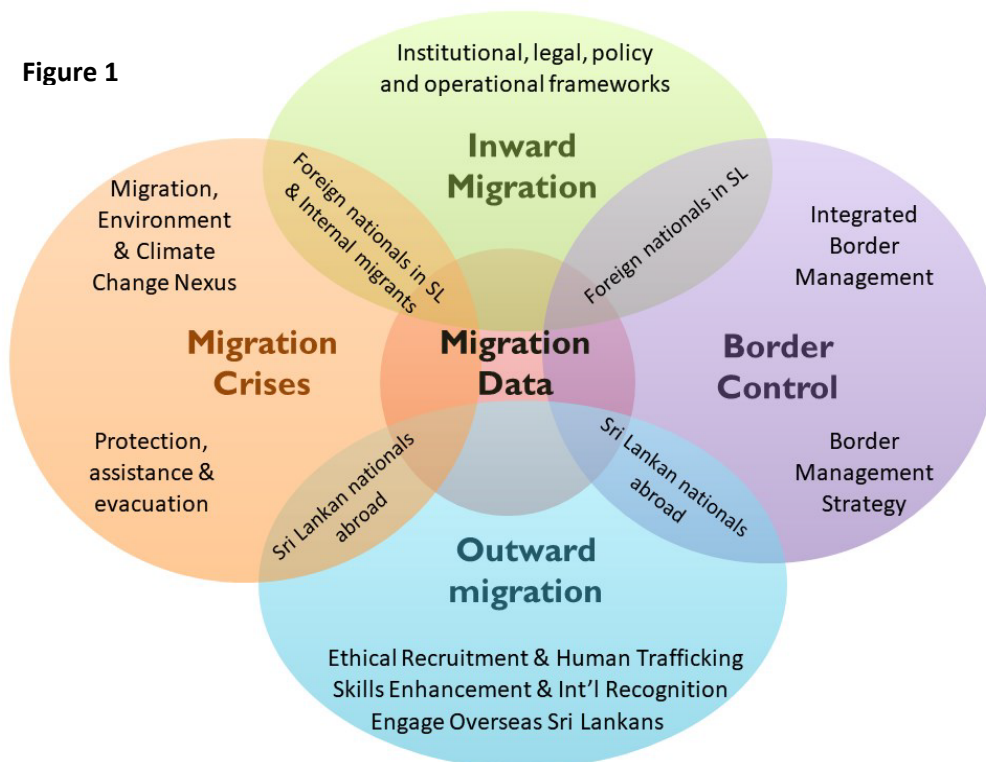


Figure 1 illustrates the interconnectedness of these five priority areas and lists key aspects or initiatives for further engagement with and among relevant stakeholders.

2.1.1 Inward Migration

Data released by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) Population Division⁵, IOM and other statistical agencies, show how international migration has grown rapidly in recent years. International migration is increasingly considered an integral part of the economic growth of developing countries, many of which are emerging as large recipients of international migrants. However, similar to the developed countries, developing countries are also faced with challenges with regards to integration of immigrants, job competition between migrants and national workers, and fiscal costs associated with provision of social services to migrants.⁶

Moving away from being solely an emigration country, in recent times Sri Lanka has experienced an inward migration trend. The influx of foreign migrant workers into the country is mainly due to labour shortages within the country, especially in relation to unskilled labour.⁷

⁴ Samples presented at the MGI Symposium to generate discussions

⁵<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/populationfacts/docs/MigrationPopFacts20154.pdf>

⁶ http://siteresources.worldbank.org/TOPICS/Resources/214970-1288877981391/Migration&Development-Ratha-GFMD_2010a.pdf

⁷<http://www.sundaytimes.lk/180311/business-times/peculiarities-of-labour-shortage-in-sri-lanka-285426.html>

Sri Lanka is currently expanding in the sectors of tourism, trade and investment. The construction industry is also witnessing a rapid expansion due to large infrastructure projects and this trend is expected to grow in the next decade.

As per estimates obtained from the Chamber of Construction Industry Sri Lanka (CCI), the total estimated private and public-sector construction workload up to 2020 is approximately USD 45 billion with a workforce requirement of approximately 1,000,000⁸ workers. According to the Department of Census and Statistics, the current construction workforce amounts to 600,000, which translates into a 400,000 shortfall if the estimate proves correct. The GoSL recently approved a pilot project for employment of foreign construction workers from neighboring countries.

During the National MGI Symposium, there was consensus that steps should be taken to strengthen and develop inward labour migration policies in Sri Lanka. It was noted that while the 2008 National Labour Migration Policy does not have specific provisions for inward migration, the ongoing revision process of this policy could promote the quality of life and protection of migrant workers.

Examples of Proxy Indicators for Inward Labour Migration

- Policies developed and enacted to regulate arrival, stay and departure of foreign workers in the country (yes/no)
- Institutions appointed to monitor policy implementation around the foreign workforce in the country (yes/no)
- # of schemes initiated to facilitate the utilization of foreign workers in the country
- % foreign workforce filing grievances encountered at each stage of their migration process
- % success rate in investigating and adjudicating abuse/dispute cases

2.1.2 Outward Migration

Migration continues to play a key role in the economic development of Sri Lanka. In the 1970s with the increase in oil prices in the Middle East, formal labour migration from Sri Lanka started to be a trend.⁹ Since then, the Middle East has continued to maintain its position as a major market for Sri Lankan labour resulting in a substantial drop in Sri Lanka's unemployment rate and large inflows of remittances.

With the Sri Lankan economy relying on foreign employment, a major portion of income in terms of foreign exchange is obtained from migrant workers, reportedly used to finance the country's trade deficit.¹⁰ Remittances in Sri Lanka averaged USD 497.24 million from 2009 until 2018, reaching an all-time high of USD 729.35 million in January 2018 and a record low of USD 241.34 million in February 2009, according to the Central Bank of Sri Lanka.¹¹

Official government data¹² shows that in 2015, labour migration decreased by 12.4% compared to 2014, while there was an increase in departures through private sources by 18.2% and a fall in recruitment by licensed foreign employment agencies by 33.9%. Female labour migration decreased to 34% in 2015, while male labour migration increased rapidly. This inversion can be attributed to a number of factors including: a) the SLBFE's decision to increase the minimum age limit for women

⁸ CCI, December 2017

⁹ http://www.ips.lk/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/migration_foreign_ips.pdf

¹⁰ <http://www.ft.lk/front-page/Worker-remittances-suffer-sharpest-monthly-drop/44-641824>

¹¹ <http://www.dailymirror.lk/article/Importance-of-remittance-to-Sri-Lanka-and-its-future-in-digital-world-126985.html>

¹² <http://www.slbfe.lk/file.php?FID=253>

migrating for domestic work, b) upgrading training for female domestic workers to level 3 of the National Vocational Qualification and making this qualification compulsory for women migrating to Saudi Arabia for domestic work and c) the introduction of a mandatory requirement for potential women migrant workers to submit a family background report.

In recent years, the GoSL has encouraged migration of more skilled migrants as opposed to domestic and unskilled ones. High levels of vulnerability among low-skilled workers compared to skilled workers and professionals' subjects them to human rights violations, including breaches of labour rights, harassment and abuse at the work place. The flow of workers' remittances is also expected to slow down, given the increased availability of domestic employment opportunities and policy measures to discourage migration in the semi-skilled and unskilled categories.

Furthermore, according to the 2017 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report¹³, Sri Lanka is a primary source and, to a lesser extent, a destination country for human trafficking. It was reported that some Sri Lankan migrant workers in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Afghanistan employed in the construction and garment industries were subjected to forced labour. These migrant workers got into debt because of the recruitment fees imposed by recruitment agencies got trapped by a debt bondage. It was further emphasized that Sri Lankan women were mostly subjected to forced prostitution in the Maldives, Malaysia and Singapore. Hence, there is a need to promote responsible recruitment and to counteract human trafficking and forced labour. Policies also need to be revised to invest in skills needed within the country as well as in global labour markets.

To slow down the large-scale brain drain experienced over the last four decades by Sri Lanka, effective policies and programmes should be introduced to tap the human resource capital of overseas Sri Lankans, including the diaspora, in order to foster a knowledge-based economy.

Examples of Proxy Indicators for Outward Migration

- % increase in trafficking cases detected/prosecuted
- # trafficking victims assisted and/or repatriated
- % compliance by recruitment agencies with approved conduct & ethics code
- Evidence of migrant workers' skills enhanced and internationally recognized by job sector (i.e. % increase vs set baseline)
- Incentives scheme in place to attract global Sri Lankans for the contribution of the national human resource base (yes/no)
- % out of the total migrant population, who exercise their franchise out-of-country

2.1.3 Border Management

At a time when Sri Lanka is experiencing an increased cross-border movement of people and goods as a result of rapidly rising trade and tourism, a revitalized economy, and increased economic and cultural ties with other countries, effective border management can greatly assist GoSL in achieving the twin objectives of maintaining national security and fostering economic development.

Central to border management is upholding and enhancing national security. To this end, all migration and trade should be ideally conducted using intelligence-driven and risk-based principles. This would assist in assessing and quickly clearing the majority of people and goods, while expending resources on people and goods that pose a risk or require interception, such as those: a) involved in terrorism

¹³ <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2017/271284.htm>

and transnational crime, including smuggling harmful drugs and narcotics, contraband (gold, electronics and pharmaceuticals) and people smuggling and trafficking, b) presenting a hazard to public health, c) bringing goods that present biosecurity risks and d) bringing plant matter that presents a quarantine risk.

Agencies with border functions need to work in a collaborative and cooperative manner to provide the most efficient service and assist tourists, companies importing/exporting goods and industry partners (airlines, ships, fishing companies). Sri Lanka will continue to foster relationships with international partners and organizations to cooperate on border security, intelligence and risks for assessing the suitability of people entering Sri Lanka and to monitor and combat human trafficking and terrorist networks operating in the region.

Efficient and effective border management not only contributes to secure borders, but also facilitates the smooth movement of people and goods across borders as well as increases regional/international trade and transits - a key prerequisite for economic growth and poverty reduction. This includes streamlining movement of people and goods, while also considering security impacts. Development challenges are complex, and collaborative and coordinated approaches along with the introduction of enhanced technologies are required to ensure sustainable growth. Agencies involved in border processes are required to review their policies and practices that impact on migration and trade for alignment with efficient, secure and client-focused services. These include, but are not limited to, health, biosecurity, fisheries and labour.

It is necessary for border-related agencies to review international conventions and decide on their applicability in the Sri Lankan context. Where Sri Lanka is a signatory to a particular convention concerning border management, legislation and policies will adopt the international standard unless exceptions are noted and alternative conventions adopted. Maintaining relationships with international partners, particularly those in South Asia, can be beneficial for sharing information on international conventions, including the practicalities of implementing standards and guidelines, liaising with international organizations and coordinating training in international conventions.

Examples of Proxy Indicators for Border Management

- % increase in illegal entry/stay detection rates
- Migration intelligence data is shared between and among all concerned agencies (yes/no)
- # provisions updated in the Immigration & Emigration Act in line with international best practices
- % increase in international acceptance of Sri Lanka travel documents
- Border management strategy in place (yes/no)

2.1.4 Migration Crises

‘Migration crisis’ is a term that describes the complex and often large-scale migration flows and mobility patterns caused by a crisis, which typically involve significant vulnerabilities for individuals and affected communities and generate acute and longer-term migration management challenges. A migration crisis may be sudden or slow in onset, can have natural or man-made causes, and can take place internally or across borders.¹⁴

¹⁴ IOM Migration Crisis Operational Framework, IOM Council, 15 November 2012

Governments are encouraged to improve and systematize their preparedness and responses to migration crises by bringing together different sectors of assistance under the mandate of different line ministries and departments with the aim of upholding human rights and humanitarian principles. This includes helping crisis-affected populations, displaced persons and international migrants stranded in crisis situations in their destination or transit countries, to better access their fundamental rights to protection and assistance.

Migrant workers in Sri Lanka and Sri Lankan migrant workers abroad are vulnerable to adverse consequences of man-made or natural disasters, which can lead to displacement and make them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Migrant-specific vulnerabilities can stem from a lack of information or limited access to mechanisms of nationally-based assistance, heightened exposure to violence and exploitation, a shortage of personal means to escape crisis-torn areas and a lack of access to embassies and thus to travel documents. Crises have lasting implications on the well-being of migrants, especially when they have not only lost livelihoods and belongings, but have also been forced to return to contexts characterized by economic and social instability, often posing an additional challenge to existing structures and resources.

The GoSL does not have specific measures to provide assistance to international migrants during crises in Sri Lanka or Sri Lankan nationals overseas, other than ad hoc basis evacuation and repatriation assistance implemented by the Consular Division of MoFA.

Furthermore, the interconnected nature of natural disasters can result in droughts, floods and landslides occurring in quick succession and within the same districts, affecting the same vulnerable communities and further eroding their capacity to cope. The compounded impacts of multiple disasters also limit the capacity of communities to prepare and reduce the impacts of future events and climate change. Sri Lanka faces a multitude of natural hazards, including seasonal flooding and droughts caused by irregular rainfall, landslides set off by natural and human causes, strong winds and tropical cyclones. Hazard risks are combined with numerous environmental issues, including post-conflict landscapes (damage to agricultural infrastructure) and other areas affected by land degradation and deforestation as well as scarcity of water, resource extraction, coastal and river bank erosion.

There is, however, a lack of data and analysis on whether climate change is in fact exerting a “push” factor on these movements, as emerged during the multi-stakeholder national consultation on the GCM, facilitated by IOM in Sri Lanka in August 2017 and reiterated during the National MGI Symposium.

Authorities responsible for disaster management do not currently include adequate migration data in their analysis of disaster-induced displacement trends. While authorities record the numbers of people temporarily displaced by rapid-onset events such as landslides, cyclones or floods, they do not record the extent to which these numbers translate into permanent or temporary migration. Nor do they record the impact on migration of slow-onset events such as drought or changes in seasonal rainfall or temperature patterns, which can lead to steady yield declines and eventually drive people to give up agricultural work and move to urban areas, with a possible impact on national food security.

As a result, policies and programmes in Sri Lanka do not address this nexus. A month after ratifying the Paris Agreement in September 2016, Sri Lanka published its National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change Impacts 2016-2025, detailing adaptation actions in nine key sectors (agriculture, health, water, irrigation, coastal and marine, biodiversity, tourism, urban development and human settlements). In this plan, however, migration in the context of climate change is not adequately addressed. There is a need of enhancing awareness and understanding on this topic through dialogue and action.

Examples of Proxy Indicators for Migration Crisis

- % increase in disaster preparedness/response plans provisions that take into account disaster-induced displacement/relocation
- # government officials trained on IOM's Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF)
- SOPs are in place to assist, protect and repatriate migrants caught in crisis, both overseas and in the country (yes/no)
- % increase in climate change adaptation plans provisions that recognize and address internal or external migration as a coping strategy (yes/no)

2.1.5 Migration Data

Policy-makers and the general public's understanding of migration can make the difference between migration having a positive or negative impact on a region, country or society. Precise and reliable information on international or internal migration trends and the accurate analysis of key migration issues are fundamental to formulate effective migration management policies and implementing effective programmes.

The inclusion of migration in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has far-reaching implications for the collection of migration data. Improving migration statistics has now become a priority for policy-makers and planners at national, regional and global levels. The SDGs include one migration-specific target (10.7), which calls on countries to "facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of well-planned migration policies." In addition, there are several migration-related targets, including Target 3c (retention of health workers in developing countries), Target 4b (provision of scholarships for study abroad), Targets 5.2, 8.7 and 16.2 (combating human trafficking), Target 8.8 (respecting labour standards for migrant workers), Target 10c (lowering the costs of transmitting remittances) and Target 17.18 (disaggregating data by migratory status). Other targets, for examples those related to poverty reduction, education, health and peaceful societies, do not refer to migration directly but are still relevant for what concerns migration or migrants, especially when looking at data related to those targets, disaggregated by migratory status.

There are many data collection gaps in relation to migration in Sri Lanka, including the lack of a coordinated approach to migration data collection practices to inform policy and programmes related to migration management.

Nearly everyone at the National MGI Symposium acknowledged the need for Sri Lanka to increase capacity and thus: a) establish a fast, user-friendly and sustainable migration data collection mechanism, b) collect, coordinate, analyze and disseminate high-quality, reliable and comprehensive statistical information that comply with international principles and standards and c) enhance the capacity of the GoSL to understand migration-related issues.

As shown in Figure 1, migration data is a multi-dimensional and cross-cutting priority area - fundamental to formulate and implement evidence-based policies. The availability and accessibility of adequate and up-to-date information is, therefore, crucial to strengthen migration management.

2.2 Possible follow up mechanism

In the current complex and fast-changing economic and social context of Sri Lanka, different Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies have been assigned different roles and responsibilities in managing different aspects of migration. As a result, various *ad hoc* multi-agency mechanisms are in place to deal with specific migration issues which include, but are not limited to: 1) National Human Trafficking Task Force chaired by the Ministry of Justice; 2) National Advisory Committee on Labour Migration chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Employment; 3) National Border Management Committee chaired by the Ministry of Defence; and 4) National Coordination Committee on Readmission chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The absence of a dedicated agency or a mechanism unifying and consolidating the government's effort to develop its migration governance framework may hinder its ability to promote a coordinated and coherent migration management.

The Government of Sri Lanka may consider establishing a Steering Committee on Migration Governance (SCMG) with the overarching mandate to support the review, implementation and follow-up of recommendations contained in this report. The objective of the SCMG would be to strengthen policy processes and identify practical approaches to migration governance as detailed in the six domains of the MGI, with a particular focus on the following five priority areas for action: 1) Inward Migration, 2) Outward Migration, 3) Border Control, 4) Migration Crises, and 5) Migration Data. The SCMG, if established, would not replace any of the existing multi-agency mechanisms identified in this report but complement them to ensure overall policy coherence.

Core functions of the SCMG may include:

- 1) Promoting and monitoring the effective application and implementation of relevant national, regional and international instruments relating to migration management through respective institutions;
- 2) Encouraging the adoption of coherent, comprehensive and better coordinated approaches to migration management;
- 3) Exploring ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of key migration stakeholders' structures;
- 4) Analyzing opportunities and challenges arising from internal and international migration trends and patterns;
- 5) Recommending strategic ways to integrate migration into development plans;
- 6) Supporting harmonized migration data collection and analysis to inform policy;
- 7) Encouraging the exchanged of information between different agencies/ministries, while supporting global knowledge management initiatives promoting good practices in relation to migration management;
- 8) Mobilizing internal and external resources for development and implementation of new programmes to address gaps and meet emerging challenges in migration governance;
- 9) Contributing to the Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) conducted by the government periodically report to the High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF) on the implementation of migration-related SDGs; and
- 10) Acting as the principal interlocutor at the country level for the follow-up and review process of the Global Compact on Migration, which will be adopted at the end of 2018.

Regarding the working modalities, the SCMG would ideally be chaired by a Ministry with a broad cross-cutting mandate, and co-chaired by a government, inter-government or non-government agency with an institutional mandate to oversee two or more potential priority areas highlighted in this report.

In line with the multi-stakeholder nature of the Migration Governance Indicators process, participation in the SCMG should be open to all governmental and non-governmental stakeholders operating in the migration field that wish to participate as members. Government, inter-government or non-government agencies could be appointed as Lead Agencies to coordinate sub-thematic groups that may be established to focus on one or more priority areas.

Annex 1: National MGI Symposium Agenda and Participants List



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency

AGENDA Migration Governance Indicators National Symposium

Date- 12th December 2017

Time- 08.30am- 12.30pm

Venue- Movenpick Hotel, No: 24, Srimath Anagarika Dharmapala Mawatha, Colombo 03

Time	Agenda Item
08.30am-09.00am	Registration
09.00am- 09.05am	Welcome and Inaugural Address <i>Mr. Gamini Seneviratne, Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Employment</i>
09.05am- 09.10am	Opening Remarks <i>Mr. Giuseppe Crocetti, Chief of Mission, IOM Sri Lanka</i>
09.10am- 09.40am	Introductory Presentation on Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) <i>Mr. David Martineau, Policy Officer, IOM Headquarters</i>
09.40am- 10.25am	Presentation and discussion on MGI preliminary research findings Domain 1: International standards and migrants' rights Domain 2: Policy formulation Domain 3: Partnership <i>Ms. Siloe Roy, Migration Policy Consultant, IOM Headquarters</i>
10.25am- 10.45am	Tea break
10.45am- 11.30am	Presentation and discussion on MGI preliminary research findings (continued) Domain 4: Socio-economic well-being of migrants and society Domain 5: Mobility dimension of crises Domain 6: Safe, orderly and dignified pathways of migration <i>Ms. Siloe Roy, Migration Policy Consultant, IOM Headquarters</i>
11.30am- 12.00pm	Potential priority areas for Sri Lanka <i>Mr. Shantha Kulasekera, Head/Migration Governance, IOM Sri Lanka</i>
12.00pm- 12.30pm	Wrap up and way forward <i>Mr. David Martineau, Policy Officer, IOM Headquarters</i>
12.30pm onwards	Lunch

With analysis from



Participants List

1. Gamini Seneviratne, Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Employment
2. Giuseppe Crocetti, Chief of Mission, IOM
3. Yamuna Perera, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Employment
4. Padmini Ratnayake, Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Employment
5. N. Kavanagaran, coordinator, Predo
6. S. R. Wazir, Asst. Director of Education, Ministry of Education
7. M. Ramamoorthy, Director, Ministry of Social Empowerment and Welfare
8. Sujeewa Lal Dahanayake, Coordinator, Lawyers beyond borders
9. Andrew Samuel, Executive Director, Community Development Services (CDS)
10. Feizal Samath, Journalist, Sunday Times Sri Lanka
11. Swairee Rupasinghe, National Programme Officer, ILO
12. H.P. Somathilaka, Director, Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs
13. Mr. Senthurajah, Executive Director, Social Organizations Networking for Development (SOND)
14. Priyangika Rathnayake, Asst. Director, NCPA
15. S. A. Bandara, Asst. Director, BOI
16. P. H. A. Wimalaweera, Director Management, Ministry of Disaster Management
17. P. P. Jayathilake, Asst. Manager, Up country Manpower
18. Buddhima Rehana, EU Advocacy Officer, Leads
19. L. K. Ruhunage, Consultant
20. R. V. K. Hettige, SAS (Legal) Ministry of Justice
21. Dr. Susie Perera, Director, Ministry of Health, Nutrition and Indigenous Medicine
22. Dr. Anuji Gamage, CCP, Ministry of Health
23. M. I. Ameer, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Employment
24. G. S. Gunawardena, Development Asst., Women Bureau
25. Wimala Ranatunga, President, Sarvodaya Women's Movement
26. Priyanka Perera, Asst. Secretary, Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training
27. Thamilchelvi, Project Officer, ISD
28. Prof. Siri Hettige, Lecturer, University of Colombo
29. Anjalika. K. Gunaseker, Director, Dept. of National Planning
30. Ifham Jabir, Asst. Director, Dept. of National Budget
31. Saumya Amarasiriwardane, Research Analyst, The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce
32. M. M. Renuka Rathnayake, Asst. Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation
33. Keerthi Muththukumarana, DGM Legal, SLBFE
34. Sepali Kottegoda, Executive Director, Women and Media Collective (WMC)
35. Shiwanthi Ukgahakumbura, Development Officer, Dept. of Social Services
36. M. H. S. Sandareka, Development Officer, Dept. of Social Services
37. Senarath Yapa, DGM, SLBFE
38. Maheeka Leelaratne, Development Officer, Ministry of Foreign employment
39. S. S. A. Kularatne, Director/ Planning, Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation
40. P. W. H. Himadari, Asst. Director, Women's Bureau of Sri Lanka
41. A. T. Ruparatne, Asst. Controller, DIE
42. T. Jayasooriya, Manager, N. J. B
43. V. P. Hapangana, Director, Dept. of National Budget

44. P. Senthilnathanan, Addl. Secretary, Ministry of Prison Reforms, Resettlement and Hindu Religious Affairs
45. Ruchira Gunasekera, Programme Coordinator, Lawyers beyond borders
46. Madushika Lansakara, National Programme Officer, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
47. Diluka Deepamali Basanayake, Statistician, Dept. of Census and Statistics
48. Saritha Ranatunga, Asst. Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
49. Lihini Ratwatte, Gender Consultant, UNFPA
50. B. H. M. D. Hearth, Asst. Director, MoDSIT
51. Ranjan Kurian Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Project Manager
52. Chandima Arambepola, Researcher, CEPA
53. Charith Ranathunga, SPO, The Asia Foundation
54. Rizley Musthafa, Director, Myown Trade Exchange Pvt Ltd
55. Dr. Ramani Jayasundara, Director – Gender & Justice Programme, The Asia foundation (TAF)
56. Ravi Sandrasekera, Director International Relations, Ceylon Workers Congress
57. D. L. Deepani Priyangi, Asst. Director, Ministry of Resettlement
58. Piyasiri Wickramasekera, Lecturer
59. Felipe Cortes, IOM
60. Thilini Fernando, NPC, ILO
61. R. A. L. I. Ranasinghe, Legal Asst. NCPA
62. N. Wickramasekera, Senior State Council, AGs Dept.
63. Tracey Samson, IOM
64. N. Hettiarachchi, M&E Officer, Saviya Development Foundation
65. Malathy, Project Coordinator, CHRD
66. D. L. Sannasooriya, SAS, Ministry of Foreign Employment
67. Chamil Samarasinghe, DGM, State Cooperation
68. D. N. U. Wickramasinghe, Development Asst. Ministry of Women and Child Affairs
69. Sunethra Perera, Head Dept. of Demography, UoC
70. Siloe Yassa Roy, Migration Policy Consultant, IOM HQ
71. D. Martineau, Policy Officer, IOM HQ
72. Shantha Kulasekera, Head of Migration Governance, IOM
73. Chameera de Silva, Head of Operations, IOM
74. Priyantha Kulatunge, Head, Migrant Assistance Unit, IOM
75. Sashini Gomez, Senior Project Assistant, IOM
76. Sharuni Fernando, Project coordinator, IOM
77. Indraka Ubeysekera, Programme Analyst, IOM
78. Pushpi Weerakoon, NPO, IOM
79. Nissansala Gunarathne, Senior Project Coordinator, IOM
80. Tharindu Jayawardena, Project coordinator, IOM
81. Amritha Muttiah, Project Assistant, IOM

Annex 2: Justification of Scoring

01. The Sri Lanka National Migration Health Policy states, "Sri Lanka places importance on access to essential preventive and public health services for all migrants, regardless of status or origin."
02. Guiding principle (c) of the Proposals for a National Policy on General Education in Sri Lanka states, "The State shall promote with special care the interests of children so as to ensure their full development, physical, mental, moral, religious and social, and to protect them from exploitation and discrimination." Guiding principle (i) states, "Education shall be compulsory for children from the age of four to sixteen years." All refugees and asylum-seekers have access to schooling. However, this parity disappears at the tertiary level.

According to UNICEF, "The reasons children are excluded [from school in Sri Lanka] can be complex. As anywhere else, children in Sri Lanka may be deterred from school by poverty or conflict. Many children also miss out on opportunities because they live in remote regions and have no transportation to the nearest school. Some are impeded by violence or natural disaster. Others are hindered by disability or discrimination because of language, ethnic origin or gender." Legal status, however, is not offered as a reason for children and youth being excluded from school.
03. Social security is available to only long-term residents in Sri Lanka. According to the Commissioner General of the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Labour manages the Employee Provident Fund (EPF) and Employee's Trust Fund (ETF), Sri Lanka's social security schemes. They are portable for long term residents.
04. Sri Lanka has social security portability agreements with some OECD countries including South Korea. One with India is currently in the pipeline.
05. Family reunification does not form part of the list of visas issued by Sri Lanka. Only one type of visa contains provisions for visas for dependents, namely the ex-Sri Lankan visa category. Furthermore, the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs lists different conditions for visa applications for family members of individuals working in Sri Lanka according to the type of their work (diplomatic and non-diplomatic). Expert interviews assert that the ex-Sri Lankan visa category is, in practice, reserved for nationals born in Sri Lanka who have gained citizenship in another country that does not permit dual citizenship. It is a restrictive category that reflects diplomatic nuance rather than an attempt to provide a family reunification framework.
06. According to the Department of Immigration and Emigration, non-citizens may work in Sri Lanka provided they have residence visas. A wide variety of residence visas are available to non-permanent resident foreign nationals. However, these permits are a requisite for working in Sri Lanka. Refugees and asylum-seekers are not allowed to work in Sri Lanka.
07. There are no additional restrictions to work in Sri Lanka beyond the requirement for a residence visa. The residence visa requirements do not explicitly define any language criteria for migrants. For example, refugees and asylum-seekers are not allowed to work in Sri Lanka.
08. Among the different types of employment categories of residence visas, one type pertains to working on projects approved by the Sri Lankan Government. The application form does not outline any explicit criteria for being eligible to take up public sector employment. The Sri Lanka Administrative Service (Sri Lanka's civil service) Open Competitive Examination, a prerequisite for service, is only open to citizens of Sri Lanka. The Public Service Commission further states that "a person who is not a citizen of Sri Lanka or who does not have citizenship rights is disqualified for appointment to the public service." A review of recent appointments to the civil service corroborates this policy.
09. Sri Lanka Immigration and Emigration may issue a visa if they are "satisfied that you are suitable to enter Sri Lanka," approve of the purpose for entering the country, and are convinced of the applicant's pecuniary independence. It is conceivable that self-employment may be permitted under this scheme. However, there are no visa categories specifically for self-employment. Refugees and asylum-seekers are not permitted to work in the country.
10. There are no explicit provisions in immigration procedures that require skills such as language proficiency. Sri Lanka Immigration and Emigration may issue a visa if they are satisfied with the applicant's suitability, purpose for entering the country, and pecuniary independence.

11. The rules for residence visa extension show that applicants can only extend their residence permits for a finite period of time (1 year at the most). Expert interviews assert there is no permanent resident visa category as such in Sri Lanka.
12. Normally, Sri Lanka's dual citizenship legislation enlists different eligibility groups where the most commonly stated pre-application period is 3 years (e.g. an applicant who has a fixed deposit of Rupees 2.5 million or above for a minimum of 3 years is eligible). Similarly, an applicant who has invested USD 25,000 or above for a minimum of 3 years is eligible). The only instance foreign nationals can be a Sri Lankan national is under the resident guest scheme.
13. According to the election commission of Sri Lanka, being a citizen is one of the basic qualifications for voting in national elections.
14. According to the election commission of Sri Lanka, being a citizen is one of the basic qualifications for voting either in national or municipal elections. There does not appear to be any indication that anyone other than citizens may vote in local elections. Expert interviewees agree that Sri Lanka does not have a permanent resident visa, and all other kinds of residents cannot vote.
15. The Department of Immigration and Emigration is the dedicated government entity responsible for designing migration policy. Meanwhile, the Ministry for Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare administers the National Labour Migration Policy, which was initially developed in October 2008.
16. There are several mechanisms established for various aspects of migration (e.g. labour migration, border management, and human trafficking). While there is not a single inter-ministerial coordination mechanism, these mechanisms operate at both the ministry level, district level and the divisional level.
17. The Department of Immigration and Emigration is responsible for both inward and outward migration, and there is no other agency singularly dedicated to inward migration.
18. The Ministry for Foreign Employment is responsible singularly for outward migration in Sri Lanka.
19. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has created a special division within the Ministry for Overseas Sri Lankans to coordinate efforts to engage with the diaspora. In 2016, International Alert, a London-based conflict prevention NGO, released a report entitled "Roadmap for Engagement with Overseas Sri Lankans," aimed at guiding policymakers and the private sector to find meaningful ways to engage Sri Lankan communities and individuals residing in other countries.
20. The National Labour Migration Policy for Sri Lanka is the national migration framework adopted by the country. However, its provisions are mainly oriented towards outward migration, and do not have specific provisions for inward migration. Moreover, this policy framed in 2008 is not recent.
21. The National Labour Migration Policy for Sri Lanka devotes a complete section enumerating steps to be taken to harness the benefits of migration and accelerate development (e.g. taking advantage of substantial migrant remittances received by the country, and leveraging on the skills of return migrants).
22. Sri Lanka has a legal framework pertaining to returnee migrant workers, but does not have a policy that specifically addresses overall inward migration.
23. Although there does not exist a singular policy that designs provisions for specific migrant types, different agencies in Sri Lanka are responsible for specific migrant groups have designed their own legislation pertinent to that group. For example, Sri Lanka does not have a national asylum legislation, but the UNHCR, in coordination with a government agency in Sri Lanka has framed a specific protocol for receiving and handling refugees and asylum-seekers in the country. Rules pertaining to migrants surrounding visas are enlisted by the Department of Immigration and Emigration.
24. The Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare has developed the Sri Lanka National Policy on Labour Migration which includes extensive provisions for outward migration. The policy covers governance of the migration process, protection and empowerment of migrant workers and their families, and the link between migration and development.
25. Taking together all of Sri Lanka's embassies, high commissions, consulates, and permanent missions, there are 54 representative offices.
26. Visa categories are clearly explained on the country's immigration and emigration website. Furthermore, refugee and asylum-seeker protocol is handled by the UNHCR in coordination with a government agency.

27. Sri Lanka is making efforts to enhance horizontal policy coherence through several inter-ministerial co-ordination bodies. These mechanisms include: The National Advisory Committee on Labour Migration, the National Steering Committee on Return and Re-integration for labour migrants, the Programme Advisory Committee on Safe Labour Migration, the National Border Management Committee, the National Coordination Committee for Readmission, the Task force on Anti- Human Trafficking, and the Policy sub-committee of National Coordination Committee on Readmission.
28. Sri Lanka is making some efforts to enhance vertical policy coherence. The existing public service structure under the Ministry of Public Administration provides a sound platform for evidence-based policy coherence in consultation with decentralized provincial administration. (e.g. government agents, divisional secretaries, Grama niladari and migration development officers)
29. The Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment produces annual statistics on Sri Lankan individuals employed abroad, but there is no other source that produces quarterly/annual statistics on inward migration, except for the Department of Census and Statistics.
30. The Census of Population and Housing includes the population living abroad temporary by country of original residence, age and sex; and foreign-born population by country of birth, age and sex.
31. Sri Lanka acceded to the ICRMW on 11 March 1996.
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33. Sri Lanka is not a signatory to the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.
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35. Sri Lanka signed the CRC on 26 January 1990 and ratified it on 16 June 1993.
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37. Sri Lanka has not ratified the ILO Migration for Employment Convention.
38. Sri Lanka has not ratified the Supplementary Provisions of the ILO Migrant Workers Convention.
39. Sri Lanka has neither signed nor ratified the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, or the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.
40. Sri Lanka participates in official RCPs such as the Abu Dhabi Dialogue and the Colombo Process Thematic Area Working Group on Skills Qualification and Recognition. Sri Lanka is at present the chair-in-office of the Abu-Dhabi Dialogue. The objective is to enhance safe and orderly mobility among migrant sending and migrant receiving countries. Sri Lanka was also the Chair of the Colombo Process until early 2017. Sri Lanka is a participant in the Bali Process, which aims to provide assistance to migrants to return to Sri Lanka.
41. As a result of the Abu-Dhabi Dialogue, the UAE and Kuwait have actively cooperated with the governments including Sri Lanka to conduct a pilot project by identifying a group of construction and service workers recruited by UAE and Kuwait employers in pre-selected construction and service occupations.
This is a pilot project that aims to: test workers to be certified as qualified for the jobs they were recruited to perform on the basis of occupational standards developed by the respective UAE and Kuwait qualifications authorities; offer workers the opportunity to be periodically tested and certified for upgraded skills; document accumulated skills throughout employment; and enter into agreements with the participating origin countries on the mutual recognition of upgraded skills.
42. Sri Lanka has a formal bilateral agreement with Qatar entitled "Agreement between the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Government of the State of Qatar Concerning the Regulation of Sri Lankan Manpower Employment in the State of Qatar," signed on 9 January 2008.
43. Sri Lanka has MOUs with migration receiving countries. One example of an MOU between Sri Lanka and another government is the MOU between Australia and Sri Lanka concerning "Legal Cooperation against the Smuggling of Migrants." The Republic of Korea has an MOU with Sri Lanka for the hiring of foreign workers under its Employment Permit System. Sri Lanka and Malaysia have an MOU to regulate recruitment processes and procedures. Sri Lanka also has MOUs on the supply of manpower with UAE, Libya, Jordan and Bahrain.
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46. Sri Lanka is participant of the Global Forum on Migration Development. The country co-chaired roundtable 1.1 "Tools and safeguards for policy coherence – finding the right policy mix to balance different interests and objectives" in the year 2016.
47. Sri Lanka is a member of IOM. Sri Lanka was a participant in the most recent iteration of UNHCR's Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, which took place in Geneva, Switzerland on 26 October 2017.
48. Sri Lanka formally engages CSOs in agenda setting and implementation of migration-related issues. Sri Lanka is a formal member of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime.
49. According to expert interviews, Sri Lanka formally engages with the private sector and social partners in agenda setting and implementation of migration-related issues. By law, the Association of Private Recruitment Agents (ALFEA) represents the private sector on the board of directors of Sri Lanka's Bureau of Foreign Employment (the lead regulator for foreign employment). The National Advisory Committee on Labour Migration and the National Steering Committee on Return and Re-integration for Labour Migration also formally include the private and social sectors.
50. International Alert in Sri Lanka developed a roadmap for engagement with overseas Sri Lankan workers with seven areas of engagement that was presented to GoSL, namely: 1) Social and Economic Development, 2) Skills & Knowledge Transfer, 3) Outreach & Exposure Links, 4) Media Engagement, 5) Arts & Culture, 6) Interfaith Engagement, and 7) Reconciliation. With the aim of obtaining support from diaspora and expatriate communities, the Department of Immigration and Emigration (DIE) is in the process of introducing a lifelong resident visa scheme for Sri Lankans unable to obtain dual citizenship. This scheme will be introduced as part of the ongoing immigration legislation review that is currently underway. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (through the DG of Communication) is engaging the diaspora. Sri Lanka formally allows dual citizenship with the aim of engaging the diaspora for national economic development.
51. Sri Lanka is not part of any regional agreement promoting labour mobility. The World Bank notes that South Asia is one of the least integrated regions in the world.
52. According to IOM, the government has been made aware of the shortage of labour in the construction and garment industries of Sri Lanka. Recently, the government approved a proposal from the Chamber of Construction Industry to recruit construction workers from Nepal and Myanmar to meet labour demand. The government is also pursuing a similar arrangement with the Joint Apparel Association Forum of Sri Lanka. The Department of Census and Statistics publishes the Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey on a quarterly basis, to measure the levels and trends of employment, unemployment and labour force composition.
53. Sri Lanka's Ministry of Labour, in collaboration with ILO, completed the Skills Gap Survey and Labour Trend Study. The study looked primarily at four sectors for the severity of the skills gap and their potential impact on the economy: ICT, tourism, construction and light engineering. However, this is not a regular exercise.
54. According to IOM, the gradual increase of inward migration to Sri Lanka has led the Department of Census and Statistics to conduct a survey to identify the number of migrant workers in Sri Lanka in

different sectors. Findings are yet to be presented. The government has also implemented a quota of 2500 construction workers from Nepal and Myanmar after the Chamber of Construction Industry proposed to recruit construction workers to meet labour demand. The census does track internal migration by asking about districts of previous residence and reasons for migration, one of which is employment.

55. Sri Lanka has a distinct visa category for bank personnel. There is also a "resident guest scheme visa programme" for foreign investors and professionals "who could contribute to the economic and socio-cultural enrichment of the country."
56. Aside from a visa issued specifically to banking personnel, Sri Lanka does not consider migrant skills in its issuance of residence visas.
57. The Sri Lanka Ministry of Higher Education maintains the Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework. This framework "is an important element of systems development in the higher education sector," and is meant to "provide a clear system to develop links with higher education institutions abroad." The framework cuts across professions and is organized by level of education. Sri Lanka also has a National Vocational Qualification Framework that is managed by the Tertiary Vocational Education Commission.
58. According to expert interviews, Sri Lanka has a pilot project on common qualification frameworks in the construction sector with the UAE. There are also other examples of international qualification schemes that Sri Lanka participates in: Sri Lanka Qualification Framework, British Computer Society, Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA), Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), City and Guilds of London Institute, and the International Vocational Qualification.
59. Sri Lanka offers a distinct student visa for international students seeking to study in Sri Lanka's universities, or other institutions approved by the state.
60. Foreign nationals seeking to study at Sri Lankan universities must provide encashment receipts to the value of USD 1,500 per year (per person) to receive a student residence visa. There are fees associated with the visa application but may be waived on the Ministry of Higher Education's recommendation.
61. According to the Ministry of Higher Education and Highways, the quota for students with foreign qualifications is 0.5% of the total number of places available in each course of study. "Up to 4.5% of the places over and above the proposed intake in each course of study will be allocated to foreign students and Sri Lankan students who have obtained qualifications abroad on [a] fee levying basis."
62. There are no visa schemes at present that give priority or are specifically tailored to foreign students who have graduated from Sri Lankan universities.
63. There are no explicit provisions in the student visa that permit foreign students to work while in the country. Expert interviews suggest that all migrants in Sri Lanka must have specific visas that permit working in the country. One example of a formal bilateral labour agreement that Sri Lanka has with another government is the 2011 Agreement on Bilateral Cooperation on Labour Migration between Sri Lanka and Italy.
64. Sri Lanka's Bureau of Foreign Employment has numerous regulatory measures introduced throughout the migration cycle to promote ethical recruitment. One such measure is the Code of Ethical Conduct for Licensed Foreign Employment Recruitment Agencies. The Bureau of Foreign Employment also regulates recruitment fees and sets minimum wages for certain categories of jobs.
65. Sri Lanka's Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare has put forth guidelines entitled "Operational Manual for Labour Sections of Sri Lankan Diplomatic Missions in Destination Countries: Ensuring the Protection and Welfare of Migrant Workers" (the Operational Manual) in support of the National Labour Migration Policy. Guideline categories include handling grievances and complaints of migrant workers; repatriation of workers; ensuring safe recruitment for promoting the rights of Sri Lankan migrant workers; registration of individual job contracts; a code of conduct; and financial provisions and practices applicable to labour sections.
66. According to the Foundation for Development Cooperation, "There are 25 financial agencies authorized by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka to engage in foreign exchange transactions. These include 22 Licensed Commercial Banks (LCBs), two other financial institutions and the Sri Lankan post office. There are several formal schemes which give incentives on remittances transfer through formal channels. These include foreign currency-denominated Sri Lanka Nation Building Bonds (SLNBB) and exemptions on custom duties on goods brought into the country. Further, there are a number of other incentives

related to migration and remittances such as the services offered by the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment."

67. The average cost of remittances to Sri Lanka from four major migration destination countries is between 3% and 7% (approximately 5.12% on average). For example, the average costs to transfer money to Sri Lanka are: UK: 5.2%, Australia: 7.13%, India: 4.44%, UAE: 3.7% (1).
68. The government does not have specific measures on providing assistance to migrants during crises in Sri Lanka. However, the government has addressed specific measures through certain bilateral agreements to provide assistance to migrants in other countries experiencing a crisis.
69. The National Disaster Management Plan has specific provisions for addressing the displacement impacts of disasters. Part of the framework explicitly calls for coordination with civil NGOs. IOM is one of these NGOs, and addresses displacement. According to expert interviews, strategies are under development to address areas of needed improvement, including the identification of evacuation sites in disaster prone areas. The government also aims to increase the capacity of government offices and key community leaders on evacuation and crisis camp management. Under the ongoing emergency response programme, the IOM has initiated some activities related to disaster risk reduction and disaster management in Sri Lanka's Southern Province. A cabinet paper previously proposed resettling people from landslide high risk areas; the scheme would see the government compensate affected persons for their relocation. Additionally, Sri Lanka has a country strategy planned under UNISDR's Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.
70. The Sri Lankan government is currently developing a strategy to relocate people from disaster prone areas due to climate change. Approximately 15,000 families from high risk areas (notably the hill country) have been identified for relocation. Budgets are a concern and have yet to be finalised, though the government is currently pushing ahead with a special subproject that would relocate around 5,000 families immediately due to recent floods and landslides (Cabinet number 17/1216/715/017 from 10 June 2017).
71. Sri Lanka has contingency plans in place through different ministries. The Ministry of Defense manages a large scale plan for internally displaced persons. The Ministry of Disaster Management has plans at the district and divisional levels. The National Disaster Relief Services Center has identified temporary shelters and evacuation plans.
72. According to expert interviews, the government keeps records of nationals who have obtained dual citizenship. However, there is no known general database for nationals living abroad. The government keeps records of foreign nationals in Sri Lanka.
73. As of September 2017, Sri Lanka maintains 54 overseas missions. The degree of consular services varies between missions.
74. According to expert interviews, there are some systems in place to communicate with the public during times of crisis. The Early Warning Centre at the Department of Meteorology manages early warning systems for floods and tsunamis. The Building Research Institute manages landslide warnings. The Disaster Management Center provides information on multi-faceted disasters.
75. Sri Lanka's crisis communication systems do not explicitly account for the specific vulnerabilities faced by migrants. General information is disseminated through government divisional offices in national languages. No similar, specific programme exists at the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment. Migrants in Sri Lanka have access to the Disaster Management Center's offices but mechanisms in place do not account for migrant-specific vulnerabilities.
76. According to expert interviews, in the aftermath of a disaster, government and humanitarian organizations provide assistance equally, regardless of legal status. According to the Disaster Management Center, during times of disaster, immediate relief is provided to all persons regardless of legal status.
77. Sri Lanka is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention. However, expert interviews assert that the government, on an ad hoc basis, allows vulnerable foreign nationals to remain in the country until they are resettled in a third country by UNHCR.
78. The Ministry of Finance manages Sri Lanka's current national development strategy titled "Vision 2025." Vision 2025 does not include measures regarding displacement (e.g., provisions on refugees or IDPs, or reintegration of returning migrants). However, a separate document, the National Policy on Durable

Solutions for Conflict-affected Displacement was approved by the Cabinet in 2016. This policy sets out and guarantees the rights of IDPs, refugee returnees and others persons of concern and to promote measures to address their immediate, medium and long-term protection and assistance needs, with a view to facilitating durable solutions to their displacement.

79. Migration issues are not included in recovery strategies and development planning. More specifically, Sri Lanka's Disaster Risk Management Framework does not include migration issues. However, Vision 2025 - the national development strategy - mentions migration issues on four occasions, in the context of remittances, demographics and the labour force, labour shortages in domestic sectors, and better integrating the diaspora into development.
80. The National Labour Migration Policy includes a provision for return and re-integration. In addition, the Bureau of Foreign Employment Act 1985 (Rehabilitation for returned migrant workers) mandates the protection of assets through diplomatic missions.
81. Immigration Border Control Systems records every entry and departure electronically enabling identification of visa overstays. The Department of Immigration and Emigration operates a deterrence strategy of arrest, detention, and blacklisting of visitors who are detected overstaying in the country.
82. The Department of Immigration and Emigration manages border control and security at the four designated airports and seven designated seaports of Sri Lanka. The government recently authorized IOM with a project to develop an Integrated Border Control System and development is on-going.
83. According to expert interviews, border control staff are regularly trained in a variety of disciplines, such as international migration law; skills enhancement; forgery detection; and identity management. The Department of Immigration and Emigration Training Unit is the dedicated entity responsible for such training.
84. The Department of Immigration and Emigration maintains a clear and comprehensive website for legal migration which outlines available visa options.
85. Foreign nationals may apply for a tourist, business or transit visa through Sri Lanka's electronic travel authorization system, run by the Department of Immigration and Emigration (DIE). All other visa categories require paperwork and authorization from a Sri Lanka mission abroad before entering the country.
86. According to ILO, migrant returnees are eligible for low cost loans to build homes. Additionally, Samurdhi Bank offers self-employment loans to migrant returnees who are able to fulfill the Samurdhi criteria.
87. In 2015, the Ministry of Foreign Employment released the "Sub Policy and National Action Plan on Return and Reintegration of Migrant Workers." The action plan includes strategies on social reintegration of returnees; economic reintegration of returnees; physical and psychological well-being of returnees and their family members; mobilization and empowerment of migrant returnees; and effective management of return and reintegration processes.
88. According to the US State Department's 2017 Trafficking in Persons report for Sri Lanka, "The government maintained efforts to prevent trafficking. The inter-ministerial anti-trafficking task force continued to implement the national action plan to combat human trafficking; however, observers reported overall government coordination on anti-trafficking was weak and that all members of the taskforce were not meeting regularly."
89. The Sri Lankan government provides information on counter-trafficking activities on an annual basis to the US State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report. In September 2017, the Ministry of Justice launched the Public Awareness Campaign to combat Human Trafficking. At the launch event, Justice and Foreign Employment Minister, Thalatha Athukorala emphasised that public awareness is a key component of the National Strategic Plan between 2015-19 to prevent and combat trafficking. The campaign, a collaboration with IOM, is supported by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
90. According to the US State Department's 2017 Trafficking in Persons report for Sri Lanka, "The Government of Sri Lanka does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so."

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