



Migration & Development: Mainstreaming Migration into Development Strategies of Sri Lanka

Assessment Report 2021

Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka



INSTITUTE OF POLICY STUDIES OF SRI LANKA

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International Organization for Migration
9th Floor, Institute of Bankers of Sri Lanka Building
No. 80A, Elvitigala Mawatha,
Colombo 08, Sri Lanka
Phone: +94 11 5325 300 / +94 11 2112 600
Fax: +94 11 5325 302 / +94 11 2112 602
Email: iomcolombo@iom.int
Website: www.srilanka.iom.int

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Authored by:

Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka
100/20, Independence Avenue
Colombo 07, Sri Lanka.
Telephone: +94-11-2143100, +94-11-2665068
Facsimile: +94-11-2665065
E-mail: ips@ips.lk

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Bilesha Weeraratne, Harini Weerasekera and Thilini Bandara
Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka

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Preface

As recognized in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, migration is a powerful driver of sustainable development, for migrants and their communities. It brings benefits in the form of skills, strengthening the labour force, investment, and cultural diversity, and contributes to improving the lives of communities in their countries of origin through the transfer of skills and financial resources.

It has become evident that the benefits of migration should not only be seen from the perspective of what migrants can bring to any given territory, as the relationship between migration and development is much more complex. The nexus between migration and development (M&D) can be bi-directional, where migration can impact development and development can influence migration. While the political, social, and economic processes of potential destination countries will determine how, where and when migration occurs, if migration is poorly governed, it can also negatively impact the development of a country. Therefore, development cannot be achieved without due consideration to migrants and migration.

Mainstreaming migration into development allows (1) migration to be viewed as a component affecting all aspects of human development, (2) for migration to be integrated into the broader development strategy, (3) to replace the unsystematic approach with a more coherent one capable of identifying gaps in existing legislative and policy, and (4) to facilitate funding and technical assistance for migration-related activities.

Despite its potential advantages, the focus on mainstreaming migration into development plans in Sri Lanka has been limited over the years. Although there are many reasons for this, the primary constraint remains the lack of data and direct indicators on migration and development.

- There is insufficient empirical evidence to support the benefits of the relationship between M&D.
- Lack of evidence-based data to identify current national goals and priorities to effectively mainstream migration into development strategies.
- The lack of a national dialogue and the need to create awareness on including migration in development planning and addressing the developmental challenges and opportunities stemming from migration.
- The lack of comprehensive migration strategies such as a National GCM (Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration) Implementation Plan for Sri Lanka.

Against this backdrop, with overall support and coordination from the State Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Market Diversification, and with the technical assistance from the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) conducted a M&D country assessment to develop evidence-based data on the nexus between migration and development in Sri Lanka, and to provide recommendations in mainstreaming migration into development strategies.

The final report of the M&D assessment will assist the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) to:

- Identify current national goals and priorities to mainstream migration into development strategies;
- Initiate a national inclusive dialogue to discuss how migration may be incorporated into Sri Lanka's development planning;
- Address the developmental challenges and opportunities stemming from migration;
- Contribute to the development of establishing a national GCM implementation plan for Sri Lanka.

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Nexus Between Migration and Development (M&D)

Migration and development (M&D) are highly interconnected and interdependent concepts. Migration is the movement of individuals across the international borders, while development is the process that improves the overall quality of life of a group of people and enhancing the range of opportunities available to them (Global Migration Group, 2010). This nexus between M&D can be bi-directional, where “development can encourage migration, and migration can be a consequence of development deficiencies” (IOM Brussels, 2020, p. 5). Hence, as much as migration has an impact on development, migration is also affected by development. Thus, underscoring the importance of the nexus between M&D, development cannot be achieved without due consideration to migrants and migration.

Nevertheless, the effects of migration on development have often been difficult to grapple with, given the varying impacts on both the home and host country of the migrants. For host countries, carefully crafted migration policies are a mechanism to address their demographic, talent and skills deficiencies in the population and the labour market, respectively. For home countries, migration serves to address another dimension of the labour market by easing the pressure for limited or absence of suitable employment opportunities domestically, and bringing in remittances, which serves many developmental aspects within the economy. The remittances brought in by migrant workers to their home country economies particularly for the countries of the global South have a significant impact on the country’s GDP and can be considered even as one of the main sources of foreign exchange that contributes positively towards balance of payments. Remittances sent to home countries are far more effective in aiding development as money is directly transferred to families facing poverty and hardship, enabling them to alleviate themselves out of poverty through better access to health care, schooling for children and even opportunities to make investments and start small businesses. These remittances are even in fact more effective than foreign aid as individuals are able to select areas that they can direct this personal income towards. In addition to financial remittances, migration is also associated with social remittances, which have various developmental implications. Similarly, when all types of migrants who have been away from the home country are collectively considered as diaspora, they are able to act as ambassadors to advocate for the national interests of their home country. Together, these aspects serve as positive drivers of migration on development, which can

bring about sustainable development for migrants and their communities in countries of origin, transit and destination. Another dimension with ample developmental implications is gender in migration. Currently, over 48.1 % of global migrants are females (UN DESA, 2020). The average female worker supports at least 5 individuals in the home country and women migrant workers remit higher values when compared with their male counterparts. The development impacts are not limited to financial benefits but returning migrant women are more independent resulting in more equitable household decision making and a marked decreases in domestic violence cases. (Nyberg-Sørensen, Hear, & Engberg-Pedersen, 2002)

Given these multiple mechanisms where migration affects development and vice versa, there exists a need for labour migration to be recognized as a development resource both for home and host countries, host countries benefit particularly as a majority of migrant workers take up low skilled work otherwise left unfulfilled and home countries benefit from the remittances sent home that lead to development of local economies. Alongside the positive, there remains the negative drivers of migration that needs to be reduced. These include the reduction in skilled workers in the home countries in areas that are critical to development such as health care, education and governance. Home country's governments that invest heavily in public education may not see returns due to brain drain and this could mean that taxpayers funds are being wasted and misallocated. Migration negatively affects the families of the migrant workers, particularly in social and mental aspects as they spend a majority of time away from their families. Migrants may also have to suffer due to lack of knowledge and language barriers in host countries. In a similar vein migrants may have difficulty adjusting to foreign cultures as well as facing xenophobic behavior from citizens in host countries.

1.2 Importance and Methods of Mainstreaming Migration into Development

In order to minimize the negative and maximize the positive drivers, it is important to factor in migration into all aspects of development, to enhance how migration can positively affect development and how development can positively affect migration. This process of integrating migration into development is referred to as mainstreaming migration into development. Literature identifies that mainstreaming migration into development planning means integrating M&D concerns at all stages of development planning, including design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation, and factoring in the implications of migration on any development strategy, action or goal. This entails mainstreaming M&D concerns into legislation, policies and programmes at all levels (local, national and, if applicable, regional) (Global Migration Group, 2010).

Neelim and Siddiqui (2015) identify that mainstreaming migration in development planning involves assessing the implications of migration for achieving development or sectoral goals, as well the implications of such development or sectoral goals on migration. The benefits of mainstreaming migration include viewing migration as an issue affecting all aspects of human development; allowing migration to be embedded in the broader development strategy and replace the piecemeal approach with a coherent one that is capable of identifying gaps in existing legislative and policy; and facilitating funding and technical assistance for migration-related activities. Despite the known potential benefits, the link between M&D is rarely recognized and rarely acknowledged in development planning. Often mainstreaming migration into development is stopped at the conceptual phase seldom reaching a practical level.

Migration can be embedded into development by establishing networks that connect the rural labour force with urban communities such that specific labour requirements are matched appropriately. This allows for better job matching and reduced unemployment. This allows both host and home countries to benefit from labour movements. Some migrants may have left their home countries due to conflict and this may have short term negative effects on the home countries as resources allocated for citizens may be allocated for migrants. However, the host countries need to focus on the long term, especially with regards to how migrants can be included in the labour market in ways that benefit the home country, particularly as the Western world shows a decline in birth rates leading to much older population who are unable to work and continue contributing to the economic growth of the country.

Development efforts for home countries through migration does not require migrants to return, benefits are still accrued through remittances sent by migrant workers. However, home country governments could focus on providing better opportunities by building diplomatic relationships with host countries such that migrant workers are provided with the facilities and opportunities to grow and thrive. Migration has been recognized as a source contributing to development with the establishment of institutions and international organizations that are solely focused on the impacts of migration as well as concern over issues that migrants may encounter.

1.3 M&D in Sri Lanka

In the case of Sri Lanka, the nexus between migration and development is strong and vast, while the potential for migration to support development is immense. Sri Lanka benefits tremendously from migrant worker remittances that contribute significantly

towards the country's GDP. It is also a source of foreign exchange and important component in a debt-ridden era for Sri Lanka. In the past, migration from Sri Lanka was predominantly through two channels, voluntary migration due to economic difficulties faced in Sri Lanka or through forced migration due to the political climate of the civil war. The high levels of migration levels led to the establishment of several Sri Lankan organizations and governmental institutions to assist individuals who migrated. The component of female migrants has increased resulting in empowerment for Sri Lankan women and equality in household decision making and independence. Benefits are accrued to home country families as children are able to access better education and health-care facilities particularly as women remit more than their male migrant counterparts. Sri Lankan women earn as much as eight times more than what they would earn in Sri Lanka.

Nevertheless, similar to the global case, Sri Lanka's focus on mainstreaming migration into development has been limited over the years, mainly due to insufficient empirical evidence to support the benefits of this nexus between migration and development. As such, it is important for Sri Lanka to undertake an exploratory scoping exercise that would provide an objective initial analysis of the M&D situation in the country to guide an effective mainstreaming exercise. Thus, it is important for Sri Lanka to conduct a M&D country assessment to develop evidence-based data on its nexus to provide recommendations in mainstreaming migration into development strategies. It is envisioned that such exercise would initiate a national dialogue on how to include migration into development planning and to address the developmental challenges and opportunities stemming from migration.

Against this backdrop, this study aims to develop evidence-based analysis of the nexus between M&D in Sri Lanka by conducting a country assessment of M&D in Sri Lanka to identify current national goals and priorities to mainstream migration into development strategies of Sri Lanka, with the view to initiate a national inclusive dialogue on how to include migration into development planning and address the developmental challenges and opportunities stemming from migration (IOM Colombo, 2021). The expected outcome of these broad goal is to provide recommendations for mainstreaming migration into development strategies in Sri Lanka. The above goals and objectives of the study are achieved by focusing on answering the following research questions - What mechanisms, processes, strategic priorities (under cross-sectoral thematic areas), policies, and legislation (at national, regional, and international levels) are relevant to this exercise? How do policies appear to affect M&D outcomes at present? What are the key direct and indirect indicators related to M&D in Sri Lanka? and What is needed in terms of

mainstreaming migration into national development strategies in Sri Lanka? The study is developed as an extensive desk review based on content analysis and thematic analysis of existing documents.

The remainder of the report is organized as follows. Chapter 2 presents the design and the methodology adopted in the study, followed by Chapter 3 reviews existing literature in terms of main themes and priorities in the nexus between M&D and how migration is integrated into development at the international level. Chapter 4 gives an account of the M&D context in Sri Lanka - which involves a discussion about the current and foreseen national development planning tools and information on strategic planning frameworks in the context of mainstreaming migration into development. Based on the key issues emerging from the desk review, Chapter 5 involves a thematic analysis to assess the extent to which national policies integrate migration concerns for selected relevant government institutions. Chapter 6 develops a set of recommendations that are needed to mainstream migration into national development strategies in Sri Lanka

2. Design and Methodology

2.1 Analytical Introduction

In this study, migration is considered as the movement across the international border of Sri Lanka - away from a migrant's habitual place of residence, regardless of their legal status, nature¹ or causes of movement or the length of the stay in the country of destination (United Nations, n.d.). Development is considered as a process that improves the overall quality of life of a group of people and enhances the range of opportunities available to them (Global Migration Group, 2010). Given such multifaceted nuances of both migration and development, the nexus between the two can be bi-directional, where "development can encourage migration, and migration can be a consequence of development deficiencies" (IOM Brussels, 2020, p. 5). At the same time, there are positive and negative drivers of migration. Migration can be a powerful driver of sustainable development for migrants and their communities in countries of origin, transit and destination. However, as much as migration has an impact on development, migration is also affected by development. Hence, development cannot be achieved without due consideration to migrants and migration.

¹ Voluntary or involuntary

The international community has long acknowledged the crucial interlinkages between migration and sustainable development. The first High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (HLD) took place in 2006 during the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, following which the Global Forum on Migration and Development held its first summit in 2007. Further, the second High-Level Dialogue in 2013 focused on the role of migration in the post 2015 development framework. These platforms paved way for the development of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which became the first international development framework to include and recognize the contribution of migration to sustainable development. Hence, migration governance in the 2030 Agenda goes beyond “governance as usual” to “pursue policy coherence and an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors” (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, n. d.). Furthermore, the migration-development nexus has been deeply embedded across the 23 objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration - the first intergovernmental negotiated cooperation framework between UN Member States, to cover all dimensions of international migration.

Thus, the nature of migration, and the context in which it takes place, are vital, making it important that policymakers intervene to shape the context and harness migration’s beneficial effects and mitigate its negative consequences (Global Migration Group, 2010). Ideally, given the complex nature of the interrelationship between migration and development, it is important that these interventions are best undertaken in a systematic and comprehensive way by factoring in, or rather mainstreaming migration into development related efforts.

2.2 Problem Analysis

While there has been growing interest in the linkages between M&D in Sri Lanka, the relationship between the two has not been adequately studied. As a result, there is a lack of general awareness among policy makers of the multidimensional relationship between the two and how migration can be leveraged to achieve broader, national development aims. This lack of awareness is reflected in the ad hoc and reactive policymaking process of the foreign employment sector.

Mainstreaming migration into development efforts is a vast and in-depth undertaking which involves channeling migration concerns into development related legislation, policies and programmes at all levels of institutions from sub-national, national to regional, during all stages of development planning, from design, implementation, to monitoring and evaluation. However, due to the lack of consensus on the impacts of

migration on development and the types of measures to be taken, as an initial step, it is vital to gather evidence - to create the linkage between the two areas of interest and in turn, to effectively mainstream migration into development within the country.

2.3 Scope of the Study

As per the Terms of Reference (TOR) in connection with this study, the goal of this study is to conduct a migration and development (M&D) country assessment to identify current national goals and priorities to mainstream migration into development strategies of Sri Lanka, with the view to initiate a national inclusive dialogue on how to include migration into development planning and address the developmental challenges and opportunities stemming from migration (IOM Colombo, 2021). To achieve this broad goal, the study started off with the aim to:

- Develop evidence-based data on the nexus between M&D in Sri Lanka;
- Conduct a country assessment of M&D in Sri Lanka with direct indicators related to M&D; and
- Provide recommendations for mainstreaming migration into development strategies.

The above objectives are achieved by focusing on answering the following research questions:

- What are the key migration trends in Sri Lanka?
- What are the positive and negative drivers of migration on development?
- What mechanisms, processes, strategic priorities (under cross-sectoral thematic areas), policies, and legislation (at national, regional, and international levels) are relevant to this exercise?
- How do policies appear to affect M&D outcomes at present?
- What are the key direct and indirect indicators related to M&D in Sri Lanka?
- What is needed in terms of mainstreaming migration into national development strategies in Sri Lanka?

Revised Study Scope

The above study scope had to be marginally revised due to data collection difficulties faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. While the objectives outlined above remain unchanged, the usage of “direct indicators” in the analysis was not fully possible, due to the inability to collect primary data from stakeholders along these parameters. In this

context, the analysis has been conducted using secondary data following the same indicators where possible.

2.4 Conceptual framework

This study approaches mainstreaming migration into development from an inclusive and multi-stakeholder perspective spanning stakeholders across both horizontal and vertical dimensions. For inclusivity, all types of migrants (both inbound and outbound) – workers/students/family, legal/illegal, people of diverse genders, skilled/semi-skilled/unskilled etc., are focused on in this study, while to incorporate multi-stakeholder perspectives, inputs from government, private sector, non-governmental and international stakeholders were to be solicited. For horizontal integration, a vast cross section of sectors of the economy and the Government is considered, while for vertical integration sub-national, national and international level stakeholders were to be focused on. With the view of a shared responsibility to enhance the positive drivers of migration on development factors in the country, the study intended to undertake an evidence-based and whole-of-government approach to identify current national goals and priorities to mainstream migration into development strategies in Sri Lanka.

2.5 Data and Methodology

For data and information, the study initially intended to rely on a combination of existing material and primary data. Primary data was to be gathered from related government institutions in Sri Lanka via a self-administered matrix (SAM) and complemented with data from secondary sources including but not limited to the IOM Migration Governance Indicator (MGI) follow-up assessment for Sri Lanka (draft), IOM guide for Integrating Migration into International Cooperation and Development (IOM Brussels, 2020), Global Migration Group (GMG) handbook for mainstreaming migration (Global Migration Group, 2010), UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMIDI) guidelines on mainstreaming migration into local development planning (JMIDI, n.d) and The Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) Migration Governance Index (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2016).

However, primary data collation was attempted but subsequently removed from the study scope due to non-responsiveness of institutions in providing information via the

SAM tool designed for primary data collection. This is because the planned project data collection period coincided with the 3rd wave of the COVID-19- pandemic in Sri Lanka, which meant that government institutions were operating at limited capacity, and unable to commit to non-mandatory exercises such as this. As a remedy, with the agreement of the IOM, the study scope was revised to be conducted only with secondary data, via a desk review.

As such, relying mainly on existing published and unpublished material, administrative data and other information, this report identifies:

- The M&D country context in-depth to understand the manner in which migration currently affects development goals in the country.
- Data and information gaps on the nexus between M&D.
- M&D related issues and priorities in Sri Lanka.
- National and international frameworks/planning tools and best practices on effectively mainstreaming migration into development planning.

2.6 Sectors, Stakeholders and Themes

Based on the main themes emerging from the review of Sri Lanka specific and international literature, the relevant sectors of the economy for mainstreaming migration into development were identified. These are sectors such as health, education, security, urbanization, infrastructure, governance, social security, agriculture, rural development, private sector, trade, financial services, employment, environment and climate change which are considered in mainstreaming migration into development (IOM, Brussels, 2018; Global Migration Group, 2010).

At the same time, the literature notes that in order to identify priority sectors and stakeholders for targeting when mainstreaming migration into development, alternative approaches based on various United Nations tools are available. These include the United Nations Development Programme's Rapid Integrated Assessment and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Accelerator and Bottleneck Assessment, and IOM's Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF) and Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) (IOM, 2018). Among these alternatives, this study is based on IOM's MGI due to the following reasons: An MGI assessment was already completed in Sri Lanka in 2017 (IOM Colombo, 2018) and the MGI follow up assessment in Sri Lanka was underway concurrent to this

study. As such, there is a well-established network of stakeholders involved in providing valuable information related to migration in Sri Lanka, spanning the domains of migrants’ rights, whole of government approach, partnerships, well-being of migrants, mobility crises, and safe, orderly and dignified migration. As underscored by IOM (2018) “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)” (IOM Colombo, 2018, p. 1). Given this link between migration and development in MGI assessment and having formulated relevant stakeholders into focal points, the MGI framework offered a ready pool of resources for the current study on M&D to draw on.

The triangulation of sectors, stakeholders and themes emerging from the preliminary desk review with those covered in the MGI assessment in Sri Lanka, provided a comprehensive list of sectors, stakeholders and themes to be considered for the extensive desk review efforts under this M&D exercise. As depicted in

Exhibit 1, the unshaded rows reflect the sector and stakeholders covered in MGI related work in Sri Lanka. The other additional sectors and stakeholder that have potential to contribute to a comprehensive mainstreaming migration into development exercise are listed in the shaded region. As per the TOR, the final list of sectors, stakeholders and themes to be pursued for this study was determined by the research team of the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS), together with the State Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Diversification, the IOM project team, and the inter-ministerial committee established by the IOM. The list finalized in the above manner included 21 institutions that were covered in the extensive desk review analysis.

Exhibit 1: Sectors and Institutions for Analysis

No	Sector	Institution
1	Health	Ministry of Health
2	Education and skills	State Ministry of Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research and Innovation
3		Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission
4		Ministry of Education
5		Ministry of Higher Education
6		State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Pre-schools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services
7		Employment
8	Department of Labour	

9	Migration Governance, Security and Diplomacy	Department of Immigration and Emigration
10		State Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Market Diversification
11		Foreign Ministry
12		State Ministry of Home Affairs
13		Ministry of Justice
14	Social security	Department of Samurdhi Development
15	Economic development	Sustainable Development Council
16		Department of National Planning
17	Financial Services Sector	Ministry of Finance
18		Central Bank of Sri Lanka
19	Other sectors	Ministry of Agriculture
20		Ministry of Environment
21		Ministry of Youth & Sports

Source: Authors' compilation

2.7 Indicators

In assessing M&D, it is important to identify the indicators along which the assessment is carried out under different sectors and themes. As identified by the Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMIDI) (n.d.) indicators for mainstreaming migration into development are along two main dimensions; 1) institutional arrangements and 2) policy and practice. Institutional indicators focus on measures with potential to enhance cooperation and coordination on migration among various actors and institutions, while the indicators related to policies and practices are based on theoretical understanding of the linkages between migration and development. The JMIDI (n.d.) offers a list of potential indicators by dimension and sector as depicted in Exhibit 2 below. The list of indicators considered was selected by the IPS research team in consultation with the State Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Diversification, and the IOM project team.

Exhibit 2: List of indicators to be considered for M&D efforts

Dimension	Sector	Indicator
Institutional arrangement	Mapping the local context	Data and Evidence
		Needs Assessment
		Institutional Mapping
	Engagement and Coordination	Multi-stakeholder Engagement
		Civil Engagement
		Coordination
		Sustainability

	Implementation and Sustainability	Capacity Assessment
		Preparedness
Policy & Practice	Society	Migrant's Rights
		Social Cohesion & Xenophobia
		Diaspora Engagement
	Education	Inclusive Education
	Health	Inclusive Health care
	Labour/employment	Inclusive Employment
	Infrastructure	Inclusive Infrastructure
	Agriculture	Inclusive Agriculture & Food Security
	Investment	Inclusive Investment
Environment	Environment & Climate Change	

Source: Adopted from JMDI (n.d).

Along with these finalized lists of sector and indicators, the specific questions were developed for the data collection tools as discussed next.

2.8 Data Collection Tools

As discussed previously, this study intended to emulate the data collection process followed in the MGI assessment, through a self-administered matrix (SAM) administered to government stakeholders to understand the manner in which migration is considered within the mandates of these institutional structures. The SAM was expected to nurture ownership and sustainability for the efforts related to mainstreaming migration into development from the onset of the mainstreaming related efforts in Sri Lanka.

The SAM was to be administered to understand how these stakeholders contribute to the nexus between M&D within their institutional mandates. At the same time, to understand their perceptions about the adequacy of existing governmental efforts on M&D, the gaps, challenges and opportunities either a virtual Focus Group Discussion (FGD) or virtual Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were to be conducted.

As mentioned in the revised study scope, implementing the above was challenging due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, the nexus between M&D within institutional mandates of focal points is conducted through a desk review.

Self-administered Matrix (SAM)

Based on this preliminary desk analysis, a SAM was developed to collect qualitative data from key inter-ministerial focal points related to M&D as well as other stakeholders in the NGO, private and international organization sectors in Sri Lanka.

The SAM adopted the structure of a matrix where under each sector identified above, the relevant indicators (and sub-indicators) were listed with a rationale for each indicator. Subsequently, a structured question was asked related to each indicator/sub-indicator, followed by definition and guidance to enter responses. As shown in the sample self-administered matrix depicted in Exhibit 3 below, the respondent stakeholders were required to enter information in Columns (4) and (5). In filling Column (4) the respondent were to select the appropriate response from the list of structured answers provided, while in Column (5) a qualitative response was to be provided to justify the response in Column (4).

The self-administered matrix focused on gathering information on

- The country context in M&D.
- Identify existing and potential planning policies mechanisms, processes, policies, legislation (at national, regional and international levels) and strategies that can factor in migration.
- Identify data and information gaps.
- The manner in which migration affects development goals.
- Identifying M&D priorities.

Amidst challenges due to the pandemic, even though the SAM was circulated to relevant stakeholders on, responses were not received as expected. As mentioned before, this was due to the data collection period coinciding with the third wave of the pandemic under which government sector institutions was operating at limited staff capacity, prioritizing on essential activities. As such, the primary data collection from stakeholders/institutions was eliminated from the research activities and an extensive desk research approach was adopted.

Although the primary data collection component of the study was subsequently eliminated from the scope of the study, the analysis continued to adopt the same themes and institutional focal points adopted for the SAM and related data collection. The analysis was conducted along the same themes and sectors by relying on secondary data.

Exhibit 3: Sample self-administered matrix

1. Indicator	2. Question	3. Select Response	4. Provide Explanation for Response	5. Provide References for Explanation (Specify policies/documents, and if available, provide source/link or attach soft copy)
2.2.c Inclusive education	(c.1) Has SL taken steps to address the implications of migration on education? (relevant to inward migrants) If not, what is inhibiting such steps from being taken?	[Yes/ No]		
	c.2) Has SL taken steps to address the implications of migration on education/human resource development? (relevant to outward migrants) If not, what is inhibiting such steps from being taken? If yes, mention all applicable options from the list below. 1-Employment specific skills development training 2-Destination specific skills development (language training, etc) 3-Foreign employment guidance/career fairs/events 4-Foreign study guidance/fairs/events 5- Guidance on managing family left behind 6- Education guidance for children left behind 5-Other (Specify)	[Yes/ No]		

Source: Authors' compilation based on JMDI (n.d.) and the Economist Intelligence Unit (2016)

2.9 Approach for Analysis

The data aimed to be collected in above tools and approaches were to be analysed using a combination of two main qualitative analysis methodologies – content analysis and thematic analysis.

Content analysis is an approach to identify patterns in texts. In this study, content analysis approach is applied mainly with regards to existing development related mechanisms, processes, strategies, policies, and legislation to evaluate the extent to which migration is factored in. Here, a more of a qualitative content analysis approach is adopted, where the meaning and semantic relationship of words and concepts are focused on, rather than a quantitative content analysis - which would focus on the frequency of the occurrence of terms migration or migrant in texts. Content analysis approach facilitates a systematic procedure for qualitative data analysis with high reliability due to the possibility for others to replicate and arrive at near similar results.

The content analysis process involves five main steps:

- (i) Identification of parameters for inclusion of content (or text) for the analysis, such as type of documents, documents from what type of institutions, time period of documents.
- (ii) Defining the units and categories of analysis, which involves determining the level at which the chosen texts would be analysed. In this study, it involves identifying the characteristics of the sectors/institutions that produced the text that refers to migration or related terms.
- (iii) Developing a set of key words or phrases to be coded i.e. migrant, migration, foreign employment, diaspora, etc.
- (iv) Coding of data. This step involved applying the above coding rules to the data collected.
- (v) Analyzing collected and coded data to arrive at conclusions. Here data was analysed to find patterns and discuss same to interpret their meaning, and make inferences about sectors, stakeholder and policies etc., that factor in migration in their development plans.

Apart from the content analysis, the study also involved a stylized version of thematic analysis. Here, an inductive approach to thematic analysis was adopted, where the identification of sectors, stakeholder and themes discussed previously provided the basis

for the set of preconceived themes to be focused on in the analysis. The thematic analysis focused on both semantic and a latent approach. The semantic approach involved analyzing the explicit content in documents as per the SAD, while the latent approach involves delving beyond the text to the nuances and assumptions underlying the texts.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Main Themes, Issues, Sectors and Potential Priorities in M&D

3.1.1 The M&D Nexus

According to the context of this study, migration is considered as the movement across borders - away from a migrant's habitual place of residence, regardless of their legal status, nature or causes of movement or the length of the stay in the country of destination (United Nations, n.d.), whereas development is considered as "process of improving the quality of a group of people, and in particular expanding the range of opportunities open to them" (Global Migration Group, 2010). Given the multifaceted nature of both migration and development, there is no simple one-way relationship between the two phenomena, and effects of migration on development are far from straightforward, thus leaving the link unsettled, ambivalent, or even contentious and contested (Skeldon, 2008).

As much as migration has an impact on development, it is also affected by development. As such "development can encourage migration and migration can also be a consequence of development deficiencies (IOM Brussels, 2020, p. 6). In general terms, economic growth and improved livelihoods foster the higher aspirations leading to migratory movements. Thus, increases in per capita income could make migration more affordable. For instance, IOM (2020) highlights countries earning USD 8,000–10,000 per capita annually produce three times more emigrants than countries earning USD 2,000 or less. Similarly, it is evident that better quality education can increase both the ability to migrate and the desire to do so, through a broader life outlook and increased aspirations (IOM, 2020).

Similarly, development deficiencies could have a decisive impact on migratory movements of people. Such development deficiencies are related to lack of health care, employment opportunities, climate change vulnerabilities, marginalization or inadequate service provisions. The latter is often connected to underlying structural

conditions of the country such as poor governance, acute and chronic poverty, conflicts and job insecurity (IOM, 2020). In the context of such developmental deficiencies both regular and irregular migration could be visible, specifically among young populations in most developing countries in the recent past (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019). Accordingly, evidence suggests that the South Asian region may be required to generate more than 13 million jobs every year to keep pace with its demographics and in sub-Saharan Africa, despite a smaller population, the challenge will be even greater where 15 million jobs will need to be generated each year to avoid such outmigration (IOM, 2020). Similarly, Vogler & Rotte (2000) suggest five main reasons behind the increase of migration in the course of development (specifically in least developed countries (LDCs)), such as dissolving financial restrictions, population growth, societal change, improved communication and transportation and expanding networks, which are often accompanied with the economic transitions of most LDCs. Further, evidence suggests that these people often migrate to developed or industrialized countries in search of better economic opportunities. As such, more developed countries experience faster growth in immigrant numbers (Sriskandarajah, n.d).

Literature points towards two arguments which lead to reduced migration as a result of development (Vogler & Rotte, 2000). One is the reduction of the income differential between sending and receiving countries, which leads to a convergence of living standards across the two countries, while the other is home preference, where potential migrants place a greater value for income in home country than abroad.

When combining all these factors, there is an inverse u-shaped relationship between migration and development. According to the migration transition theory, this phenomenon is often known as ‘migration hump’, where emigration tends to fall as economies grow/mature, and at the same time, emigration tends to rise in less developed countries as people may move in search of better economic prospects or safety (De Haas, 2010; IOM Brussels, 2020). In the context of such dynamics between migration and development, the current socioeconomic disparities across countries and the related pressures for migration in the future the share of the world’s population living and working outside their home countries, would increase from the current 3.5% (UNFPA, 2004). Against this backdrop of significant human mobility, the nexus between M&D has gained greater attention among a wide spectrum of stakeholders.

3.1.2 Issues & Priorities

Migration is a complex and fluid socioeconomic, political, and cultural phenomenon that involves millions of people moving around at any given moment (UNFPA, 2004). Therefore, the extent to which migration has development implications for origin and destination countries would depend on number of interacting factors, such as volume, patterns and dynamics of migration flows. The impact of migration on development also can vary across regions of migratory flows for similar reasons. IOM Colombo (2018) identifies inward migration, outward migration, border management, migration crises and migration data among the potential priority areas to focus on migration in the context of Sri Lanka. Similarly, OECD, (2017) further underscores “issues and priorities in the context of migration & development” in terms of several dimensions of migration, namely emigration, immigration, return migration and remittances, which overlap with the above mentioned priorities identified by IOM Colombo (2018). The UNFPA (2006) adopts a broader approach and identifies migration as a development force, the special needs of women migrants, the human rights of international migrants, human trafficking, refugee protection, and need for migration data/information/studies/analysis as migration priorities. The priorities and their associated issues emerging from literature are discussed below.

Outward migration - This represents an important asset for the economic & social well-being of migrants themselves, families left behind, as well as their home countries. Hence emigration has the potential to relieve labour market pressures, provide an incentive for skills upgrading and boost women’s economic and social independence in the countries of origin. Despite these opportunities, the contribution of emigration to the development of home countries remains still limited or untapped due to various issues. For instance, households left behind do not have the adequate tools to overcome negative short-term effects that emerge with the emigration of one or several members of the household or because the home country lacks inadequate mechanisms to harness the development potential of emigration. In addition, evidence suggest that public policies in most of home countries play a limited role in enhancing the positive contribution of emigration to their development or growth potential. As such, “emigration is a strong but underexploited asset for development” in most of the origin countries (OECD, 2017).

Remittances - This represents an important source of foreign funds for many developing countries, both in terms of absolute number and as a share of GDP (Clemens, 2014). One of the key issues associated with remittances is the existence of high remittance transfer cost in most developing countries, which results in reducing the effective amount of remittances received. At the same time, such high remittance costs encourage the use of informal channels, which impedes the contribution of remittances to the development of

domestic financial markets and, in turn, limits households' ability to use the formal financial system for their savings and investments. In such a context, encouraging flows of remittances and creating an enabling environment for productive investments of remittances are often considered emerging priority areas in the context of migration and development (OECD, 2017).

Return migration - This holds great development potential, stemming from the financial, human and social assets embodied in returnees. For instance, return migration derives various positive impacts on development in terms of investment in business start-ups and self-employment, transfer of skills and knowledge as well as on social norms. As such, harnessing the potential of return migration for development has emerged as an important policy priority in countries of origin (Wickramasekara, 2015). In connection with this, many developing countries have implemented several policies and programmes to grasp the potential of return migrants. However, weaknesses in the overall institutional framework such as deficient health systems, weak political institutions and unhealthy investment environments, hinder successful socioeconomic and psychological reintegration of returnees, which may discourage returning (OECD, 2017). Another issue is the disproportionate division of responsibility between host and origin country for return and reintegration of migrants (Weeraratne, 2020). Therefore, it is important to provide a favorable environment in the country of origin across social, economic, psychological as well as political realms, for returnees' successful reintegration and positive contribution towards development.

Immigration - This is an important asset for the countries of destination, which contributes to fulfill the existing demographic, labour and skill gaps in the population as well as for investments and tax revenues in the host countries. Despite these positive contributions to the economy, immigrants fall short on a number of key outcomes in their host country mainly due to issues and difficulties in assimilation or integration in the host countries. Such issues are mainly caused by existing public policies or their shortcomings. For instance, high levels of underemployment and low education rates and discrimination in access to education, health and social services, can undermine immigrants' contribution towards development in the host country and translates into missed opportunity for both immigrants and the host country (OECD, 2017).

Data - Evidence suggests that there is an emerging need for comprehensive, accurate and timely migration data on migratory stocks/flows, to provide a strong basis for the formulation and implementation of international migration policy and programmes (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019). Such a clear understanding of migrant

stocks and flows are critical for understanding the role of migrants and migration in the development of both origin and destination countries, and thereby for facilitating safe orderly and responsible migration and mobility of which will ultimately contribute towards development (UNFPA, 2004). Key issues in terms of data include the absence of standardize definitions for the different migration categories and terminologies, the varying quality of data and challenges in dissemination, access and utilization of data (UNFPA, 2006).

Gender - Globally, female migrants are growing around the world, both in terms of absolute numbers and as a percentage of the global migrant population, over the past few decades (UNFPA, 2006). According to UNDP data, the stock of female migrants has grown faster than stock of male migrant stocks in most of the receiving countries in the recent past (UNFPA, 2004). More importantly, it is noted that women constitute more than half of the migration population in most receiving countries. For instance, according to 2019 estimates, a greater share of migrant women is recorded in Northern America (52%) and Europe (51%) (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019). However, given these trends, women migrants are increasingly exposed to several types of vulnerabilities in terms of forced labour, gender discrimination, violence, human trafficking and sexual abuse, since they often work in gender segregated and unregulated sectors of the economy such as domestic work (UNFPA, 2004: UNFPA, 2006: ESCAP,2020). Given these trends, there's an emerging need to consider gender aspects into migration & development related concerns.

Border management - With increased international migration across countries, border management is a priority area due to its capacity to contributes to secure borders, uphold and enhance national security, and assist smooth movement of people across borders with potential for economic growth and poverty reduction. As such, as identified by IOM Colombo (2018) border management is best conducted using intelligence-driven and risk-based principles, which would assist in assessing and quickly clearing migrants at borders. As such, interceptions at borders should be driven by an intelligent and risk-based approach, where those a) involved in terrorism 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, are intercepted. In serving at borders, agencies with border functions need to collaborate and cooperate with domestic as well as international partner organizations to provide an efficient service to cooperate on border security, intelligence and risks for assessing the suitability of people crossing

borders. As such, some key issues in border management include cooperation across countries and striking a balance between national security and assisting movement of people.

Irregular or undocumented migration - Increasingly tight migration governance structures limit pathways for regular migration. As a result, many migrants resort to irregular pathways such as crossing borders without the proper documents, overstaying their visas, resorting to human smuggling networks for passage across borders or falling victim to human trafficking and become irregular or undocumented migrants in the country of destination (COD).

One key issue under irregular migration includes human rights of irregular migrants and their access to services. For instance, migrants with such irregular status lack opportunities for non-discriminatory access to rights and related services, since there is a lack of national and regional responses to irregular migration. At the same time, there is an overemphasis on criminalization, detention or removal of such irregular migrants (ESCAP, 2020), in the absence of reasonable acknowledgement of the benefit they bring to the host country, especially in terms of economic contribution by way of providing flexibility to the labour market. Other key issues include the inherent data gaps on irregular migration (Krairiksh, Lopez , & Bruce, 2015), and the inequitable burden-sharing across host and origin countries.

Migrants' Rights - Assuring human rights is one of the most critical determinants of migrants' well-being and gaining a greater social and economic development. Hence, it is important to ensure that migrants of all ages have access to affordable basic social and health services, including reproductive health. The emphasis on the human rights of migrants reflects an appreciation for the vulnerabilities of migrants to rights abuses and the necessity for national and international attention in this area. The continued deterioration of the human rights of migrants, especially discriminatory and exclusionary practices and the increasing tendency to restrict the human rights of migrants is cause for concern. While states have the sovereign right to enact rules and regulations governing immigrants' entry and stay, international human rights instruments are required by the states to follow international humanitarian and human rights laws (UNFPA, 2006).

Migration Crises - The movement of migrants as an outcome of a crisis involve complex and often large-scale migration flows, typically involving individuals with significant vulnerabilities. As identified by IOM Colombo (2018) 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. Therefore, it is a priority to improve and systematize preparedness and responses to migration crises, with a plan that brings together different sectors and stakeholders of assistance 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. Some issues emerging from crisis situations is the excessive vulnerability of migrants compared to natives in the host countries during a crisis situation, the inadequacy of the preparedness of home and host country governments to support migrants in crisis, and the limited coordination between host and home countries to ensure the wellbeing of migrants during crises.

Diaspora Engagement - Diaspora communities can be defined in terms of most settled communities of migrants who maintain transnational ties with their country of origin (Krairiksh, Lopez , & Bruce, 2015). Diaspora are increasingly seen as a development force for both countries of origin and destination as a key source of remittances direct investments and human capital etc (UNFPA, 2004). Hence, most countries and respective government bodies are now paying attention to develop and maintain ties with their diaspora communities abroad. As such, several countries have attempted to link their diaspora directly to development by promoting sending and investment of remittances, direct investment, transfers of human capital, philanthropic contributions, capital market investments and diaspora tourism (Krairiksh, Lopez , & Bruce, 2015). Nevertheless, some challenges of diaspora engagement for development include the mismatch between the view of the diaspora and home country population/government, and limited trust placed by diaspora on the home country institutional and governance structures.

The aforesaid priorities and issues have become complex due to factors such as widening influence of migration on development; the involvement of a greater number of actors across these two areas; growing recognition of migration's mutual benefits and its inter-linkages with other sectors (UNFPA, 2004). Therefore, the issues and priorities in the context of migration and development have resulted in many planning and strategic frameworks at the global, regional and national levels to strengthen the co-ordination and collaboration at each level. The next section focuses on how migration is integrated into such developmental planning and strategic frameworks.

3.1.3 Sectors for Migration Mainstreaming

Interlinkages between migration and development and the priorities and issues emerging could be analysed in a comprehensive way, focusing on various sectors such as governance, legal protection, employment, social protection, health services, education, tertiary education, economic growth, financial services, trade, agriculture and rural development, infrastructure and environment as discussed below (GMG, 2010; GFMD, 2014).

Governance - This refers to the governance of the migration process in terms of protection of human rights, which is at the core of enhancing migration development impacts. On one hand, lack of good governance can be caused for migratory flows, including forced migration. On the other hand, migration can positively or negatively affect a country's governance. Therefore, both countries of origin and destination will need to have policies that are concerned with managing/ governing the emigration of their own nationals and receiving immigrants from other places (GMG, 2010).

Legal protection - Legal protection is both part of and a driver of development. Lack of legal protection in home countries can potentially be a prompt for outmigration. Therefore, governments should ensure that national laws and practice could promote and protect human rights in all aspects, while ensuring the migrant rights at all stages of the migration process in countries of origin, transit and destination. On the other hand, if the legal protection related push factors have not been resolved, returned migration would be less likely, and tend to contribute to country of origin as members of the diaspora. Therefore, ensuring a certain standard of legal protection is probably a good strategy for both countries of origin and destination, to make migration as more development-friendly approach (GMG, 2010).

Social protection - Social protection is also claimed as a critical determinant of country's development and often closely interrelated with migration. For instance, social exclusion and the lack of opportunities in the home countries may trigger as push factor for migrant's outflows, while formal or informal social protection in destination countries may drive as pull factors for migrant's inflows (UNFPA, 2004). However, migration can also lead migrants and their families to become exposed into certain risks and vulnerabilities at each stage of the migration process which require further social protection strategies, especially in the countries of destination. For instance, in countries of destination, migrants could become victims of discrimination and social marginalization, and face difficulties in accessing basic services and other social benefits.

And in countries of origin, separation of family members can lead to vulnerabilities for children and families left behind. As such, social protection can be seen as a way to address the risks and vulnerabilities created by migration and also to make migration as a more development friendly aspect (GMG, 2010).

Employment - Employment is a critical determinant of country's development and often closely link with migration in both countries of origin and destination (GMG, 2010). For instance, outmigration would create labour shortage in countries of origin and may often result a decrease in the national output, based on the premise that those who have the capacity to leave are often the most productive. On the contrary, outmigration may also result a reduction of unemployment and underemployment, thus positively affecting the economy of country of origin. Also, on the other hand, immigration of most productive workers would increase the national output of countries of destination. Therefore, both countries of origin and destination should consider migration as a critical component in employment-related objectives like decent work, job growth and development.

Health services - Health and migration are linked and interdependent (Global Forum on Migration & Development, 2014). More importantly, these links revolve around two clusters of issues; 1) the health of (often lower-skilled) migrants and how it affects human development in different phases of the migration cycle and 2) the challenges migration presents for health systems in countries of origin and destination, including disease control and ensuring health of migrant workers (GMG, 2010). For instance, lack of access to quality health-care services in countries of origin may trigger as push factor for migrant's outflows, and on the other hand; migrants with low social status and lower education, including undocumented migrants, can face barriers to have equal access to health-care services and related social protection mechanisms in countries of destination. Therefore, it is necessary to promote migrant-sensitive health policies and public health strategies; and ensure equitable access to health-care services for migrants and their families without discrimination, especially in both countries of origin and destination (Global Forum on Migration & Development, 2014).

Education - Education is a critical component of human development and a cornerstone for a country's economic growth and development as well as often closely interrelated with migration (GMG, 2010). On one hand, educational attainment can influence the decision to emigrate. Also, limited access, poor quality and the costs of education in the countries of origin may trigger as a push factor for most of the people to emigrate in search for better opportunities. In contrast, migrants in countries of destination may also

experience lack in access to education due to factors such as their legal status, or language barriers, which can both impede access to schooling (Global Forum on Migration & Development, 2014). Also the absence of quality education opportunities at tertiary level also inspire some people to emigrate to pursue education abroad and such emigratory flows would lead to reduce the stock of skilled workforce in home countries, resulting the effect of 'brain drain' – but it can be offset by other aspects of migration such as immigration, return, remittances spent on skills development and incentive effects (Global Forum on Migration & Development, 2014). On the other hand, development of the tertiary education sector can make countries more attractive for students from neighboring and other developing countries, with increased economic benefits in terms of skills acquisition and capital/financial inflows, which is ultimately lead to growth and development of countries of destination (GMG, 2010).

Finance services - Migration, development and the financial services sector are often interlinked with each other in different perspectives, where remittances play a major role within it. Given that, limited access to financial services may drive people to migrate, as people with a business idea or other aspiration that requires credit may go abroad in order to earn the necessary capital (GMG, 2010). On the other hand, migrants have to turn up to financial markets in order to be able to finance their move abroad, as they lack the resources up-front to pay the costs. Since the costs of borrowing under formal structures are lower, and access to such formal channels or regulated financial systems tend to be beneficial for migrants and their families, thus encouraging their productive use and lowering the cost of remittances, which is ultimately lead to growth and development of both countries of origin and destination (Global Forum on Migration & Development, 2014).

Trade and investment - Trade and investment can make an important contribution to development, primarily by stimulating economic growth (GMG, 2010). International trade and investment allow countries to allocate resources more efficiently, specialize in sectors in which they have a comparative advantage, create employment, and access technologies and know-how, etc. More prominently, migration can also create important opportunities to develop foreign trade links, thus promoting the export and import of goods and services that foster economic growth and a rise in income levels (GMG, 2010). In this connection, evidence suggest that migrants may facilitate the development of trade and investment by establishing social and business networks that will ultimately lead to improve the quality of information flowing and encourage trade and investment flows between countries of origin and destination (OECD, 2017). As such OECD (2017) further

highlights that, countries tend to trade and invest more with countries from which they have received more migrants and, for trade, this relationship appears to be stronger where information barriers like distance and language would otherwise more greatly inhibit trade.

Agriculture and rural development - Although the agriculture is one of the most predominant livelihood strategies in the developing world, the precarious nature of rural livelihoods and several other factors such as remoteness, access to markets, level of mechanization, property rights often push families to look for alternative employment opportunities, including migration (GMG, 2010). As a result of migration, 'labour gaps' could be created in the household left behind. In some cases, this may be offset by remittances (which allow the household to buy the extra labour if needs), but in many instances, such labour gaps can create extra burdens on families left behind. Also, based on the fact that greater requirement of labour in agriculture intensification; outmigration could potentially limit agricultural intensification. Immigration, on the other hand, may replace foreign labour, while remittances may permit investment in more productive farming practices, or migrants may return with social remittances in terms of new knowledge and technologies, all of which could contribute to agricultural intensification in and of itself (GMG, 2010).

Infrastructure - Infrastructure is one of the most important factors of development and serves as the foundation for the development of many other sectors by making vital services (such as transportation, communications, energy, and water supply) more accessible (GMG, 2010). In essence, infrastructure can also constitute a critical determinant of migration, based on the fact that disparities in access to such services may subsequently generate inequalities in the society. However, the nature of the impact of infrastructure on migration and the relationship between the two is very context specific. For instance, it could constitute a migration push factor, given the fact that, migrant's desire to access to better infrastructure in their country of destination, or to make money and remit to their families, which in turn lead to pursue quality education, better housing, and so on. Also, remittances sent home by migrants increase overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which in turn can be used in development projects for improving the public infrastructure in countries of origin. On the other hand, infrastructure can also be a pull factor if people migrate in order to take up opportunities to work in construction or maintenance work. Thus, countries in developing world can often benefit from the earnings of its nationals overseas or from new migrants who have come to its shores to work, towards the development of its infrastructure. However large inflows of migrants,

especially in urban settings, can strain existing infrastructures and lead to the deprivation of living conditions in poorly serviced areas, such as slum dwellings (Global Forum on Migration & Development, 2014).

Environment - Environment can also be considered as a constituent of development and migration (GMG, 2010). Changes to the natural environment can make livelihoods and economic activities more difficult to sustain and ultimately drive people for migration. However, the relationship between environment and migration is complex. Environmental changes might influence peoples' mobility (e.g., rural to urban areas and urban to cross-border) having significant consequences on people's livelihoods and desired personal and professional objectives. In such instances, migration can derive positive effects on the environment and socioeconomic development in areas of origin. Migration, for example, may reduce population pressure on land and the local labour market, and thus directly promote environmental and economic recovery of the areas of origin. In addition, migrants can also contribute to the development of their home countries through remittances and other non-monetary contributions. For destination countries, migration can improve the labour force and its knowledge of how to better utilize environmental resources or improve the quality of the environment. However, if poorly managed such mass inflows, migration may have detrimental effects on the environment in areas of destination, resulting issues such as unsustainable consumption of water, food and fuel etc. (GMG, 2010).

3.2 Review of Global and Regional Mechanisms for Integrating Migration into Development Planning

Numerous global and regional initiatives on how to make migration work for development in practical ways have emerged, resulting in attempts to include migration concerns in development agendas of countries around the world (Sørensen, 2016). The examination of the current and foreseen regional development planning tools and information on strategic development planning frameworks in this section is carried out separately for those focusing on the global level and those at the regional level. These include global initiatives, which are already focused on harnessing the nexus between M&D initiatives, where migration has potential and well-established connections to development. Similarly, regional initiatives, mainly on migration, which have potential to contribute to M&D together are reviewed at the end.

3.2.1 Current Global Development Frameworks

In September 2006, the United Nations held its first High-Level Dialogue on International Migration & Development (HLD), bringing out the full arrival of this subject on the global platform (Crush & Frayne, 2007). Further, the second High-Level Dialogue in 2013 focused on the role of migration in the post 2015 development framework and these paved way for the development of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which became the first international development framework to include and recognize the contribution of migration to sustainable development. Following that, a number of non-binding, but nonetheless influential, frameworks have also been initiated at global level to help or guide states in their treatment of migrants, such as those discussed below (Krairiksh, Lopez , & Bruce, 2015).

Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)

Founded in 2006, the GFMD is considered as one of largest state-led, informal, voluntary and non-binding processes, helping to shape the global migration and development debate outside the United Nations, while bringing together expertise from all regions and countries at all stages of economic, social and political development across the world (Global Forum on Migration & Development, 2020). As such, GFMD is a common platform, which allows governments in partnership with civil society, the private sector, the United Nations system, and other relevant stakeholders to discuss the multidimensional aspects, opportunities and challenges related to migration and development and thereby, building consensus, pose innovative solutions, and share policies and practices.

Accordingly, the GFMD process is driven by five main objectives. The first is to informally discuss relevant policies, practical challenges and opportunities related to migration and development with the engagement of a wide spectrum of stakeholders including government and non-government organizations. The second objective is to exchange good practices and experiences in order to maximize the development benefits of migration, while the third focuses on identifying information, policy and institutional gaps necessary to gain synergies and greater policy coherence between M&D at national, regional and international levels. The fourth objective of GFMD aims to establish partnerships and collaboration between countries, and a wide spectrum of stakeholders on migration and development, while the final objective aims to structure international priorities and agendas on migration and development (Global Forum on Migration & Development, 2020).

In line with these objectives, GFMD has adopted a human rights-based approach to migration policymaking and advocated for the inclusion of migration in the 2030 Agenda. In addition, both the New York Declaration and the Global Compact for Migration have also recognized the importance of the GFMD in advancing the international dialogue on migration, sharing good practices on policies and cooperation, promoting innovative approaches, and fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships around specific policy issues (ESCAP, 2020).

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Member States of the United Nations have developed a set of SDGs, approved by the General Assembly in September 2015, which entail 17 goals and 169 targets. In response to the number of debates around M&D, migration and migrants have also been positioned in the new 2030 agenda, which recognizes migration as an enabler of development (Krairiksh, Lopez, & Bruce, 2015). As such, the 2030 agenda is relevant to all mobile populations regardless of whether internal or cross-border, displaced or not: goals and targets will be met for all nations and peoples and all segments of society (IOM, 2018). It recognizes migrant women, men and children as a vulnerable group to be protected, and as agents of development. All types of migration should also be considered, including displacement (IOM, 2018, p. 13).

Accordingly, the central reference to migration is made in target 10.7 under the goal of “Reduce inequality in and among countries”, calling to “facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.” Many other targets also directly reference migration (e.g., Target 1.3 under the goal of “End poverty in all its forms everywhere” to implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and vulnerable; Target 8.8 under the goal of “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” to protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment) (IOM, 2018).

Therefore, implementation of the SDGs provides an opportunity to protect and empower mobile populations to fulfill their development potential and derive benefits for individuals, communities and countries around the world. Moreover, SDGs address

migration through the lenses of governance and rights, providing a framework to strategically guide future practice by states, United Nations and other actors towards the most important actions to enable positive outcomes of migration for development (Krairiksh, Lopez , & Bruce, 2015).

Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)

In December 2018, UN member states agreed on the landmark GCM with the aim of managing international migration in all its dimensions (Migration Data Portal, 2020). In fact, this non-binding cooperative framework addresses all aspects of international migration in a more holistic and comprehensive manner and is considered in the 2030 SDG Agenda. More importantly, this covers a “360-degree vision of international migration and identifies the need for a comprehensive approach to optimize the overall benefits of migration while addressing risks and challenges for individuals and communities in countries of origin, transit and destination” (ESCAP, 2020, p. 22). Also, it “promotes international cooperation among all relevant actors on migration, conceding that no State can address migration alone, and upholds the sovereignty of States and their obligations under international law”, including human rights obligations (ESCAP, 2020, p. 22).

GCM entails 23 objectives for better managing migration at local, national, regional and global levels. At the same time, GCM consists of ten cross-cutting and interdependent guiding principles namely, people-centeredness, international cooperation, national sovereignty, rule of law and due process, sustainable development, human rights, gender-responsiveness, child-sensitivity, and whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, which connect migration into development related concerns as well. As such, GCM is deemed to be consistent with target 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development in which member states commit to cooperate internationally to facilitate orderly, safe and responsible migration (Migration Data Portal, 2020).

Nansen Initiative

The Nansen Initiative aims to build a consensus on displacement in disaster contexts. The Initiative was launched by the Governments of Norway and Switzerland in October 2012 and is directed by a Steering Group that also includes representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Germany, Kenya, Mexico and the Philippines, with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as a standing invitee. It

has held consultations in five subregions, including the Pacific, South Asia and South-East Asia (Krairiksh, Lopez , & Bruce, 2015).

The Initiative identified a wide range of protection measures for people affected by disasters, including issuing humanitarian visas, stays of deportation, granting refugee status in exceptional cases, bilateral and regional arrangements for the free movement of persons, expediting regular migration channels, and the issuance of work permits. In October 2015, States adopted the Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change (Krairiksh, Lopez , & Bruce, 2015).

3.2.2 Current Regional Mechanisms & Processes

There are number of regional processes which have led to agreements in opening up avenues for migration routes and regulating the treatment of migrant workers, including Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Bali Process, Colombo Process, Abu Dhabi Dialogue and Asia-EU Dialogue on Labour Migration, etc. Among these ASEAN, PIFS and SAARC consist of more formal agreements, which are related to development (rather migration and development), with reference to migration in terms of human trafficking and labour migration, etc. At the same time, the Bali Process, Colombo Process, Abu Dhabi Dialogue and Asia-EU Dialogue on Labour Migration to name a few, are more migration specific arrangements. As outlined below, the scope, effectiveness and implementation of agreements vary widely between sub-regions, while their potential for development also stand at varying degrees.

ASEAN

The ASEAN was established on 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) initially with five member countries including Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Later, Brunei Darussalam, Viet Nam, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Cambodia joined to make up the current ten Member States of ASEAN (ASEAN, 2020). The development objective is inbuilt within the ASEAN framework, where development of the region and member states is one of the cross-cutting themes of the seven aims and purposes of the ASEAN. For instance, Vu (2020, p. 2) highlights that "ASEAN as an economic bloc is one of the top worldwide destinations for foreign direct investment

(FDI), and its trade-to-GDP ratio exceeds 100%". Amidst its economic growth and development emphasis, over the years ASEAN has adopted a number of declarations directly and indirectly addressing issues related to migration such as, 2004 Declaration Against Trafficking in Persons, Particularly Women and Children; the 2007 Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers; the 2013 Declaration on Social Protection recognizing the right of migrant workers to social security; the 2017 Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers and the 2019 ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration (ESCAP, 2020). In essence, the primary focus of most of these declarations was to a develop a regional position on migration by ensuring migrant rights. For instance; with regards to migrant rights, the 2007 declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers was adopted, which focused on "strengthening the political, economic and social pillars of the ASEAN Community by promoting the full potential and dignity of migrant workers in a climate of freedom, equity and stability in accordance with the laws, regulations and policies of respective ASEAN member countries" (Krairiksh, Lopez , & Bruce, 2015, p. 117).

Moreover, the ASEAN Economic Community has been established with the aim of promoting economic integration among member states, while allowing the free movement of skilled and professional labour, as a result of mutual agreement across member countries. The outlined plan for the ASEAN Economic Community for 2025 asserts that these arrangements aim to facilitate the temporary cross-border movement of natural persons and business visitors engaged in the process of trade in goods, trade in services, and investment. The blueprint also refers to remittances and notes that it aims to make payment systems safe, efficient and competitive. As such, evidence suggests that these initiatives have open up avenues to address the M&D related aspects in the region (ESCAP, 2020).

PIFS

The PIFS is one of the premier political and economic policy organizations, established in 1971 with 18 member countries including Australia, Cook Islands, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu (PIFS, 2021). The forum is guided by the "Framework for Pacific Regionalism", which supports political conversations and initiatives that address key strategic issues in the region as well as promotes an inclusive regional policy development process. In 2017, PIFS leaders endorsed their roadmap for sustainable

development indicators to guide regional efforts and pledged support to countries for implementation, monitoring and reporting on global and regional sustainable development commitments with the underlying principle of leaving no one left behind (ESCAP, 2020). To this end, one main focus of PIFS is to increase mobility in the region via recognizing the potential for increased regional mobility and contributing to economic integration, greater investment and improved business practices, which paves the way to address both mobility and development related concerns of the member countries. (ESCAP, 2020).

As such, PIFS facilitates negotiations among its member countries in a wide range of both M&D related areas. Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA) is one of such initiative which was entered into action in 2003 and covers trade in services, under which one component is the temporary movement of natural persons, focusing on skilled and semi-skilled workers. Moreover, this entails three broader purposes namely, 1) to address critical domestic labour shortages; 2) to promote the temporary movement of skilled people between Forum Island Countries and encourage economic growth; and 3) to promote the development of some Forum Island Countries as labour deploying countries (Krairiksh, Lopez , & Bruce, 2015). Moreover, the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations Plus (PACER-Plus), signed in 2017, is another initiative which facilitates the cross-border movement of skilled workers, contractual service suppliers and business visitors, which resulted in a Labour Mobility Arrangement involving PACER-Plus signatories, observers, industry and civil society representatives, as well as other relevant stakeholders. Notwithstanding, none of the PACER-Plus provisions regarding labour mobility are binding. However, evidence suggest that development assistance is required to assist Pacific Island countries to harness the full potential benefits of labour mobility across the region, including by opening up windows to international markets through facilitating the mobility of learners and workers (Pacific Community, 2020).

SAARC

The SAARC was established with the signing of the SAARC Charter in Dhaka in 1985, with eight member countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka (SAARC, 2020). Major objectives of the SAARC cover three dimensions including growth, cultural development and social progress (SARTUC, n.d). Towards, this member states of the SAARC cooperate on many areas not limited to human resource development; agriculture, rural development, environment; trade, finance, poverty alleviation, education, security tourism and culture. Along these

areas, in 2014, the Eighteenth SAARC Summit Declaration, committed to establish South Asian Economic Union to facilitate free trade, a common market, and a common economic and monetary union in the region, which address both migration and development concerns.

Similarly, the 18th SAARC summit recognized the need for SAARC's regional cooperation and to revitalize SAARC as an effective vehicle to fulfill the developmental aspects of the people of South Asia; and for the first time endorsed in migration agenda (SARTUC, n.d). As a result, the member countries agreed "to collaborate and cooperate on safe, orderly and responsible management of labour migration from South Asia to ensure safety, security and wellbeing of their migrant workers in the destination countries outside the region" (ESCAP, 2020, p. 164). In line with these aspirations of the association, the SAARC members have committed to a number of international instruments to uphold the rights and well-being of all individuals, including migrant workers.² To facilitate easy mobility across the region the Association introduced a SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme in 1992, where selected categories of entitled persons, such as dignitaries, judges of higher courts, parliamentarians, senior officials, businessmen, journalists and sportsmen are issued a visa (exemption) Sticker generally valid for one year.

As discussed above, there are several regional arrangements that primarily focus on improving economic growth and development in the region. Nevertheless, as highlighted in the foregone discussion, these development centric regional arrangements also facilitate a migration interest within their scope. On the contrary, there are some regional arrangements which primarily focus on mobility. The discussion below examines the developmental dimensions addressed in these migration centric regional frameworks.

Bali Process (BP)

² As such, most of the countries in the region have adopted the Universal Declaration on Human Rights 1948, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), 1966, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1966 and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1979, while a few countries in the region are also signatories to the International Convention on the Protection of Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (1990) and/or are considering ratifying the Domestic Workers' Convention 2011- C189, the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention 1975- C143, and the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 - C181 (SARTUC, n.d).

The Bali Process (BP) on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime was established in 2002 as the largest consultative process in the Asia Pacific region, chaired by Australia and Indonesia. Currently it has 49 members including states in the region, and international organizations such as ILO, IOM, UNHCR and UNODC (ESCAP, 2020). The aim of the Bali process is to prevent irregular migration, criminalization and traffickers, via opening up avenues for legal channels of migration that would help in addressing irregular migration and the activities of people smugglers and human traffickers (Bali Process, 2015). As such, the Bali process has improved regional coordination on migratory issues, developed business partnerships to end human trafficking and modern slavery, and created a platform for greater information sharing (Bali Process, 2015).

More importantly, BP has a unique level of engagement with civil society and private sector, where the “Bali Process Government and Business Forum” is an example for bringing senior business leaders and Government ministers across the Asia-Pacific region together to contribute towards the eradication of trafficking in persons, forced labour, modern slavery and child labour (ESCAP, 2020). Moreover, the BP considers that the sustained engagement of civil society is a priority of in addressing irregular migration issues (Bali Process, 2015). Similarly, the PB creates a platform to share information, promising practices and lessons learnt, and to demonstrate progress in support of achievement of target 8.7 under goal 8 of the 2030 Agenda (ESCAP, 2020).

Colombo Process (CP)

Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin in Asia or the Colombo Process was established in 2003 as a platform for countries of origins to discuss ‘regular labour migration’. Two underlying objectives of the CP are 1) to consult on issues faced by overseas workers, and labour-sending and receiving States and to propose practical solutions for the well-being of those workers; and (2) to optimize development benefits from organized overseas employment and enhance dialogue with countries of destination (Colombo Process, 2015). Currently there are 12 members including Sri Lanka, with Afghanistan acting as chair for 2021. The other member states are Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet nam.

The CP process addresses five priority thematic areas, namely 1) skills and qualifications recognition processes; 2) ethical recruitment practices; 3) pre-departure orientation and empowerment; 4) cheaper, faster and safer transfer of remittances; and 5) labour-market analysis. These priority thematic areas are linked by four cross-cutting themes involving 1) migrant health; 2) implementation of the migration-related elements of SDGs; 3) promotion of equality for women migrant and workers; and 4) consular support for migrant workers (ESCAP, 2020).

The CP efforts to encourage efficient remittance transfers, develop mechanisms for recognizing workers' qualifications and appropriate pre-departure orientation contribute towards the nexus between M&D (Colombo Process, 2015). Similarly, CP activities such as development of a comprehensive training curriculum for labour attachés and overseas labour administrators and conducting of regional workshops for employment agencies on locating workers in Europe, reflect other dimensions of the M&D nexus of this regional arrangement (Colombo Process, 2015).

Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD)

Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD) is one of the voluntary, non-binding and intergovernmental regional consultative process, which was established in 2018, with the participation of 18 member countries (including 12 countries of origin (COOs) and 6 countries of destination). A unique feature of the ADD is the integration of member states representing both CODs and COOs. As such, the 12 member states of the ADD that represent the countries of origin include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Viet nam, while the 6 COD member states include Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen (SARTUC, n.d). The main purpose of ADD is to provide a platform for the exchange of ideas and actions towards the development of a comprehensive and practical framework for the managing temporary contractual labour mobility in Asia (Colombo Process, 2015). Simultaneously ADD also provides forum for dialogue and cooperation on multiple issues related to governing overseas of labour migration in the region (SARTUC, n.d).

The ADD focuses on four key action-oriented partnerships concerning temporary contractual labour, based on the premise of partnership and shared responsibility. The first aims at developing and sharing knowledge on labour-market trends, skills profiles, workers and remittance policies and flows, and the relationship to development, while

the second is for building capacity for more effective matching of labour supply and demand. The third partnership aim is for preventing irregular recruitment and promoting welfare and protection measures for contractual workers, while the last is for developing a framework for a comprehensive approach to managing the entire cycle of temporary contractual work that fosters the mutual interests of countries of origin and destination (ESCAP, 2020).

Given these concerns, ADD supports the member states to establish effective partnerships and to adopt best practices to enable safe, orderly and regular labour migration in some of the world's largest temporary labour migration corridors, through multi-lateral dialogue and cooperation on the joint development of labour mobility-related programming, implementation, and reporting. Civil society has also been invited to contribute to these dialogues and in recent years to partner in realization of some of the program areas (SARTUC, n.d). Nevertheless, despite being an ideal platform to take on a greater focus on M&D, the current emphasis on development dimensions of the migration centric regional arrangement is limited.

Asia-EU Dialogue on Labour Migration

In 2008, Asia – EU Dialogue on Labour Migration has been initiated to develop and enhance inter and intra-regional exchange of ideas and strategies on facilitating managed and legal migration between Asia and the European Union (EU), with the participation of 28 member states of the European Union and 11 member states of the Colombo Process (IOM UN Migration, n.d.).

The aim of Asia – EU Dialogue on Labour Migration is to identify key trends and issues, common policy concerns and to promote actions that will facilitate safe and legal labour migration between the two regions. These are often achieved by giving due consideration to regional and national perspectives and policies, thus allowing for origin countries to better understand the challenges faced by destination countries and vice versa (IOM UN Migration, n.d.).

To this end, the current focus of this Dialogue involves both migration and development related aspects such as development of safe and legal labour migration; improving data and its dissemination to relevant governments, employers and potential migrant workers; matching labour needs with labour supply; combating irregular migration; protection of the rights of migrant workers and their families; monitoring of recruitment

agencies, codes of conduct; development potential of labour migration for origin and destination countries (IOM UN Migration, n.d.).

The mechanisms discussed above are those that emerged as most relevant to M&D at the global level and to M&D in the Asian/South Asian region. Several other mechanisms exist for regions outside Asia such as the Manila Process, Budapest Process, Prague Process, etc. (Refer Annex 1 for a comprehensive list).

3.2.3 Foreseen Frameworks

The prevailing global crisis related to COVID-19 affects all countries around the world resulting in serious implications particularly for migrant communities (ESCAP, 2020). As such, the impact of the pandemic on migrants results from personal, social, situational and structural factors, extending beyond their health to further affect their socioeconomic situation and protection in complex, and interconnected ways (ESCAP, 2020). These implications have highlighted some pre-existing issues faced by migrants and underscored the need for mechanisms and frameworks to address or mitigate the same. Below are two such recent developments with international collaboration across stakeholders with potential to develop into formal consultative processes or organizations.

Call for Action on Remittances by Switzerland and UK

With the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, migrant workers and their families are increasingly suffering from the economic consequences of the crisis. One key area of difficulty faced during the early stages of the pandemic in 2020 was due to the substantial disruption of remittance flows, mainly due to issues in accessing remittance service providers under lockdown situations. This affected migrants, members of diaspora communities, as well as the families, communities, and economies that rely on receiving remittances. The secondary impacts of COVID-19 have also resulted in migrants having less or no income due to the closure or reduced operating hours of remittance service providers, having limited access to cash, as well as difficulties in accessing remittance transfer services due to travel restrictions (SDC Network of Migration & Development, 2020).

In this context, the Call to Action “Remittances in Crisis: How to Keep them Flowing” was jointly launched in May 2020 by the Governments of Switzerland and the United Kingdom, in partnership with the World Bank/KNOMAD, UNCDF, IOM, UNDP, the International Association of Money Transfer Networks (IAMTN) and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). The aim of the Call to Action is to raise awareness and call on different stakeholders in the remittances sector to take steps to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on remittance flows, migrants, members of diaspora communities, as well as the families, communities and economies that rely on receiving remittances.

Specifically, it highlights that policymakers, regulators and remittance service providers needed to improve migrants’ access to remittance services, by enabling physical or digital access to cross-border financial service providers/facilitators. Further, it calls on policy makers to declare the provision of remittance services as an essential service during the crisis and on service providers to reduce or waive remittance transfer costs as a gesture of solidarity during the ongoing crisis (SDC Network of Migration & Development, 2020).

Civil Society Calls for Unclaimed Wages

The COVID19 pandemic has resulted in an economic fallout for an estimated 195 million people who have lost jobs. Out of this, an estimated 5 million are in the Middle East, of which most are migrant workers. At the same time, there is a risk that employers may take advantage of the pandemic situation to terminate and/or return workers who have not been paid due compensation, wages and benefits.

As such, there is a dire need for proper controls or procedures to ensure that repatriated workers do not lose out on receiving their due wages, compensation and benefits (The Global Union Federation of Workers in Public Services, 2020). To address the absence of a mechanism to help such repatriated or returned migrant worker, the Justice for Wage Theft campaign was initiated, where a call was made for states to ensure that employers are fulfilling their human rights obligations. This initiative warns that without proper oversight states may become ‘complicit’ in a situation where workers do not earn their wages, have workplace grievances unheard, nor receive justice (The Global Union Federation of Workers in Public Services, 2020).

In line with the above-mentioned global and regional mechanisms, country-specific efforts are needed to mainstream migration into national development planning tools. Such mainstreaming would harness the benefits of migration on development in a way that suits the given national context. Therefore, the following chapter outlines the M&D content in Sri Lanka, identifies national development planning tools and strategic priorities for Sri Lanka, and assesses the extent to which migration policies/priorities have been integrated into the same.

3.3 Existing Analytical Frameworks and Methodologies for M&D

The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) in collaboration with the Global Development Network in 2007, has conducted a project on “*Global Development on the Move*” with the aim of assessing wide range of economic and social impacts of international migration on development, using comparable data of seven countries including Colombia, Fiji, Georgia, Jamaica, Macedonia and Vietnam. Accordingly, the IPPR project has analysed wide range of migration’s effect on development in terms of economic impacts, educational impacts, gender impacts and wider social impacts. Subsequently, impacts for individual migrants and themselves, plus their families, communities and nations were analysed. In the later stage, impacts that occur both directly as a result of movement (through immigration, emigration and returns) and indirectly (through remittances, other transfers) and the potential that migration has to change people’s behavior were analysed. In addition, non-economic factors impacting development in countries of origin also were analysed using a combination of different analytical methods for its impact analysis, including a cross-country regression analysis. For the purpose of data collection, stakeholder interviews and nationally representative household surveys were carried out in all seven countries (Chappell & Sriskandarajah, 2007).

Further, ACP Observatory on Migration in collaboration with International Organization for Migration (IOM) has proposed a set of core indicators, with the aim of providing a comprehensive framework for measuring the impact of migration on human development and vice versa. These indicators cover several areas including economics and assets, demography factors, education, gender, wider social, governance rights, environment, and other transfers, which enable to sketch out the interrelationships between migration and development (Melde, 2012)

In a more comprehensive manner, OECD Development Centre has also conducted a project on “Interactions between Public Policies, Migration & Development” (IPMD) during 2013-2017, targeting ten developing countries with the aim of exploring untapped development potential embodied in migration and the roles of a range of sectoral policies in realizing this potential. Given that, the IPMD team designed a conceptual framework that links four dimensions of migration (including emigration, remittances, return migration and immigration) and five key policy sectors (including labour market, agriculture, education, investment and financial services and social protection and health). Notwithstanding, several aspects made IPMD approach more unique and important for shedding light on “Interrelations between Public Policies, Migration and Development”. Such aspects include 1) used the same survey tool in all ten countries over the same time period, 2) covered a wide range of migration dimensions and outcomes, including a broad overview of migration cycle, 3) examined a wide set of policy programmes across countries covering the five key sectors 4) both quantitative and qualitative survey tools were used to collect primary data from ten partner countries and finally 5) analysed the data using both descriptive and regression analysis. Also, for the purpose of primary data collection, three types of surveys were carried out including, household survey (covering both migrants and non-migrant households), community survey (covering local authorities and community leaders in the regions, where household survey was carried out) and qualitative in-depth stakeholder interviews (with key stakeholders representing national and local authorities, academia, international organizations, civil society and the private sector) (OECD, 2017).

In addition, the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), (2016) has introduced a migration governance index as a dedicated tool to assess the connection between migration, governance and development. More importantly, the EIU framework has been developed to evaluate country specific migration governance structures and to act as a potential source for notifying implementation of migration-governance related SDGs. Given that the index covers 15 countries to represent a broader level of economic development, type of migration profiles (including countries of origin and destination) and a wider geographic representation and uses 73 qualitative sub-indicators to measure performance across five key domains including 1) Institutional capacity, 2) migrant rights, 3) safe and orderly migration, 4) labour migration management and 5) regional and international cooperation and other partnerships (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2016).

Moreover, JMDI, (n.d) has further proposed a conceptual framework considering “mainstreaming migration into local development planning”, which is used as the base framework for this study. As such this particular framework/approach entails several guideline indicators under main two dimensions namely, 1) institutional arrangement and 2) policy and practice. Accordingly, the institutional indicators focus on measures that can enhance cooperation and coordination on migration among various actors and among local governments, while policy and practice indicators focus on linkages between migration and development across several sectors (JMDI, n.d).

3.4 Country Specific Strategies used in Mainstreaming Migration

Given the nexus between migration and development, there is a trend of using migration as a developmental tool by many countries and it has generated calls for mainstreaming migration into development. As such, many countries around the world tend to mainstream migration respectively into existing development strategies via National Development Plans (NDPs), Poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSP), Sector Wide Approaches (SWAPs), National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs), country and local employment strategies and into their donor, aid and development strategies (Melde & Ionescu, 2010). Moreover, Wickramasekara, (2015) has outlined such strategies in terms of; NDPs and PRSPs, National employment and human resource development strategies, Decent work country programmes (DWCP) and Cooperation agreements/statements with international organizations.

3.4.1 NDPs and PRSPs

Country development planning frameworks (such as NDPs and PRSPs) can be identified as main tools to incorporate/mainstream migration concerns into development agendas (GMG, 2010), which enable the countries for the translation of global objectives (e.g., the SDGs) to the national level as well as to design and implement the strategies responding to the needs and context of particular countries. As such, 2003 PRSP for Nepal and the Tenth Plan squarely addressed the importance of migration to the country, drawing specific attention to the key role that remittances in the economy (Lucas, 2008). Later, Nepal’s 2007 PRSP has also made two references to overseas migration and one reference to remittances (Lucas, 2008).

Also, Melde and Ionescu (2010, p. 24) has identified Bangladesh as one of LDCs that have successfully included migration into their PRSPs as mentioned below:

The 2005 Bangladeshi PRSP provides a good example of how migration issues can be mainstreamed in the development plan. Internal migration impacts of remittances on development and inter-regional migration are identified as significant elements that contribute to understanding changes in development and poverty reduction trends.

The latest Bangladesh PRSP for 2013 does not use the term mainstreaming in relation to international migration and the main focus of 2013 PRSP was to mainstream “Poverty-Environment-Climate Nexus” in the national planning process (IMF, 2013; as cited in Wickramasekara, 2015). However, it acknowledges the role of migration in creating employment opportunities, reducing interregional disparities, raising the economic status of women and the role of remittances (Wickramasekara, 2015).

Pakistan’s Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper - 2010 PRSP II - has stated only three references to internal migration, and one of such reference mentions that “Remittances play a significant role in poverty reduction in Pakistan and have the potential to do substantially more” (Government of Pakistan & IMF, 2010: 263; as cited in Wickramasekara, 2015).

However, when considering the 12th Five Year Plan document issued by India in 2013, that does not make any direct reference to “international labour migration”, thus few references are made to “internal migration” (National Planning Commission India, 2013; as cited in Wickrmasekara 2015).

Moreover, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) Commission have jointly prepared a regional PRSP on “Regional Integration Growth and Poverty Reduction in West Africa: Strategies and Plan of Action” as a complement to the National Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (NPRSPs) and is linked to the Millennium Development Goals (GMG, 2010). Accordingly, this regional PRSP considers more on labour migration as a way to accelerate economic growth in host country/areas. In exchange, remittances received from migrant workers is seen as an important mechanism for redistributing growth dividends. However, the limitation of this paper is that “not paying any attention on challenges that migration could create for national and regional development processes” (GMG, 2010, p. 45).

3.4.2 National Labour Migration Policies

National labour migration policy is also considered as one of prominent tool for integrating migration into development issues by most of the countries. For instance; Bangladesh introduced overseas employment policy in 2006 and revised in 2013, which was directly referring to the mainstreaming role of migration. As such the major piece of this policy framework was “integrating migration in national development planning framework, via establishing greater policy coherence between migration and with other economic , social and labour policies”. It also paved the way to call for a national employment policy to place labour migration in the overall employment policy context (MEWOE, 2013: 31; as cited in Wickramasekara, 2015).

Also, Nepal introduced a foreign employment policy in 2011 with the objective of “Ensuring safe, organized, respected and reliable foreign employment to contribute on poverty reduction along with sustainable economic and social development through economic and non-economic benefits of foreign employment” (Government of Nepal, 2012: 4; as cited in Wickramasekara, 2015).

Also, “Sustainable partnerships for Effective Governance of Labour Migration programme” was implemented with the involvement of national governments, workers, employers and ILO, across five countries including Russian Federation, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (GMG, 2010). In line with this programme, in the Russian Federation, tools were developed to better assess labour requirements for migrant workers on the basis of available labour market data. In Kazakhstan trade unions have, for the first time, developed a policy and manual for activists to reach out to migrant workers in need of protection. In Kyrgyztan, the occupational classification in construction is being updated to reflect the new economic realities in the country and region (GMG, 2010).

3.4.3 Decent work country programmes (DWCPs)

The Decent Work Country Programme for Nepal, 2008–2012, has incorporated labour migration under the overarching country programme objective: “To generate productive employment, guaranteeing equal employment opportunities for all, based on a floor of social protection and the full participation of the social partners through strengthening their capacity for social dialogue” (ILO,2011; as cited in Wickramasekara, 2015).

Subsequently, The Decent Work Country Programmes for Bangladesh (DWCP 2006–09 and DWCP 2012– 15) have included migration as an important element. The 2006–09 DWCP stated:

A well-managed labour migration policy is an important employment promotion tool. Promoting regular forms of labour migration through cooperation between sending and receiving countries based on sound labour migration policies, respect for migrant workers' rights, and effective legal frameworks are important ingredients of success in this respect (ILO, 2008: 4; as cited in Wickramasekara, 2015).

3.4.4 Gaps and Limitations in Mainstreaming

More importantly, the underlying meaning of mainstreaming approach is the recognition of the need for coordination of different actors and ministries, and to consider implications of different policies and strategies and their interaction in the formulation of policies related to migration and development (Wickramasekara, 2015). Policy coherence is also increasingly promoted as an aspect of good governance (GMG, 2010). However, evidence suggest that there is lack of institutional coordination and policy coherence between different actors (both government and non-government) as well as sectors related to development, trade, labour, finance and migration etc., which is moreover prominent in many developing countries including South Asia (Wickramasekara, 2015).

Within a country, a number of governmental ministries and agencies deal with migration on several fields such as finance, planning, trade, and aid etc. Melde and Ionescu (2010) and Wickramasekara (2015) have explicitly identified several development strategies which can be used in mainstreaming migration, such as national development plans, poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP), sector wide approaches (SWAPs), national adaptation plans of action (NAPAs), national employment and human resource development strategies, decent work country programmes (DWCPs) and cooperation agreements/statements with international organizations (mainstreaming policy role) as discussed in above section.

However, Melde and Ionescu (2010) and Wickramasekara, (2015) highlight several practical limitations or gaps existing in designing and implementation phases of aforesaid development planning strategies/tools in most of the countries. For instance, in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Nepal, although the migration has been explicitly mentioned in their national development plans, there is not any integrated approach

among different sectors when mainstreaming. Also, in Pakistan there is no such formal recognition of “migration” in their development plans and PRSPs, but there are public pronouncements or acknowledgements of importance of migration for the economy/ governmental initiatives. Moreover, when considering India, there is no general acknowledgement of role of migration as a whole in their development agenda, but there has been recognition of specific components of migration such as diaspora and remittances when mainstreaming. As such, evidence suggest that there is lack of institutional coordination and policy coherence in many developing countries in the context of “mainstreaming migration into development” (Wickramasekara, 2015).

4. Migration and Development Context in Sri Lanka

4.1 Labour Migration Trends in Sri Lanka

As discussed, Sri Lanka’s status as a labour sending country has resulted in a migration policy in Sri Lanka focusing exclusively on regulating the outflow of labour migrants. A corresponding result is that the data on the outflow of migrants is more closely monitored and is available in detailed and disaggregated form unlike that of other migration aspects. As such, this section focuses on some of these labour migration trends observed in Sri Lanka over the years.

International labour migration from Sri Lanka has gradually increased over the last three decades, particularly with the opening of temporary employment opportunities in the Gulf region. Recent estimates suggest that over a million migrants work abroad while the annual reported outflows are about 200,000 persons (International Labour Organization, 2021). Over the years, foreign employment has generated substantial inflows of remittances, acted as a ‘safety valve’ for local unemployment and has opened up overseas employment opportunities for many women who may not have been active in the local labour force, through in low paid occupations such as domestic work.

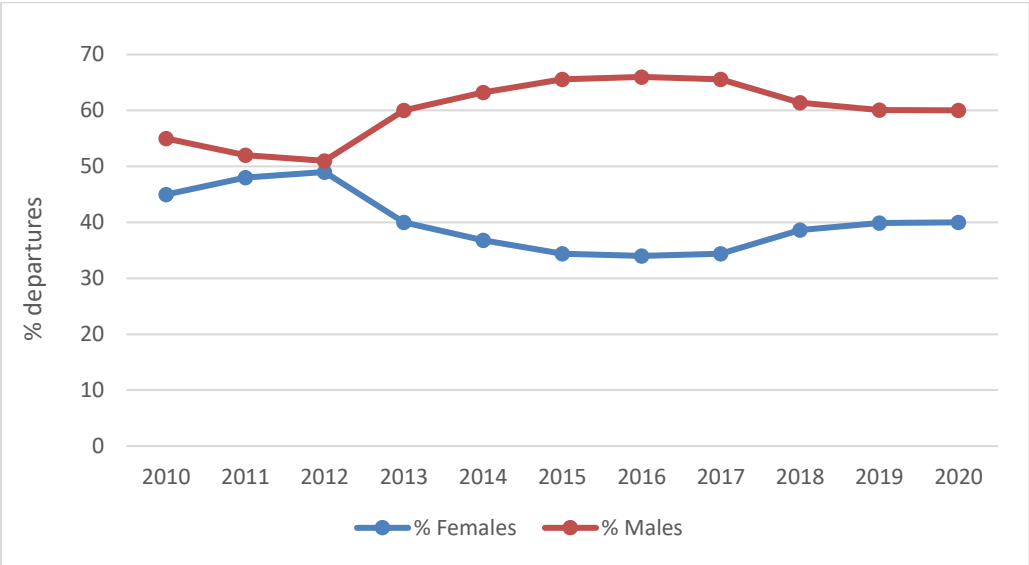
Sri Lanka continues to face a number of challenges in the field of foreign employment, including but not limited to; the concentration of labour migration in low-skilled categories dominated by female workers with related issues of protection, low remuneration resulting in low remittances, and the narrow range of destinations with high dependence on Gulf countries such as United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Saudi

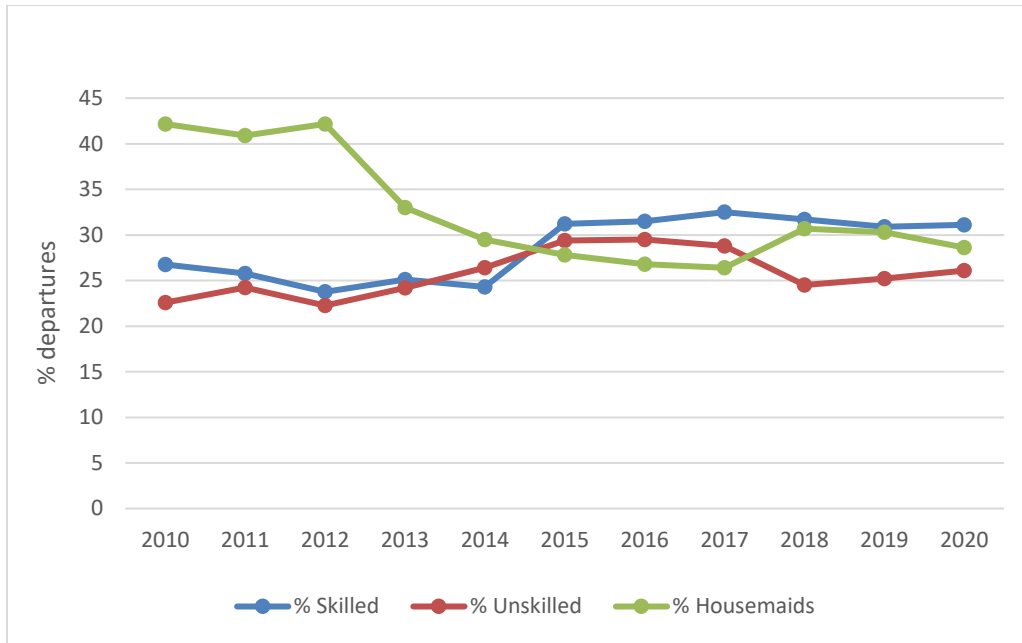
Arabia as the major destinations, which remain major challenges for the country (International Labour Organization, 2021).

In terms of departure trends for foreign employment, between 2014 and 2018, departures declined by 30 percent, primarily due to geopolitical uncertainties experienced in the Middle East, along with oil price declines that have stagnated income growth in the region (CBSL, 2018). By 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, departures further dropped by 74 percent from the previous year, with the cessation of new departures for employment.

In addition, the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) has taken decisive steps to discourage the migration of potential female domestic workers, in order to promote upskilling Sri Lanka’s migrant labour force. As a result, the gender composition of foreign employment has gradually shifted away from female dominance towards predominantly male participation (Figure 1). These changes in the composition of migrant labour potentially affect remittance income, although it is too early to determine whether these factors will bring about a definite increase or a decline in future remittance income flows (Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka , 2018).

Figure 1 Departures from Sri Lanka for Foreign Employment by Gender and Occupational Group





Source: SLBFE and CBSL, various years

Another notable trend is the change in migration patterns in terms of occupational groups (Figure 1). There has been a decrease in the migration of housemaids by almost 50 percent, between 2010 and 2017 (International Labour Organization, 2020). In contrast, the share of migrants in skilled occupations has increased over the same period. These trends are a reflection of the policy focus on upskilling the country’s labour migrant stock.

4.2 Nexus between M&D in Sri Lanka

Migration patterns broadly fall into three categories, namely outward migration, return migration and inward migration. Historically, migration policy in Sri Lanka has focused exclusively on regulating the first category, that is, the outflow of migrants. This is due in part to Sri Lanka’s status as a labour sending country (Weeraratne, 2018). As such, over the years, the national development plans of the GoSL have recognized the importance of labour migration for the economy. As reviewed in detail in section 4.3, ‘safe and skilled migration’ has been highlighted as the overarching strategy to guide overseas labour migration. Yet, the social costs of outward migration in terms of impact on families and children left behind have been highlighted by many (International Labour Organization, 2021). Thus, the delicate balance between promotion of foreign employment as a developmental strategy and the protection of national workers abroad is a continuous challenge.

While the policy focus on outward labour migration and return migration (of these same labour migrants) is a natural reflection of the predominant migration trends in the country, shifting dynamics hasten the need for stronger policies to increase Sri Lanka's preparedness to receive incoming migrant workers. The ability to retain skilled foreign workers, and continue to attract high-skilled migrant workers is contingent upon the development of policies that will cater to the needs of inbound migrant workers while "leveraging the potential they hold to foster economic growth and development in the country" (Weeraratne, *Regulating Inbound Migration: 'In's and 'Out's of Sri Lanka's Policy Framework*, 2018). Currently, there is a significant vacuum on such policies, regulations or frameworks to govern inward migration to Sri Lanka.

Migration Policies in Sri Lanka

The National Labour Migration Policy for Sri Lanka (NLMP) is a systematic migration policy that was developed in 2008, to maximize the development benefits of labour migration in Sri Lanka. It should be noted that migration was a prominent phenomenon in the country for many years prior to 2008, with significant inflows of migrant remittances coming into the country. A Sub Policy and National Action Plan on Return and Reintegration of Migrant Workers Sri Lanka was developed in December 2015 (International Labour Organization, 2021). As such, these key migration policy frameworks in principle have focused heavily on governing outward labour migration and related return migration.

The NLMP focuses on three major areas: Governance of the migration process, protection and empowerment of migrant workers and their families, and linking migration and development processes. It aims at developing a long-term vision for the role of labour migration in the country within the frameworks of the overall development strategy for the country. Furthermore, the NLMP identifies that return migration and circulation are key opportunities for skills transfer and productive employment. Similarly, the NLMP also notes that it would work to engage "transnational communities to harness the resources, skills and expertise of Sri Lankans working in skilled and professional capacities overseas by providing incentives to return, contributing to home country development". However, these aspects on transnational communities have not yet gathered momentum in policy implementation (Weeraratne, *Regulating Inbound Migration: 'In's and 'Out's of Sri Lanka's Policy Framework*, 2018). In addition, provisions on inward migration, and student migration (inward or outward) are almost exclusively omitted from the scope of NLMP.

Outward and Return Migration

Under the existing outward labour migration-centric policy framework, several initiatives have taken place in Sri Lanka's migration sector with the aim of contributing to the country's overall development goals. These include:

1. Several skills development initiatives to upskill the migrant labour force.
2. Implementing the policy on return and reintegration of Sri Lankan migrant workers in order to ensure smooth transition and continued contribution of these workers to the economy.
3. The initiation/granting of several programmes/exemptions for migrant workers in order to increase remittances inflows to the country.
4. Initiation of the Family Background Report Policy (FBR) to protect the interests of migrant families left behind.

However, the abovementioned outward labour migration and return migration related initiatives have mainly targeted the broad development objective of improving remittance flows to the economy, by upskilling the workforce. Development goals such as reducing remittance costs for migrant workers (as per SGD target 10.7.c), ensuring timely compensation, safe and secure migration to destination countries (SDG target 7) and protecting other migrant rights have been given less prominence in the country's development strategies and frameworks.

Furthermore, while return and reintegration policies are mentioned in migration policy documents, they are not effectively mainstreamed into development policies and plans. Steps to improve diaspora engagement and return migration and thus encourage circular migration and transnational communities can act as crucial drivers that contribute to the country's development.

Inward Migration

Sri Lanka's migration policies almost exclusively omit the inward migration dimension, and as a result, such immigration policies are not incorporated in the country's development plans. For instance, due to the lack of a formal, regulatory framework to govern immigration of workers, Sri Lanka lacks domestic regulation to determine and

recognize the foreign training, skills and education of incoming workers (Weeraratne, Regulating Inbound Migration: 'In's and 'Out's of Sri Lanka's Policy Framework, 2018). In recent years, professional bodies have expressed concern that in an environment where qualifications of incoming professionals cannot be guaranteed, less qualified/skilled workers who fail to secure employment in countries possessing quality assurance protocols, would seek employment opportunities in Sri Lanka. Similarly, Sri Lanka lacks a clear policy direction in terms of inward migration of students despite the small, yet consistent³ inflow of students. In addition, policies to attract migrants and integrate them to host country society should be crucial components of immigration policy.

All these aspects of migration and more, require significant policy coverage in Sri Lanka. Such efforts can contribute to filling domestic labour supply shortages in job sectors for which there is insufficient demand from locals, thus allowing migrants to contribute to the country's economy and broader development goals not only from the labour sending dimension but also from the labour receiving dimension.

5. Review of National Policies and Institutions Relevant to Migration Mainstreaming in Sri Lanka

This section reviews the tools, mechanisms, strategic priorities, policies, institutional mandates and legislation at national and sectoral level that are relevant to mainstreaming migration to development in Sri Lanka. This analysis of current and foreseen national development planning tools/frameworks will help to identify the extent to which migration is integrated in such policy frameworks. This allows for an analysis of gaps, issues and potential priorities to strengthen the M&D nexus in national development planning in Sri Lanka.

As discussed in previous sections, the current national migration policy framework focuses predominantly on outward labour migration and to some extent on return migration, with significant gaps in the coverage of inward migration and other non-labour forms of both inward and outward migration (such as student migration). As a result, the migration policies that have been mainstreamed into development tools and

³ Latest available data indicates that in 2017, 4128 new visas were issued while another 4296 were extended under the category of Student/scholarship beneficiaries (DIE, 2017).

frameworks in Sri Lanka to date, have also naturally followed a similar emphasis on outward labour migration.

The following sections review individual policies/frameworks and institutions in-depth, and discuss the extent to which migration mainstreaming into development has taken place. This review and analysis focuses on policies and institutions in two parts, namely; (1) national migration policies and national development policies (2) migration and other institutions by sector.

5.1 National Policy Review

5.1.1 National Migration Policies

National Labour Migration Policy (NLMP) 2008

The NLMP is the key policy document in Sri Lanka under which mainstreaming migration is explicitly recognized and discussed in-depth. Since the main features and provisions of the NLMP were discussed in previous sections, this section will focus on section 3 in the NLMP which is dedicated to linking migration and development processes.

The final section of the said policy, which is devoted to linking development and migration processes is influenced by recognizing the contribution of labour migration to employment, economic growth, and development. The chapter states that “while keeping in mind that overseas employment cannot be considered a strategy for sustainable economic growth and national development in the long run, the State recognises the significant contributions of labour migration towards development”. And so, the State also makes a commitment to creating “decent work opportunities at home and promoting equitable

distribution of wealth and the benefits of development” (Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare & ILO, 2008, p. 32). As such, there is an emphasis on taking a balanced approach when mainstreaming labour migration to development, in an attempt to maximize benefits and minimize the negative effects of the same. However, the scope of the policy is limited to outward labour migration and return

migration but does not cover inward migration or non-labour forms of outward migration.

Specific areas in which migration mainstreaming to development should take place are detailed in this chapter of the NLMP, as outlined below.

(1) Identifying and promoting new overseas labour markets and opportunities

The NLMP notes that the promotion and active development of employment opportunities outside Sri Lanka should be carried out through labour-market surveys, market analyses and market promotion plans in foreign countries. The NLMP specifically mentions the importance of mainstreaming this aspect into the country's development plans via a coordinated effort with other national and international agencies.

Despite the lapse of over a decade since the implementation of the NLMP, labour migration from Sri Lanka is still highly concentrated in the Middle Eastern region. In recent years, on average the Middle Eastern region accounts for 85% of annual departures. The destination specific issues faced by migrant workers such as limited opportunities for assimilation in country of destination, limited opportunities for permanent migration, prolonged temporary migrant status, cultural differences etc., contribute to challenge developmental outcomes for migrant workers from Sri Lanka (Weeraratne, 2020).

(2) Promotion of skilled worker migration

Increasing opportunities for prospective migrant workers to become skilled and take up more skilled jobs abroad is encouraged through this section of the NLMP. As identified in the policy, this will require a combination of human resource development plans which aim at a globally competitive workforce, networking to maximize training and recruitment benefits, language skills and exchange programmes.

Sri Lanka has achieved some progress in this area, where the share of skilled workers among migrants have increased from 26% in 2006 - before the introduction of the policy to 31% in 2020 (see Figure 1), while the share of female domestic workers also has decreased from 46% before the policy (in 2006) to 29% in 2020. The upskilling of migrant workers contributes to more positive outcomes from migration such as safer working environments, earning higher wages, and the capacity to send higher remittances.

(3) Promoting migrant remittances

The NLMP stresses on recognizing the role of migrant remittances in human capital formation through education and health care for children. With this in mind, it recommends that action be taken to raise volume of remittances, reduce transfer costs and expand institutional channels of remitting money. Migrant savings schemes and investment incentives are other means by which migrant remittances can contribute directly and indirectly to development.

The NLMP has been effective in this aspect as well, where greater emphasis on remittances during pre-departure training and various incentives have contributed to increase remittances to Sri Lanka from USD 2.92 billion in 2008 to USD 7.1 billion in 2020.

(4) Encouraging return migration and circular migration

The NLMP recognizes that return migration and related circulation are key developmental opportunities for skills transfer, productive employment and social integration. Furthermore, the engagement of 'transnational communities' to harness the resources, skills and expertise of Sri Lankans working in skilled and professional capacities overseas is recognized in the policy document. Similarly, offering attractive incentives for such migrants to return to Sri Lanka and contribute to home country development are identified as important. Moreover, diaspora mappings, links to transnational community organisations and active networking with scientific and intellectual diasporas are identified as areas to focus on in this regard.

Despite having identified these important aspects of labour migration the progress made in assisting return migration and their reintegration in Sri Lanka is limited. A key reflection of this limitation is the absence of an understanding, estimates or statistics of the number of returnees. The magnitude of this issue was reflected during the challenges faced in repatriating and reintegrating migrant workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. There is some level of effectiveness of the policy and activities in Sri Lanka in terms of circular migration, where re-migration is common among most migrant workers. Toward remigration, SLBFE actively involves in Recognition of Prior Learning (RPS) and upskilling to name a few. Nevertheless, the high level of remigration reflecting circular migration may also be due to issues faced in reintegration along economic, social and psychosocial dimensions. Moreover, despite being a resource pool with high potential to

contribute to development, Sri Lanka's involvement with its diaspora is very limited. This is indicated by the lack of any estimates on the stock of Sri Lankans abroad.

(5) Comprehensive data and information on labour migration

Regular monitoring and analysis of labour migration flows would aid in more effective mainstreaming between migration and development. It would also enable a more specialized set of services catered to migrant workers of diverse categories. The policy mentions the establishment of a Migration Studies Institute to be responsible for the above.

There are significant lacunae in implementation of related activities under this area. The establishment of a dedicated migration studies institute is still pending, while the despite availability of data, access to disaggregated or micro data on labour migration outflows is limited. At the same time, there is an almost absence of return labour migration data.

Sub Policy on Return and Reintegration

The Sub Policy and National Action Plan on Return and Reintegration of Migrant Workers introduced in 2015, focuses on five key areas of reintegration. They are social reintegration of returnees; economic reintegration of returnees; physical and psychological wellbeing of returnees and their families; mobilization and empowerment of returning migrants; and effective management of the return and reintegration process (Ministry of Foreign Employment, 2015).

The Sub Policy identifies that reintegration support needs to commence at the stage of pre-departure and continue throughout the migration cycle till return. This policy document also consists of strategies and an action plan.

The NLMP (2008) and the Sub Policy identifies the SLBFE as the focal institution responsible for return and reintegration of migrant workers. As such the SLBFE is entrusted with the development of required programmes and mechanisms to facilitate economic, social and psycho-social reintegration of returnee migrants. To facilitate this the SLBFE has a dedicated unit to support the implementation of the Sub Policy and National Action Plan on Return & Reintegration.

The limited implementation of this Sub Policy was displayed during the COVID-19 pandemic where IPS (2021, p. 161) highlights that “the incipient base level of reintegration support offered (during normal times), and related lack of experience and well-established mechanisms contributed to challenges in assisting returnees when reintegration needs were brought under pressure due to the pandemic”.

National Human Resources and Employment Policy (NHREP) 2012⁴

This policy document broadly covers employment policy in Sri Lanka and also consists of a dedicated section on foreign employment. The contents on foreign employment in this document seem to have informed subsequent development policy documents (as reviewed in the next section) with regards to mainstreaming migration sector policies into development plans in Sri Lanka.

While the main focus of national policy in the foreign employment sector is aimed at ‘ensuring skilled and safe migration’, even in the NHREP, a greater focus is placed on skilling, and not many details on are on ensuring safe migration are provided. Similarly, national development policy documents (reviewed in the next section) seem to have followed this approach, where there is more concentration on the ‘skilled migration’ aspect, rather than the ‘safe migration’ aspect.

Box 1 provides the detailed provisions pertaining to foreign employment that have been mainstreamed into this document. Once again, the focus is exclusively on outward labour migration, with no provisions for inward and non-labour forms of migration.

BOX 1: Foreign Employment Policy in the National Human Resources and Employment Policy 2012

“The focus of national policy in the foreign employment sector is aimed at ‘ensuring skilled, safe migration’. The long-term policy of the government would be to create decent jobs for Sri Lankans at home and promoting

migration by choice rather than by poverty and need. Every effort will be taken to strike the correct balance between these apparently contradictory objectives in planning skills development for domestic and foreign employment. Ensuring skilled, safe migration would involve firstly, promoting skilled migration through better skills training, diversification of destinations, identification of and capitalizing on Sri

⁴ https://www.nhrep.gov.lk/images/pdf/nhrep_final.pdf - pg 26

Lanka's competitive advantages in this field according to global employment opportunities that are available. Secondly, the rights of Sri Lankan migrant workers would be protected thereby reducing their vulnerabilities in the host country. Thirdly, there will be targeted employment promotion in poor rural areas where out-migration is high to create alternative livelihoods and employment opportunities therein. Fourthly, bilateral agreements will be established with labour receiving countries, with a view to promote respect for and safeguard labour rights of migrant workers.

- Vocational and other training programmes will be made to improve links between skills required in the local and foreign job markets. The versatility of the locally available labour force will thus be enhanced and this will facilitate achievement of the medium and long terms foreign employment policy objectives of the country. A workforce of globally employable youth is a vital objective of overall human resource development policy of the country.

- Greater cross-border mobility of Sri Lankan people will be facilitated so that unacceptable behavioural practices attributed to Sri Lankans on visits abroad could be minimized so that migration of skilled persons for employment overseas will be facilitated. Finding employment for these categories is observed to be easier this way that through state-to-state regulated migration programmes.

-Action will be taken to restructure and strengthen institutional capacity in the

management of overseas migration for work. Greater authority for the SLBFE and improvement of its internal capacity will enable the organization to play a more effective role in market promotion, skills training and protection of migrant workers. Labour and consular divisions of Sri Lanka diplomatic missions abroad will be revitalized to better serve and protect Sri Lankan workers.

-Stronger mechanisms to identify foreign employment opportunities will be instituted. In the planned labour-market information system, all stakeholders will be networked and facilities provided to monitor global trends in labour markets. Updated and accurate information provided to stakeholders will enable them to make decisions effectively.

-In the interests of Sri Lankan migrant workers, the systems that are available for the protection of migrant workers will be strengthened.

-The TEVT system will be expanded to facilitate diversification of skills and skills enhancement of prospective migrant workers. Skills training for this purpose will be country- and job- specific and would be offered in collaboration with the overseas partners/ companies to meet the demands of the destination countries. NVQ standards would be developed on par with regional and international standards.

-With a view to managing the nexus between migration and development more effectively, improved systems in remittances management will be instituted. Providing

due recognition to returnees will help in achieving this objective. Bilateral and multilateral agreements would create harmonized expectations and maximize the returns from migration at the family and the society levels.

-The promotion of e-migration services would ensure free flow of information on opportunities for and details of labour migration to all stakeholders. This would ensure fair distribution of available opportunities among prospective applicants as well as the establishment of a speedy and flexible recruitment process. The improvement of governmental supervision of private employment agencies which work as intermediaries for migrant labour will go a long way in achieving this objective.

-Effective action will be undertaken to explore new avenues/opportunities internationally for employment. Sri Lankan authorities would explore the possibility of facilitating commercial activities in migrant labour destination countries.

-Policies will be developed to use the Sri Lankan expatriates overseas as a valuable human resource for development. Many of these expatriates are found to be willing to serve the home country on short-term or long-term assignments. Significant benefits can be achieved to promote the country's development by formulating systems to facilitate such use of expatriates' services. The government would create conducive environment to promote the participation of expatriates in activities where local expertise and skills are in short supply.

-Measures to recognize the skills the returning migrants bring back with them will have significant developmental effects.

-Training before migration, among other things, will continue to provide awareness about the wise use of their earnings abroad. Policy action in the informal and SME sectors and in micro enterprise sphere will have spillover effects on migrant workers by opening up opportunities for them to invest their savings.

-NVQ standards would be developed on par with regional and international standards and introduce Mutual Recognition of Qualification Agreements (MRA) in to bilateral agreements and memoranda of understanding for easy access to international labour market. Methods for formal recognition (i.e. domestic certification) of skills gained abroad will be developed.”

5.1.2 National Development Policy Documents

*National Policy Framework: Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour (VPS)*⁵

The VPS is the main national development policy document put forth by the GoSL, under the current regime that came into power in 2019. It outlines 10 policy priorities for the country. Migration has been mainstreamed into this overall national policy framework under the 4th policy priority of “A Productive Citizen and Happy Family”. This policy priority covers an array of sub-sectors including foreign employment, elder care, women’s affairs, childcare, youth affairs, social protection, and several others. The following Table 1 depicts how the VPS mainstreams migration into the national development framework.

In line with the focus areas of Sri Lanka’s migration policies, the VPS includes policies to incentivize Sri Lankan migrants to return and reintegrate as well as policies to provide incentives to send remittance income to Sri Lanka. There is also emphasis on upskilling the migrant workforce. In terms of protecting migrant rights at the country of destination, policies to introduce legal reforms to obtain compensation from ‘accidents’ at workplace. To improve the social security of migrants a contributory pension scheme for migrant workers is also included (Government of Sri Lanka, 2019).

However, there is an array of issues currently facing Sri Lanka’s migrant sector which are not mainstreamed into this document. These include labour migration related issues such as the high costs of remitting money, unregulated migrant recruitment practices, non-payment of wages by employers, abuses faced by female migrant workers, and now further compounding of these issues along with job insecurity due to COVID-19. In addition, non-labour aspects of migration and inward migration are not given any coverage. For instance, policies to attract and integrate inward migrant workers to sectors in which domestic labour supply shortages exist, and policies to regulate the inflow and outflow of student migrations and expand their contributions to Sri Lankan society/economy are some potential priority areas that are not covered in the country’s overall development framework.

Table 1 VPS on Migration

Sub-Sector:	Foreign Employment
Sectoral Policies and Policy Component:	Admiring Migrant Workforce

⁵ <http://www.doc.gov.lk/images/pdf/NationalPolicyframeworkEN/FinalDovVer02-English.pdf> - pg 21

Strategies:	Encouraging works in abroad with providing incentives
Activities:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exempt workers remittances as well as the earnings and saving of Sri Lankans domiciled abroad from income taxes and foreign currency bank accounts will be made tax free. • Introduce a special loan scheme to enable those who return to Sri Lanka after foreign employment to commence tax-exempt enterprises. • Provide a duty-free vehicle permit for migrant workers and Sri Lankans abroad who have remitted US dollars 50,000 annually continuously for a period of 10 years. • Introduce a contributory pension scheme for migrant workers who have been in employment abroad for a period of over 6 years. • Introduce a programme to send skilled workers instead of unskilled workers. • Introduce legal reforms to strengthen the process of obtaining compensation for victims of accidents in workplaces abroad. 	

Source: VPS, pg 21.

Vision 2025⁶

This was the national development policy document of the government in power from 2015-2019. Here, migration has been somewhat mainstreamed into the ‘land, labour and capital market reforms’ although a heavy emphasis has not been placed on mainstreaming migration sector concerns into this overarching national framework.

The document refers to outmigration as resulting in a labour market shortage in the country. Hence, the recommended strategy focuses more on preventing brain drain and encouraging return and reintegration of migrant workers. The policy document mentions that the government will do so by inviting Sri Lankans living abroad to actively contribute towards their home country’s development, primarily through faster skills transfers. It also mentions the “revision of immigration policies to facilitate obtain services of first and latter generation migrant Sri Lankans.” (Government of Sri Lanka, 2015, p. 26).

Hence, in terms of recent and current key national policy documents, there has been a heavy emphasis on upskilling labour migrants and on incentivizing return

⁶ https://www.news.lk/images/pdf/2017/sep/Vision_2025_English.pdf - pg 26

migration to Sri Lanka. Less emphasis has been placed on addressing migrant worker concerns while they are employed in countries of destination – related to reducing remittance costs, preventing abuses, fair recruitment practices etc. In addition, inward labour/non-labour migration policies are not covered. These are vital migration dimensions that Sri Lanka should prioritize and mainstream into future development plans.

*Public Investment Programme 2017-2020 - Department of National Planning*⁷

Sectoral policies have been identified in the Public Investment Programme (2017-2020) published by the Department of National Planning as indicated in the Government Policy Statements declared by the 2015-2019 government. Migration has not been included as a separate sector for investment. However, there is some reference to global employment under ‘Skills Development and Vocational Training’ sector where it states, “Making every Sri Lankan skilled enabling full employment in the global economy while improving their competencies, soft skills and access to quality vocational education.” (Department of National Planning , 2017, p. 1)

5.2 Institutional Analysis by Sector

Sectors and related institutions under these sectors (as outlined in Exhibit 1) are reviewed in this section. Institutional mandates, policies and mechanisms are analysed under each sector, to identify what is mentioned related to migration and development, and to identify the gaps in migration mainstreaming.

5.2.1 Migration Governance, Security and Diplomacy Sectors

Foreign Ministry (MFA)

Since the Foreign Ministry directly deals with all matters pertaining to Sri Lanka’s foreign engagements, migration concerns are inherently mainstreamed into its frameworks. Its vision is “To be a responsible nation within the international community and to maintain friendly relations with all countries.” while its mission is “The Promotion, Projection and Protection of Sri Lanka’s national interests internationally, in accordance with the foreign policy of the Government and to advise the Government on managing foreign relations in keeping with Sri Lanka’s national

⁷ http://www.npd.gov.lk/images/files/Sector_Policies_included_in_the_Public_Investment_Programme.pdf - pg 1

interests.” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018, p. 1.). In line with this, the functions of the MFA are: The implementation of political plans and programmes in respect of Foreign Affairs; Representation of Sri Lanka abroad; International Agreements and Treaties; Foreign Government and international organization’s representation in Sri Lanka; External publicity; Diplomatic immunities and privileges and Consular functions (Ministry of Foreign Affairs , 2018).

In direct relation to migration, the following functions and facilities are specified in the Annual Report: The consular division of the MFA provides direct consular services (passport renewal/certification of birth, death, marriage etc.) to Sri Lankan migrants overseas; Economic Diplomacy Programme is related to the contribution of migrant workers and overseas Sri Lankans; Multilateral Economic Relations focus on the Colombo Process, Abu Dhabi Dialogue, and GFMD; functions of MFAs Middle East Division has a strong component related to labour migration; functions of the Public Communication, Overseas Sri Lankans (OSL) and cultural diplomacy division are also heavily related to the migration mandate.

Additionally, the Sri Lankan missions overseas play a key role in attracting immigrants to Sri Lanka for various reasons such as for investment, employment or education.

Further steps that can be taken by MFA to improve the contribution of migration towards development include:

- Reviewing bilateral agreements and re-evaluating terms in these which can have a negative effect on the country, while creating a background where entering into agreements are not harmful to the domestic economy, would help the migration sector capture more job opportunities for foreign employment.
- When establishing Sri Lankan missions overseas, it is important to conduct an analysis of the Sri Lankan migrant population in the respective country and their impact on Sri Lanka’s development/economy.
- Additionally, the MFA should ideally contribute to Sri Lanka’s effort to maintain statistics of the stock of Sri Lankan abroad.

Department of Immigration and Emigration (DIE)

The latest Performance Report (2018) of the DIE states “The Department of Immigration & Emigration is set to march forward in line with the Government Policy

“Vision - 2025” aimed at transforming Sri Lanka into an Economic and Financial Hub in the Asia through the promotion of Local and Foreign investments for the development process.” (Department of Immigration and Emigration , 2018, p.4.), while their mission statement is to “regulate the entry and exit of persons, and provide citizenship services, while safeguarding the nation's security & social order, and promoting economic development.” (Department of Immigration and Emigration , n.d.). In this context, the mandate of the DIE includes the issuance of visas for foreigners to enter Sri Lanka for various migration purposes such as for studies or employment to name a few. Sri Lanka’s visa policy which comes under the purview of the DIE covers several different resident visa categories by purpose, namely: employment, investors, religious persons, students, registered Indians, ex-Sri Lankans, and family members of Sri Lankans (Department of Immigration and Emigration, 2021). Similarly, the responsibility of approval for dual citizenships and the relevant approvals for awarding other citizenships set forth in the citizenship act rests with the DIE (State Ministry of Home Affairs, 2020).

Although not explicitly mentioned in any related policy documents, these visa categories granted by DIE have implications on the contributions of such categories of foreign residents towards Sri Lanka’s development. As discussed in previous sections, benefits of drawing inward migrants for employment lie in filling domestic labour supply gaps and bringing in international expertise and skills which are otherwise not locally available. Similarly, the investor visa category is designed for attracting investors who bring in projects/investments via the Board of Investments (BOI). Drawing investors through BOI projects (predominantly construction sector projects at present) directly contribute towards economic development. At the same time, student migration can act as incentive to accelerate the quality of local education systems and institutions and a mechanism to attract foreign exchange.

While the DIE mandate covers all immigration and emigration related matters, there is relatively less focus on the immigration or inward migration aspect, due to Sri Lanka’s overemphasis and related institutional and policy structure as a ‘sending country’. In terms of development, it is mentioned to “...render an efficient service to the foreigners as well as Sri Lankans who are travelling into and out of this country through ports approved by Sri Lanka while maintaining economic development at an optimum level...” (Department of Immigration and Emigration , 2018, p. 48.).

In terms of gaps for mainstreaming, it would be important to generate disaggregated data on different migration flows. Currently, disaggregated data is available only on outward labour migrants. The process of mainstreaming cannot be carried out without adequate disaggregated information on migration inflows and outflows. Since the department tracks entry and exit at ports, the data already exists, but it needs to be cleaned, collated and made publicly available for analysis and policymaking.

State Ministry of Home Affairs

The vision of Ministry of Home Affairs is “Providing exceptional service towards the Nation’s progress.” while the mission statement is “Assuring an excellent service through an optimum administrative system at national and divisional level with the utilization of human resources endowed with required skills.” (State Ministry of Home Affairs, 2021). The Ministry collaborates with a number of fields for the excellence of administrative performance, such as implementation of public policies, human resource management, institutional development, application of electronic and technological methods, and good governance, in line with the Government's national policy priorities and targeting social and economic development of the country. There are number of divisions/institutions operate under this Ministry including Home Affairs Division, Internal Affairs Division, Disaster Management Division, Internal Security Division and National Security Division (State Ministry of Home Affairs, 2021). In terms of migration, the main institution functioning under the Internal Affairs Division of the Ministry is the above discussed Department of Immigration and Emigration.

Similarly, specific provisions for migration and related displacement due to climate impacts are made through the several institutions functioning under the Disaster Management Division of the Ministry namely Disaster Management Centre, National Disaster Relief Services Centre and National Building Research Organization (State Ministry of Home Affairs, 2020). As such the Annual Performance Report 2020 of the State Ministry of Home Affairs indicates progress made towards resettlement of families evacuated due to several disasters in the country. For instance, the report highlights “progress of the resettlement programme that has been implemented in the Kegalle District since 2016 as at 31.12.2020 is 93%. Number of constructed houses was 119 from the cost of Rs. Mn. 2,005.32” (State Ministry of Home Affairs, 2020, p. 17).

With respect to development, the institutional focus is on district, divisional, rural and overall economic development of the country. For instance the key objectives reflect how the ministry steps forward with development activities such as 1) establishment of a district, divisional and rural administration mechanism, with a participatory development approach which is closer to general public; 2) establishment of collective and participatory approach for rural, divisional and overall economic development; and 3) establishment and keeping of integrated approach and a public service, closer to general public (State Ministry of Home Affairs, 2021).

In terms of gaps in mainstreaming, the lack of a proper system in place to detect where a foreigner is staying if the visa has expired, difficulty in identifying risky individuals when entering the country, inadequacy of temporary detention facilities for foreigners

and unavailability of a returnee migrant database can be considered some of the major issues.

State Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Market Diversification (SMFEPMD)

The vision of the SMFEPMD is “Facilitating uplifting Sri Lanka the regional leader in supplying skilled human resources for the global employment market.” while the mission is “To formulate, direct and evaluate appropriate policies, programmes and projects to fulfill the expectation of all stakeholders by promoting competent human resource for foreign employment opportunities and quality of life of families of migrant workers.” (State Ministry of Foreign Relations Employment and Promotion and Market Diversification, 2020, p. 2.). The key function of the Ministry as mentioned in their APR are as follows:

- Formulating, following-up and evaluating policies, programmes related to the subject of Foreign Employment.
- Implementing the National Policy on Migration for Employment Sri Lanka.
- Providing solutions and guidance to the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment in addressing the employment related issues of migrant workers and increasing welfare of them and following-up implementation with the Sri Lanka missions abroad.
- Following-up on the implementation of the role of Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment in regulating and monitoring employment agencies and introducing new management concepts that can be applied for the identified variations.
- Planning, implementing and following-up of welfare, protection and development activities of migrant community in collaboration with local and foreign donor organizations, Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau and Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Agency (Pvt) Ltd.
- Supervising and following-up of plans, development programmes and projects of Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau and Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Agency (Pvt) Ltd.

- Providing more productive services for migrant worker community and their family members by developing the capacities of Development Officers who have been working in the field of foreign employment.
- Entering into bi-lateral agreements and sign Memoranda of Understanding that are aimed towards the promotion of foreign employment opportunities, ensure welfare and protection of migrant workers and conduct follow-ups accordingly.
- Participating dialogues, discussions and seminars organized by global and regional forums related to foreign employment.
- Ensuring the implementation of ratified conventions of United Nations and its affiliated institutions and submit periodical reports accordingly.

As such, the institutional mandate is clearly and directly pertaining to labour migration and development. In addition, the APR outlined progress and future plans relating to foreign employment covering MOUs and agreements to be signed in future, the procedures for joint committee meetings, etc. In terms of catering to developmental needs, the following actions are mentioned:

- The governance of labour migration in the context of changing employment landscapes.
- Leveraging technology to empower migrants.
- Fostering partnerships to realize migration-related goals in the Sustainable Development Agenda and managing the future of human mobility.
- Strengthening the Legal Framework Required for the Promotion of Foreign Employment.
- Updating the Sri Lanka National Policy on Labour Migration and Expanding the Scope.
- Conducting Awareness programs.
- Programme for Training of Trainers (TOT).
- Establishment of Skilled Labour Force for Foreign Employment.
- Good governance of labour migration to promote decent and productive employment.
- Secure rights and protection of migrant workers and ensure well-being of their families.
- Promotion of employment opportunities for skilled and semi-skilled migrant workers in local and global economies.
- Enhance benefits of migration and its nexus with national development.
- Providing facilities for the protection and welfare of migrant workers.

Furthermore, there is direct mention of migration and development in terms of the Global Forum on Migration Development (GFMD). Specifically, it states that “at the first High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (HLD) held

on 14-15 September 2006 during the UN General Assembly over 140 Member States discussed the interaction between migration and development, a complex relationship of growing importance in view of the increasing migration flows” (State Ministry of Foreign Relations Employment and Promotion and Market Diversification, 2020, p.8). It goes on to say that this led to the birth of the GFMD, hosting its first summit meeting in 2007, which has since remained as “the largest informal, non-binding, voluntary and government-led process, bringing together expertise from all regions and countries at all stages of economic, social and political development.” (State Ministry of Foreign Relations Employment and Promotion and Market Diversification, 2020, p. 8.).

A key limitation of this institution in terms of M&D is the implied mandate to focus on outward labour migration and absence of any focus on inward labour migration.

Ministry of Justice (MOJ)

The vision statement of MOJ is to have an “Efficient system of administration of justice.” and to conduct “Law reform to respond to societal needs in keeping with global advancements and the aspirations of the people.” while its mission is the “Formulation and implementation of policies, plans and programmes aimed at the efficient and meaningful administration of Justice, and law reform for greater recognition, protection and promotion of the rights of the citizens.” (Ministry of Justice, n.d.).

The main provisions under which migration is mainstreamed into the institutional structure of MOJ is through its [National Action Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights 2017-2021](#) (NAPPPHR). This policy has a special section focusing on the rights of migrant workers, and refers to the provisions of the NLMP, National Migrant Health Policy (2013) and Sub policy and National Action Plan on Return & Reintegration of Migrant workers (2015) which were introduced to protect rights of migrant workers. In that sense, mainstreaming of migration policies into the human rights protection mandate of MOJ is clearly seen through this policy.

The policy clearly outlines 17 goals pertaining to protecting migrant rights, along with the required activities to fulfil each goal, with the responsible agency, timeframe and performance indicator to achieve it. These goals include but are not limited to; minimizing the exploitation of migrant workers at the recruitment pre-departure and in-service stages; strengthening the labour migration process through research and development; strengthening labour migration through Global and Regional Policy Dialogues; promoting the rights of children of migrant workers; ensuring systematic

verification of Foreign Recruitment agents and the services they provide, etc. (National Action Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights, 2017 - 2021).

As such, the area of migrant rights is effectively mainstreamed into the human rights/justice sector, which undoubtedly links to developmental needs of the country.

5.2.2 Employment Sector

Department of Labour (DoL)

The Department of Labour has a mission to “Contribute to the economic development process of Sri Lanka by establishing decent work environment with secured industrial peace.” (Department of Labour, 2020, p. 2.).

As per their annual report 2020, the only reference to migration is given under the section pertaining to reaching SDG goal targets relating to labour. Specifically, SDG target 8.8 to “Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment”, which is measured by rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries by sex and migrant status, is said to be met by DOL through means of “identifying situations with potential for accidents through factory inspections, creating awareness amongst employers and employees of factories, initiating legal action against factories which fail to put in place preventive measures despite instructions and for not reporting accidents.” (Department of Labour, 2020, p. 61). Further, this data is currently not disaggregated by sex and type of migrant.

Other than the above references to migration, there are no specific provisions relating to migration covered by the DOL frameworks. However the [Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment Act No 21 of 1985](#) contains Orders and Regulations published in the Gazette under the SLBFE Act by the Minister of Labour. This includes provisions directly pertaining to regulating foreign employment in Sri Lanka.

It is essential that labour migration is integrated and mainstreamed into the labour sector to ensure that decent work, labour market and poverty reduction policies underscore the role of migration in Sri Lanka's development to ensure that current labour demand in the country is met. The nexus between these two is not yet effectively managed resulting in a gap. For instance, outward migration results in some level of brain drain from the country, but this could be compensated by a better managed inward labour migration flow, which can plug labour-market gaps for jobs not being filled by Sri Lankans. In this manner, mainstreaming migration into the

labour sector through the DOL at institutional level is necessary to fulfil this development need.

Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) has a vision for “Sri Lanka to be the best choice for competent human resources for overseas market.”, while it has the mission to “Create efficient and equitable pathways for people to benefit from their skills in overseas employment markets securing interests of all stakeholders while contributing to economic growth.” (Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, 2017, p. 19).

When considering migration and related aspects, SLBFE is the regulatory body for the foreign employment sector in Sri Lanka, which is functioning under the purview of the State Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotions and Market Diversification. The key objectives of the SLBFE includes regulation of recruitment process, looking after the welfare and wellbeing of migrant workers and their families, and providing better opportunities for Sri Lankans through employment promotion. The recruitment for foreign employment is mainly controlled by the registration scheme of migrant workers, whereas the recruitment agents are also regulated via licensing procedures. Also, the welfare aspects of foreign employment are covered in terms of providing welfare facilities and services to all Sri Lankan migrant workers and their family members during the entire migration cycle. Additionally, promotion of foreign employment opportunities and markets, is mainly conducted by SLBFE officers who are attached to overseas missions of Sri Lanka, including embassies, high commissions and consulates (Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, 2017). Similarly, return and reintegration related activities are the responsibility of SLBFE.

In terms of development, the institution directly contributes towards country's economy via increasing foreign exchange earnings (remittances) and reducing unemployment rate by promoting or facilitating foreign employment opportunities among Sri Lankans (Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, 2017).

When considering the mainstreaming migration and development, the institution contribute towards the development of the country by harnessing the economic benefits and opportunity value from foreign employment, skills and technology transfer of returnee migrant workers and providing recommendations for the national development and policy planning (Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, 2017).

5.2.3 Education and Skills Sector

Education Sector Policies

The nexus between migration and the education sector is an important one to consider in M&D. The education sector has a key role to play in terms of skills development for labour migration. Furthermore, the phenomenon of brain drain and mitigating its harms is directly linked to education policy.

‘Re-imagining Education in Sri Lanka’⁸ is the latest national policy document relating to Sri Lanka’s education sector, developed by the Presidential Task Force on Sri Lankan Education Affairs. There is no specific mention of the migration sector and related issues in this policy document. However, there is a reference to ensuring that Sri Lanka’s education system provides the necessary skill sets to face global employment market demands“ by updating all curricula in line with global best practices and industry skills requirements.” (Presidential Task Force on Sri Lanka's Education Affairs, 2020, p. 6).

This is in line with the goal of upskilling the migrant workforce as mentioned in the VPS. However, the focus here again is exclusively on equipping outward labour migrants to face the international labour market but there is no mention of inward migration aspects concerning the education sector; for example, credential evaluating protocols for incoming migrant workers, mitigation of brain drain by encouraging return migration and diaspora engagement, and non-labour forms of migration such as student migration which are directly linked with the quality of national education systems.

When it comes to vocational education, this sub-sector is governed by the ‘National Policy on Technical and Vocational Education 2018’⁹ under the purview of the National Education Commission Sri Lanka. This policy document includes a subsection on ‘Collaborations for Reaping Full Benefits from Foreign Employment’. It talks about the SLBFs upskilling policy and how low-skill female labour migration has been discouraged and reduced over the past few years. It goes on to say that upskilling is needed in order to boost remuneration, but that Sri Lanka doesn’t yet have personnel with higher levels of skills who are certified to meet job orders coming from abroad. Hence, there is a role for Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) programmes to bridge this gap and meet demand for skilled personnel from overseas. It identifies 3 policy directions in this regard:

⁸ <http://nec.gov.lk/category/policies/> - pg 6

⁹ http://nec.gov.lk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/TVE_NP_2018_English.pdf - pg 31

1. Establishing a system of forecasting foreign employment opportunities in skilled and semi-skilled categories and making TVET courses available in occupations of demand in overseas labour markets.
2. Mapping Sri Lanka's NVQ framework with national, regional or global qualification frameworks that are widely accepted in destinations where Sri Lankan workers seek foreign employment.
3. The skills and competencies obtained through foreign employment experiences should be taken into account through 'Recognition of Prior Learning' under the NVQ framework (National Education Commission Sri Lanka, 2018, p. 31).

These policies are again in line with the goal of upskilling the migrant workforce as mentioned in the VPS, but do not focus on inward or non-labour forms of migration such as student migration.

State Ministry of Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research and Innovation

The vision of the State Ministry of Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research and Innovation is to "Be the apex organization in making Sri Lanka a developed nation by 2030 through Science, Technology & Innovation (STI)." while it has the mission "To create an enabling environment that promote and support an effective STI ecosystem (R&D, IPR, Quality Infrastructure etc.) to reinforce the competitive strength of our economy in the region within the sustainable development framework." (State Ministry of Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research & Innovation, 2021).

When considering migration and related aspects, the National Strategy on TVET provision for vulnerable people in Sri Lanka, (2008) specifies the access to vocational education and training for several vulnerable groups in the country including migrant workers and their family members (Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission; Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training, 2018). In terms of development, this Ministry plays a substantial role in achieving national development goals, by directing the Public Research Institutes to involve in demand driven research, research commercialization, promoting inventions and innovations, facilitating standards and certifications (State Ministry of Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research & Innovation, 2021). Also, there are several TVET strategies and key policy documents which have provided specifications on improving the effectiveness and employability of the population, and are providing education and vocational qualifications for the citizens such as the Tertiary and

Vocational Education Policy (2016) and National Strategy on TVET provision for vulnerable people in Sri Lanka (2008) (Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission; Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training, 2018).

However, there are several gaps in mainstreaming migration and development within ministerial mandates. Having understood the impact of labour migration and related remittances towards the country's economy, there is a pressing need to focus more on skills development (e.g., technical and vocational training) of potential migrants to seek for foreign employment opportunities. Since skilled labour enables Sri Lanka to access a diversified foreign job market and reduce unemployment within the country, it is essential to revamp/revisit the existing vocational training curricula to cater to the current demand of this job market. Also, tailor-made up-skilling programmes should be designed targeting returnee migrants to make use of their skills and knowledge acquired overseas, such that these can be utilized in the Sri Lankan job market once they return. This can be achieved by providing skills certification for their skills/abilities which can be utilized when applying for jobs in the local market. In fact, there are several TVET institutions under the Ministry such as the University of Vocational Technology, Technical Colleges, Vocational Training Centres and Apprenticeship Training Centres that provide diplomas/certificates with several NVQ levels, which the potential migrants/returnee migrants can also access. Additionally, there are a number of mechanisms in place to recognize prior learning. The National Vocational Qualifications Operation Manual specifies that NVQ qualifications may be awarded through the recognition of prior learning (RPL) if the applicant has a minimum industrial experience of 18 months for NVQ 2 or 3 qualifications (Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission; Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training, 2018). As such, returnees can be absorbed into the Sri Lankan job market by giving proper skills certificates and also by linking them with potential employers, once they return. Also, it is important to promote Sri Lanka as a research and innovation hub, which can attract more foreign direct investments (FDI) to the country and facilitate Sri Lankan researchers to closely link with international trade parties/foreign investors.

Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission

The Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission is the apex body in the technical and vocational education and training sector in Sri Lanka, with the responsibilities of policy formulation, planning, quality assurance, coordination and development of tertiary and vocational education in the country. In fact the institution has the vision of developing "A Sri Lanka where all citizens have access to the highest possible standards of tertiary and vocational education and training

which meet the human resource development needs of the country.” and the mission to “establish and maintain an efficient and effective technical education and vocational training system which is relevant to socio- economic goals and changing market needs.” (Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission, 2020).

In terms of migration, nothing has been specifically mentioned within the institutional mandates. However the current institutional objectives highlight interventions towards the country’s development in terms of providing skills development/skill certification to cater the existing labour market needs such as 1) to develop, review, and reformulate national policies on tertiary and vocational education and training; 2) to formulate plans for the development of tertiary and vocational education and training sector; 3) to implement the national system of quality assurance through registration of institutes and accreditation of training courses; 4) to develop and maintain a national system of vocational qualifications; and 5) to maintain the labour-market information system for the TVET sector etc. (Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission, 2020).

When considering mainstreaming migration into development, since 2016, the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) and the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) have been collaborating on the harmonization of occupational classifications and data systems with the technical support of the ILO project, Enhanced Recognition of Skills and reduced vulnerability of Sri Lankan construction workers in GCC countries, targeting the upgrading of migrant workers’ skills.

However, there are a number of gaps in the sector, when mainstreaming migration and development. For instance, the current vocational training programmes, in particular the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) system, is generally inward-looking and caters to the Sri Lanka market needs but is not necessarily tailored for foreign markets. Therefore, current training programs are supply driven rather than market oriented and this has created a considerable skill mismatch between the supply and demand of the labour market. However, these NVQ levels are designed for the job seekers to enter the job market soon after their General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (G. C. E. A/L) or Ordinary Level (G. C. E. O/L) examinations. Furthermore, the NVQ System is nationally and globally recognized, allowing qualified workers to join the international job market (Vocational Training Authority , 2021). Yet, despite the Government investing massively in the Technical and Vocational Training sector over the last decade, Sri Lanka is yet to see a significant positive transformation into a market driven workforce.

As such, upskilling for foreign employment should be market oriented to suit skills and expectation of foreign employers. This is especially critical since low levels of

skills among workers are generally associated with increased workplace disputes, rights violations, harassments, and abuse. At the same time, lack of recognition of skills and competencies gained in Sri Lanka would undermine career progression and higher earning opportunities in the countries of destination (CoDs). Unless Sri Lanka's vocational training programmes are upgraded to meet foreign market needs, achieving the stated policy objectives in foreign employment would be challenging. Another significant barrier to mainstreaming migration into the developmental process is the lack of formal training institutes and reintegration programmes for migrant workers in Sri Lanka, the result of which is the limited potential in harnessing the outcomes of migration towards country's development.

Given these concerns, it is recommended to regularly update the curricula with the changing market trends, improve skills and capabilities of trainers and lecturers, give high priority to industry practitioners to share current knowledge or skills, increase apprenticeships or training experience with accredited industry participants and upgrade infrastructure facilities and training equipment used.

Ministry of Education

The vision of the Ministry of Education is "To reach excellence in global society through competent citizens who share the Sri Lankan identity." while the mission statement indicates "To develop competent citizens keeping with the global trends through innovative and modern approaches to education leading to efficiency, equity and high quality performance ensuring stakeholder satisfaction." (Ministry of Education, 2020).

There are no specific provisions relating to migration covered by the ministerial frameworks, policies and institutional mandates. In terms of development, the Annual Performance Report 2019 states "altogether, the programs implemented by the Ministry of Education have contributed directly or indirectly to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" (Ministry of Education, 2020, p. 40). As such, several policy programmes have been implemented by the Ministry to achieve SDGs. For instance, recently the Ministry has introduced a vocational subject stream in the G. C. E. A/L examination to ensure opportunities in tertiary, technical and vocational education for the young generation to improve their skills and to work efficiently in the labour market (Ministry of Education, 2020). However, a lack of competency-based evaluation system, mismatch between the subjects and children's skills and interests, scarcity of teachers, inequalities in distribution of resources, lack of opportunities for non-formal education, difficulties in providing education for children with special needs, weakness in supplying services in rural areas, mismatch

between education and employment opportunities can be identified as challenges in reaching the SDGs within the sector.

Apart from the aforesaid education and development related issues, a very limited focus has been given to mainstreaming migration and development within the institutional mandates and the policies/frameworks. In fact, current teacher education programmes do not focus on migration and related aspects and do not include them as part of the main curricula. Therefore, it is important to invest in initial and ongoing teacher education that builds core competencies and the ability to manage diverse and multicultural contexts, raising awareness of all teachers about migration and development related aspects. Also, it is important to guide students who are interested in foreign jobs to take up relevant fields of studies after their G. C. E. A/L or G. C. E. O/L examinations. In fact, providing policy guidance for the preparation of a clear roadmap from pre-school education to the completion of higher education is critical for mainstreaming migration and development considerations into education sector.

Despite not being focused towards mainstreaming migration into development, the introduction of the bi-lingual education stream for selected grades contributes to an easier reintegration process for children of returning migrants, while the availability of local and international schools following the English medium curricular promotes educational opportunities for children/family members of inward migrants.

Ministry of Higher Education

The vision of Ministry of Higher Education is for “Sri Lanka to be an international hub of excellence on higher education by 2020” while the mission statement indicates “To Delight Students, The Industry, Staff And Other Stakeholders Of The Higher Education System Of Sri Lanka By Formulating And Implementing Results Oriented Policies & Strategies...” (Ministry of Higher Education, 2020). The Ministry's responsibilities include improving the efficiency and productivity of the higher education system, developing university infrastructure, increasing the employability of graduates by improving their quality, and improving research and innovation (Ministry of Higher Education, 2020).

In terms of migration, there is a specific Foreign Education Unit within the Ministry, which provides foreign scholarship opportunities for Sri Lankan students, including both postgraduate and undergraduate scholarships on an annual basis. Under this unit, 66 postgraduate scholarships and 151 undergraduate scholarships have been offered during the year of 2019. Apart from that, there is a presidential scholarship programme, which facilitates foreign students to pursue higher education in Sri Lankan universities, with the aim of promoting the country's higher education system

abroad. Accordingly, the total number of scholarship recipients under this program is 148 up to now (Ministry of Higher Education, 2020).

With respect to development, the Annual Performance Report 2019 states that one of core responsibilities is to “provide higher education for those who are seeking higher education opportunities with the intention of contributing to the economic development of the country as well as accessing the international job market” (Ministry of Higher Education, 2020, p. 1).

Given the aforesaid interventions, it is important to create a brand name for higher studies in Sri Lanka, which can attract foreign students to select Sri Lanka as one of their preferred education destinations, which could increase foreign exchange as well. To achieve this, the university system should adopt a more updated and attractive curricula in line with international standards, while focusing on research and development also, which could bring incentives for foreign students to study in Sri Lanka and to increase the country’s economic benefits from the same. Also, Sri Lanka currently lacks a protocol to evaluate credentials of incoming migrant workers. Therefore, it is critical to build an authoritative framework that encompasses foreign credential evaluations across all professions (IPS, 2017).

State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Pre-schools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services

The State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Pre-schools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services outlines its vision statement in terms of “A sustainably developed prosperous country of the productive citizenry, contented families and social equality where the identity of Sri Lanka reigns”. Its mission statement indicates “To formulate and execute programmes for providing and enhancing legal, institutional and human resource services and infrastructure for the economic, social and educational empowerment of women and children considering national priorities and requirements along with international standards”.

In terms of migration, the [Policy Framework and National Plan of Action to address Sexual and Gender based Violence in Sri Lanka 2016-2020](#) has made special references with respect to existing weaknesses related to sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in a range of migration and related policies such as National Policy on Decent Work in Sri Lanka (2006), National Labour Migration Policy for Sri Lanka (2008), National Migrant’s Health Policy, National Human Resources and Employment Policy of Sri Lanka (2012) and Return & Reintegration Sub Policy and the National Action Plan (2015). Simultaneously, the report identifies many programmes that have

been conducted by SLBFE specifically addressing SGBV prevention during the migration cycle (Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, 2016).

Further institutional policy priorities highlight the development and related aspects focused on by the Ministry in terms of socioeconomic development including 1) providing relief to rural women victimized by unregulated microfinance schemes; 2) introducing special child nutrition programs to address malnutrition among all children; 3) taking necessary measures to ensure the rights of the children in accordance with the International Convention on Rights of the Child, with the integration of all the relevant institutions; 4) establishing a national programme to introduce a “Foster Family System” for all children in child care centres; and 5) transforming rural schools into schools that are attractive to students etc.

Considering mainstreaming of migration and development, the National Plan of Action for children in Sri Lanka highlights the specific needs of children of migrant mothers including 1) to track all children of migrant mothers; 2) to ensure that they receive the benefits and services (e.g., medical services, educational support, vocational training, etc.) set up for them and their caregivers; 3) to determine the effectiveness of such services, and particularly focus on preventing the abuse, exploitation and neglect of such children, including the providing of access to services if such situations arise; and 4) to develop and strengthen capacities of local state officers to coordinate and deliver such services (Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, 2016). This Ministry and its activities can be cited as a clear example of mainstreaming migration into development/sectoral policies.

5.2.4 Health Sector

Health Sector Policies

The ‘Sri Lanka National Migration Health Policy 2012’¹⁰ is a dedicated migration specific policy for the health sector. This policy document takes into account the health needs of inward migrants. It sets out a comprehensive strategy to increase access to vital health services for all incoming migrants as well as to respond to potential health challenges arising from the movement of persons across borders, which marks an important step in the recognition of the rights of migrants workers and their families who live and work in Sri Lanka (Ministry of Health Sri Lanka, 2012). Most importantly, this is one of the few policies in the country that cover any sort of provisions for inward migrants. However, the migration health policy is inadequate

¹⁰http://www.health.gov.lk/moh_final/english/public/elfinder/files/publications/publishpolicy/10_Migration%20Health.pdf

as a stand-alone policy addressing immigration as it only addresses a single, albeit important, aspect of immigration policy.

Moreover, the human resource policies related to the health sector can be linked to migration. Specifically, medical officers pursuing qualifications to become Board Certified Specialists involves foreign training. Due to the high risk of non-return of such trained medical officers they are required to sign a bond to pay approximately 5,000,000 LKR (35,000 USD) to the Sri Lankan government if they do not return to Sri Lanka and practices at a designated post for four years **Invalid source specified**.

Ministry of Health (MOH)

The mission of the MOH is “To contribute to social and economic development of Sri Lanka by achieving the highest attainable health status.” (Ministry of Health, n.d.). As such, the health and development nexus is clearly established in their mandate. However, there are no specific references to migration in the institutions mandate.

Having said that, MOH has developed the “National Migration Health Policy” discussed above, which is a clear indication that migration has been mainstreamed with the health sector of the country. In addition, the [Health Services Act](#) No 3 of 1977 is an act pertaining to public health service provision in the country but has no references to migration.

In terms of gaps in mainstreaming, there needs to be further promotion of equitable access to health, disease prevention and care for migrants, subject to national laws and practice without discrimination on the basis of gender, age, religion, nationality or race.

The health sector is identified as one key area that is affected from brain drain. Literature shows that medical officers often choose to leave the country due to reasons including better quality of life, better earnings and more training opportunities in the host country (de Silva, et al., 2014). Among those who seek foreign training many are reluctant to subsequently return due to reasons such as compulsory appointment to a rural area once they return from foreign training, the poor standard of schools and other facilities in these rural such rural areas, and lack of professional development and opportunities to develop their career in Sri Lanka (De Silva, Liyanage, Silva, & Jayawardana, 2013).

Similarly, the medical profession is one of the few professions in Sri Lanka with a well-established mechanism to evaluate the credentials of foreign qualified medical officers, which is the Examination for Registration to Practice Medicine in Sri Lanka (ERPM) – formerly known as Act 16. This is a process carried out by the Sri Lanka

Medical Council (SLMC) in conjunction with the University Grants Commission (UGC) of Sri Lanka to evaluate overseas medical qualification. Under this, Sri Lankans with foreign medical qualifications who wish to practice medicine in Sri Lanka are required to pass the ERPM (IPS, 2017).

5.2.5 Financial Services Sector

Central Bank of Sri Lanka

The Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) is the apex institution in the financial sector of Sri Lanka, which was established under the Monetary Law Act No.58 of 1949. The vision statement of CBSL emphasizes on becoming “A credible and dynamic central bank contributing to the prosperity of Sri Lanka.” while their mission statement indicates “Maintaining economic and prices stability and financial system stability to support sustainable growth through policy stimulus, advice, commitment and excellence.” (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2018). As such, the stated mission would enable the CBSL to develop a conducive environment for economic agents to have an overview of the economy and make informed decisions related to resource allocation, production, labour supply, investments, consumption and savings, while assuring the sustainable growth and the poverty alleviation (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2018).

Notwithstanding, most of the development related aspects covered in the CBSL can be directly or indirectly related to migration. Accordingly, the Annual Report of CBSL, 2020 highlights two migration related aspects including 1) current trends or statistics of labour migration (pp. 70-71); and 2) remittance flows related to labour migration and its economic benefits and impact on GDP (pp. 133-135). In line with the focus on outward labour migration inflows in Sri Lanka’s development planning goals, and the country’s dependence on remittance inflows, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka provides certain financial benefits for such migrants to attract the same.

The most recent incentive scheme for temporary migrant workers is the ‘Incentive Scheme for Inward Worker Remittances’ issued by CBSL circular in December 2020 (and amended in 2021), in line with National Budget Proposals for 2021. The said incentive scheme comprises of a payment of LKR 2 per dollar above the normal exchange rate, for the foreign remittances sent by Sri Lankan workers abroad to banks in Sri Lanka (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2021). In addition to this incentives, the COVID-19 pandemic led to further policies to increase inward remittances to Sri Lanka from more permanent migrants and diaspora, with the introduction of the Special Deposit Account, which offered an interest rate of 1 percentage point per

annum above the normal for 6-month deposits and 2 percentage point per annum above the normal for 12-month deposits (CBSL(c), 2020).

In addition to policies introduced to attract inward remittances, mainly from migrants, during the COVID-19 pandemic, there were analogous policies introduced to reduce outward remittances from Sri Lanka. Nevertheless, the CBSL reiterated that outward remittance restrictions were not applicable to financing the expenses of Sri Lankans abroad related to overseas education, medical and family living expenses (CBSL (b), 2020).

Apart from these pandemic related policies for outward remittances, in general more permanent migrants are eligible for a 'migration allowance' which includes an initial migration allowance of USD 200,000 per individual aged 18 years and above and an annual migration allowance of USD 30,000 after 12 months from the full utilization of the initial migration allowance. Further, this includes proceeds realized from the sale of property and assets owned by the emigrant and gifts received by the emigrant from the spouse and parents (Department of Foreign Exchange , 2017).

In terms of gaps for mainstreaming, chapter 05 of CBSL Annual Report 2020 highlights how Sri Lanka has a wide range of data gaps in terms of remittance flows as well as flows of migrants. As such, with the identification of the need to improve data collection systems on remittances, CBSL is in the process of initiating an International Transactions Reporting System (ITRS), which is a fully comprehensive cross-border and foreign currency transactions monitoring system that will be launched through licensed banks. This approach will make it easier to enhance BOP statistics, such as a wide range of data on worker remittances, as well as reconcile any statistical anomalies. Thus, ITRS will provide disaggregated remittances data based on country of origin, currency, remittance receiving districts, demographics of remitters, and recipient banks. This approach will also be useful in identification of new trends, developing policies and promoting remittances. As such, having a complete database on remittances and migrant flows, will allow for more informed decision making on how to mainstream migration into development or sectoral strategies in the country (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2020).

Also, CBSL Annual Report (2020) highlights the impacts of foreign exchange policy on the remittances, with the recently introduced measures to ensure smooth operations in the domestic foreign exchange (FX) market, with the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. As such IOD introduced a new scheme under the Government's budget 2021 to pay extra Rs.2.00 for each US dollar converted from workers' remittances in order to attract more workers' remittances (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2020).

Further, commercial banks play a significant role in collecting remittances to Sri Lanka. For instance, the ILO (2020) identifies banks as the most popular channel for migrant workers to remit their earnings to their family back in Sri Lanka. A large portion of formal remittances to Sri Lanka are channeled through the People's Bank and Bank of Ceylon (BOC). This may be due to high reliance on banking system of Sri Lanka, the availability of a wide network of the said banks in most areas in Sri Lanka, as well as emphasis on creating a bank account to remit funds and related instructions given during the pre-departure training. Specifically, the findings by ILO (2020) indicates that over 36 percent of households rely on BOC for their remittance collection, while 25 percent rely on People's Bank. As such, evidence suggest that over 50 percent of remittances are received by BOC and People's Bank (ILO, 2020). Moreover, opening a Non-Resident Foreign Currency (NRFC) account with a bank is a requirement for registration with the SLBFE, and many banks have branches within the SLBFE office grounds at the head office and district offices (ILO, 2020).

In this context, the findings of ILO, (2020) report reveal that bank transfers are used by nearly 73 percent of sample respondents to remit their funds, while other methods included debit cards and direct deposits, and cheques.

Ministry of Finance (MoF)

The Ministry of Finance has the vision to create "Inclusive economic growth and prosperity through viable national policies." while the mission statement is to "Ensure the benefits of development for each citizen through the formulation of national policies and dynamic economic strategies for inclusive development." (Ministry of Finance, 2020). In line with these, responsibilities of the ministry are mostly in relation to macro-economic policies, annual budget and appropriation acts, public financial management, local and foreign savings and investments, public debts, banking, finance and insurance activities, international financial cooperation and directing social security and economic development activities (Ministry of Finance, 2020).

In terms of migration, there are no direct provisions relating to migration within the institutional documents. However, the key function of the ministry reflects its considerations towards development by "providing facilities to direct development activities in coordination with all ministries through the Presidential Task Force for Eradicating Poverty and Economic Revival" (Ministry of Finance, 2020). More importantly, the Ministry has stated development related policy priorities within its mandates, such as 1) to establish a sustained, high economic growth rate that distribute benefits to all, covers all provinces and minimizes income disparities; 2) to reduce unemployment giving priority to low income earners and increasing per capita

income; 3) to introduce measures to promote domestic production, empower low-income earners and incentivize investments; 4) to expand the business environment for the domestic business community in a manner that would provide benefits to general public; and 5) to strengthen the institutional structure required for the efficient management of state revenue and expenditure (Ministry of Finance, 2020).

When considering mainstreaming migration to development, there is no such mention of migration in institutional mandates. However, the ministry has its role in allocation of funds (from the treasury) within the government institutions, which indirectly has a role to facilitate mainstreaming migration into development. Therefore, the Ministry can focus more on remittance flows, which will help to reduce budget deficits and thus increase spending on other areas such as health care and education, thereby improving households' income and long-term economic welfare. In fact, it is essential to empower low-income earners by allocating budgets for their skills training to suit the current foreign labour-market demand.

With these concerns, the recently introduced National Policy Framework on Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour has mainstreamed migration under its 4th policy priority “A productive citizen and happy family”, which covers a wide array of sub-sectors including foreign employment, elder care, women’s affairs, childcare, youth affairs, social protection and several others (details of this policy were covered in chapter 04). In fact this policy indicates specific interventions to be made by the MoF such as 1) exempting workers remittances as well as the earnings and saving of Sri Lankans domiciled abroad from income taxes and foreign currency bank accounts to be made tax free; 2) introducing a special loan scheme to enable those who return to Sri Lanka after foreign employment to commence tax-exempt enterprises; 3) providing a duty-free vehicle permit for migrant workers and Sri Lankans abroad who have remitted US dollars 50,000 annually continuously for a period of 10 years; and 4) introducing a contributory pension scheme for migrant workers who have been in employment abroad for a period of over 6 years etc. (Government of Sri Lanka, 2019).

Further, over the years, the GoSL has provided several incentives/allocations through its budget proposals. For instance, the 2022 budget speech has made special provisions to improve the existing facilities to provide knowledge, skills and other requirements for overseas employment and to enhance opportunities available for migrant workers by consulting the ambassadors of other countries (Ministry of Finance, 2021). Also, the 2021 budget has made special provisions to 1) promote foreign employment by introducing integrated program to direct skilled workers for foreign employment with the participation of several institutions such as vocational training institutes, Foreign Employment Bureau and foreign employment agencies; 2) implement a contributory pension scheme for those whose workers engaged in foreign employment; and 3) pay Rs. 2 per dollar above the normal exchange rate for

the foreign exchange remittances sent by foreign workers to banks in Sri Lanka are some of the specifications made in 2021 budget proposal (Ministry of Finance, 2020).

One notable limitation is the repeated proposal to establish a pension scheme for migrant workers over budget speeches of many years, while it remains to be fully implemented. The latest development under this discussed in the next section.

5.2.6 Social Security Sector

Social Security Policies

In terms of social security, there have been various policy efforts to introduce related benefits to migrant workers. These include the “Surekuma” pension and social security scheme introduced and managed by the Sri Lanka Social Security Board. Under this any Sri Lankan engaged in foreign employment is eligible to receive the pension irrespective of country of destination. The pension comes into effect at sixty years and includes provisions to pass over to family members on decease of pensioner, and in addition, it covers the payment of death gratuity (Sri Lanka Social Security Board, n.d). Other similar efforts that are now defunct include the “Sesatha” pension scheme initiated by the Sri Lanka Social Security Board and SLBFE in 2007, and the Members Contribution Fund of SLBFE, where sixty percent of migrants’ contribution was sent to the Employees Trust Fund (ETF), while the remaining forty percent was kept with SLBFE. More recently, a new contributory pension scheme was outlined as a priority area in the GoSL’s VPS national policy document, which has since been initiated and is presently considered in the parliament.

Department of Samurdhi Development

The Department of Samurdhi Development has a vision “To be the premier organization in making poverty free empowered and prosperous Sri Lanka By 2030.” while the mission statement is to “Contribute to the economic development of the Government, the private sector, the people and the political sector with the participation of the local and global institutions, building a prosperous country free from poverty.” (Department of Samurdhi Development, 2019).

However, nothing has been specifically mentioned under its institutional mandate with respect to migration. In terms of development, most of programmes underway target socioeconomic development of the rural community such as livelihood development programmes, poor relief programmes, Samurdhi Bank Societies, Agricultural Development programmes, credit programmes, social security programmes, community development programmes, samurdhi lottery, and spiritual

and social development programmes. However, migrants and their families also would be entitled to these programmes based on their socioeconomic conditions (Department of Samurdhi Development, 2019).

In terms of gaps in mainstreaming, there is no specific mechanism to identify or screen returnee migrants or migrant families to make more tailor-made programmes to ensure their socioeconomic wellbeing. Also, given the income levels and certain other conditions, most of the time, migrant families are disqualified from the Samurdhi benefits. Hence there is a pressing need to reach out returnee migrants at local level and provide them with necessary livelihood support programmes (e.g., targeting self-employment and business development), as they could bring the expertise acquired through foreign employment, to SMEs and local industries.

5.2.7 Economic Development Sector

Department of National Planning

As part of the apex Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs, the Department of National Planning is dedicated to policy development, planning and execution in order to accelerate Sri Lanka's economic growth and social improvement. It is housed within the Ministry of Finance Secretariat, allowing for close collaboration with the treasury and its departments. The vision of the institution is "To be the most competent policy advisor and development facilitator to the nation" and the mission statement is "Optimizing the use of country's limited resources through adopting a well-planned approach for development of policies, programmes and projects by maintaining the highest level of professionalism while continuous upgrading of the planning skills to the international standard." (Department of National Planning, 2020, p. 108).

In terms of migration, there are no direct provisions relating to migration within the institutional mandates. However, according to Annual Performance Report 2020, one of key functions of the institution is to mainstream sustainable development goals (SDGs) into national planning process, which indirectly entails the migration and related aspects (Department of National Planning, 2020).

With respect to development, the institutional focus is on planning and development of a number of areas including 1) macro-economic development; 2) agriculture, irrigation, livestock, plantation and fisheries; 3) industry, trade labour, power and energy, 3) transport, highways, ports and aviation; 4) urban development, housing, water and environment; and 4) education, higher education and skills development and so forth. As per the Annual Performance Report 2020, the core responsibilities

reflect how the development aspects have been considered by the institution within its mandates. For instance, such responsibilities involve 1) assisting in formulation of national & sectoral policies; 2) preparation of medium-term investment framework (Public investment programme); 3) preparation of planning guidelines; 4) providing guidance to prepare sub national level development plans; 5) decentralized capital budget; and 6) managing development partner missions etc. (Department of National Planning, 2020).

However, given the lack of appropriate mechanisms for policy coordination and or policy coherence between different sectors such as trade, industries, finance, labour, agriculture, tourism, education and migration policies as indicated in "[Sri Lanka Strategy for Sustainable Development Report \(2007\)](#)", it is important to integrate migration into sectoral policies, national planning, PRSPs and poverty alleviation programmes covering wider aspects.

Sustainable Development Council

The vision of Sustainable Development Council (SDC) of Sri Lanka is "A sustainably developed Sri Lanka for all." and the mission statement is "Promoting Sri Lanka towards a sustainably developed nation through an inclusive and holistic approach that ensures environmental, social and economic harmony." (Sustainable Development Council of Sri Lanka, 2021). In line with these, the main approaches of SDC are to integrate the three dimensions of SDGs (including to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere) and to incorporate a holistic approach where all ecological, social and economic dimensions are identified equally in creating a sustainably developed Sri Lanka for all citizens. As such balancing these three dimensions will have a positive impact on country's economy, environment and the well-being of every citizen (Sustainable Development Council of Sri Lanka, 2021).

In terms of migration, the [Draft National Policy and Strategy on Sustainable Development, 2020](#) provides special reference to migration within the policy target 8.8 and 10.7. The policy target 8.8 emphasizes on "protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment" and policy target 10.7 reflects on "facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well managed migration policies" (Sustainable Development Council of Sri Lanka, 2020).

Under the policy target 8.8, several strategies have been mentioned specially targeting rights of migrant workers. These are to 1) provide support to migrant workers through Sri Lanka's diplomatic missions to ensure their rights are protected by strengthening grievance handling and dispute resolution mechanisms for their protection and security; 2) ensure that the rights and interests of migrant workers are protected by the relevant laws, supervision and grievance mechanisms of the countries of destination, prior to recruitment of Sri Lankan workers for foreign employment; 3) ensure protection of migrant workers' rights and interests through bilateral agreements with countries of destination; 4) establish a contributory social security system for migrant workers; and 5) promote safe, decent and gainful foreign employment (Sustainable Development Council of Sri Lanka, 2020, p. 35).

Subsequently, the policy target 10.7 outlines two specific strategies including 1) conduct policy review to identify gaps and issues pertaining to orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people and 2) revise and/or introduce policies and legislations and implement applicable programmes to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people and reintegration of returnee migrants (Sustainable Development Council of Sri Lanka, 2020, p. 41).

However, given the lack of coordination and policy coherence between different sectors such as trade, industries, finance, labour, agriculture, tourism, education, health and migration policies, it is important to formulate national and sectoral policies to enhance the positive impact of migration on sustainable development.

5.2.8 Other Sectors

Ministry of Agriculture

The vision of Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) is "To have a vibrant and dynamic agricultural sector for food security and national prosperity." and mission statement is "To achieve globally competitive production, processing and marketing enterprises through socially acceptable, innovative and commercially oriented agriculture, through sustainable management of natural resources of the country." (Ministry of Agriculture, 2020).

There are no specific provisions relating to migration covered by the MOA frameworks, policies and institutional mandates. However, in terms of development, there are several sectoral and sub-sectoral policies and strategy documents which covers a wide array of agricultural and related development activities. Such policies involve National Agriculture Policy (NAP) 2007, National Plantation Industry Policy

Framework (2006), National Agricultural Research Policy and Strategy 2018-2027 (2018), and Overarching Agriculture Policy Draft (2019) etc. For instance, the recently introduced Overarching Agriculture Policy Draft (2019) provides the framework for responding to emerging developments and coordinating actions to create efficient, diversified, sustainable, market oriented and inclusive agriculture sector. Accordingly, this policy identifies 5 core areas including 1) increasing productivity of farming; 2) increasing export earnings; 3) energizing domestic farm-market linkages and the rural economy; and 4) mainstreaming gender and youth and implement effective mechanisms to coordinate, guide and monitor sectoral development (Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Economic Affairs, Irrigation, and Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development, 2019).

Apart from the aforesaid agriculture and development related aspects, there is very limited focus on mainstreaming migration and development within its institutional mandates and frameworks. Having understood the precarious nature of rural livelihoods and several other factors (e.g., climate change, crop failures), most of the people opt for migration opportunities (either internal or international), thus it is essential to consider mainstreaming migration and development within the ministerial policies and its mandates. Given such migratory trends from rural/agricultural areas, there is a shift of labour from agriculture to other sectors leading to a decrease in agriculture productivity. Hence, there is a pressing need to retain labour in the agriculture sector by promoting modernized agriculture in rural areas. However, immigration (returned migration) on the other hand may substitute for foreign labour, while remittances may allow for investments in more productive farming practices, or returnee migrants with social remittances in the form of new knowledge and technologies, all of which could contribute to agricultural intensification. As such, existing agriculture policies must be revamped to encompass the aforementioned policy priorities related to migration and development issues.

Ministry of Environment

The Ministry of Environment is devoted to managing the country's environment and natural resources while maintaining a balance between the country's rapid economic growth and the usage of natural resources. Given that, the Ministry of Environment has the vision of “ A sustainably developed Sri Lanka.” and the mission “To provide leadership for sustainable environmental management by ensuring environmental protection through sustainable natural resource management.” (Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment, 2019, p. 2).

When considering the migration and related aspects, nothing has been specifically mentioned under institutional mandates. In terms of development, most of the institutional mandates are related to “mitigating the environmental impacts with the support of wider range of stakeholders along with whole state setup with legally, technically and institutionally in order to enhance the livelihood of the people towards thrift and sustainably through environmental conservation and various infrastructure development projects” (Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment, 2019, p. 1).

However, in terms of gaps in mainstreaming, there is no specific linkage mentioned between migration and development in institutional mandates. However, the relationship between climate change and migration should be taken into account as this is an increasingly relevant issue, since migration is considered as the last coping strategy when affected by climate impacts or environment disasters. Also, as mentioned in Annual Performance Report 2019, there were several development projects initiated by the Ministry including Moragahakanda Kaluganga Development Project, Umaoya Multipurpose Development Project, Dam Safety and Water Resources Planning Projects, Mahaweli Water Security Investment Programme and Ecosystem Conservation and Management projects, which lead large numbers of people to be displaced and relocated. Hence, there is a pressing need to consider these nuances, which directly have impacts on migration.

Ministry of Youth and Sports

The Ministry of Youth and Sports has the vision “To be the leader in sports in Asia.” and the mission statement “To build a consolidated and prosperous land by grooming every citizen to be an energetic, healthy disciplined and dignified person through formulation of national policies and implementing same.” (Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2020).

There are no specific provisions made on migration and related aspects within institutional mandates. However, in terms of development, there are several references made in its key values such as 1) to assist every Sri Lankan to achieve optimum potential in sport and ensure that Sri Lanka’s international image as a successful sporting nation is both viable and sustainable; 2) to utilize sports to enrich the quality of life, physical wellbeing and health of all Sri Lankans; 3) to create new employment and contribute to the promotion of economic growth; and 4) to utilize the field of sports as one of the main foreign exchange earner of Sri Lanka (Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2020).

When considering the mainstreaming migration and development, sports can be promoted as one of major fields which can attract foreign exchange to Sri Lanka, by encouraging the youth to acquire relevant technical training in various fields of sport.

6. Gaps and Recommendations

6.1 Summary of Gaps identified based on National Policy Review

The review of Sri Lanka's key national policy documents from the past two decades, indicates that migration mainstreaming has taken place to a certain extent in Sri Lanka's national development plans. However, due to Sri Lanka's status as a labour sending country, the national migration policy framework, and as a consequence the broader national development policy framework, cover only limited types of migration namely:

1. Outward labour migration
2. Return labour migration

The same frameworks either exclude or do not adequately cover the following types of migration that warrant potential priority in migration mainstreaming due to its increasing relevance and importance to Sri Lanka:

1. Inward labour migration
2. Inward/outward non-labour migration

Within the types of migration covered, the level of priority given to migration in development plans within different national sectors vary, and don't necessarily the address the most pressing issues faced by the migration sector.

Specifically, within the dimension of outward migration, upskilling the migrant workforce and encouraging remittance inflows to Sri Lanka has been given significant prominence in national development plans as an economic development strategy. However, other aspects of migration related to development pertaining to migrant safety, rights, compensation, etc. have been mainstreamed to a lesser extent.

When considering return migration, although return and cyclical migration of labour migrants are mentioned in migration policy documents, they are not mainstreamed into national development plans. For instance, policies such as meaningful diaspora

engagement and attracting diaspora back to Sri Lanka for knowledge retention are not prioritized or implemented. However, these warrant prioritization in order to mitigate the longstanding issue of brain drain, and to mitigate newer issues faced by Sri Lankan migrant workers abroad due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, inward migration and broader non-labour forms of migration such as student migration warrant prioritization; *within* national migration policy to start with, in order for these to be subsequently mainstreamed into national development planning. Such steps will ensure that the country leverages on the economic benefits of inward labour migrants, inward student migrants, permanent residents, etc., whilst granting them rights and facilities to integrate into Sri Lankan society to maximize said economic benefits.

6.2 Summary of Gaps identified based on Institutional Analysis by Sector

At a sectoral level, there is some linkage between and focus given to migration within employment, education, health and financial sector institutional mandates and policies. Other sectors such as social protection, agriculture and environment do not seem to have any national policy documents linking the two, even though the NLMP specifies that migration should be mainstreamed across such sectors.

The employment and skills sector in particular, is well mainstreamed with migration, due to the SLFBEs capacity as a foreign manpower sending agency, and linkage with TVET sector for skilling migrant workers. The financial services sector has policies supportive of migrant workers remitting money but can do more to reduce cost of remitting and have more supportive foreign exchange policies.

When it comes to the education sector, the gaps identified are the lack of mainstreaming into school curricular to prepare students for foreign employment/education etc., from a young age and the inadequacy of skilling to meet foreign labour market demands at the vocational training level. In terms of the health sector, although a specifically developed national migration health policy exists, it is inadequate as a stand-alone regulator as it only addresses a single, albeit important, aspect of immigration policy.

Finally, social security, agriculture and environment sectors are importance sectors to which migration considerations must be mainstreamed – but has not taken place effectively in Sri Lanka. For example, there is a growing nexus between migration and environment due to increased trends of displacement and mobility as a result of

climate change – these have not been effectively mainstreamed into institutional mandates as yet.

6.3 Recommendations

A holistic approach to mainstreaming all types of migration

When leveraging migration for development, all aspects of migration ought to be adequately considered. Currently there is a notable imbalance in mainstreaming certain aspects of migration towards development. Among different aspects of migration, outward labour migration is the most focused area in present mainstreaming efforts. Yet, within outward labour migration also, aspects such as migrant safety and compensation, etc., are currently mainstreamed to a lesser extent than the foreign employment and remittance promotion aspects. As such, it is important to provide adequate attentions to all aspects of outward labour migration in mainstreaming efforts. These will also mitigate newer issues faced by Sri Lankan migrant workers abroad due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

When considering return migration, implementation of return and reintegration sub policy is important to harness the full potential of returnees. Similarly, developing policies towards meaningful diaspora engagement and attracting diaspora back to Sri Lanka for knowledge retention need to be prioritized and keeping student migrants engaged with the development efforts of the Sri Lankan economy are crucial. This will aid in compensating for the longstanding issue of brain drain. Similarly, broader non-labour forms of migration such student migration warrant prioritization; *within* national migration policy to start with, in order for these to be subsequently mainstreamed into national development planning.

At the same time, as a first step it is important for Sri Lanka to acknowledge the development potential of inward migration and create pathways for mainstreaming same into development. Such steps will ensure that the country leverages on the economic benefits of various types of inward migrants such as immigrant workers, inward student migrants and permanent residents, etc., whilst granting them rights and facilities to integrate into Sri Lankan society to maximize said economic benefits.

Developing a Border-based Economy

With increased international migration across countries, border management has the capacity to contribute to secure borders, uphold national security, while at the same

time, assist in movement of people across borders with potential for economic growth and development.

When mainstreaming migration to development, leveraging the economics of international borders becomes a crucial component, because well managed borders have the potential to contribute to economic growth and development. In essence, the smooth movement of persons and services across borders can aid in bridging labour market and skills gaps, in the same manner that international trade of goods bridges the demand for goods not available in the domestic market. Such enhanced border controls and movements across borders can also aid in bringing in investments along with related immigrant workers, into the country. This is because when a strong framework for immigration exists, more firms will be willing to send skilled workers and invest in the country. In this manner, a more diverse set of FDIs can be reaped by the country (over and above the construction related FDIs that make up the larger she of Sri Lanka's FDI). This will also indirectly connect to enhanced infrastructural developments, when more diverse firms and individuals enter the country and set up their businesses/plants/branch offices in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, the tourism sector can also indirectly benefit in the same manner, where not just short-term tourists visiting for holidays, but 'digital nomads' and other such longer term tourism activities might be strengthened through a better managed regulated borders.

Establish a regulatory framework to protect & govern immigration of workers.

To reap the full potential of immigrant workers into the development process of Sri Lanka, it is important to understand the skills gaps in the local labour market and fill those with immigrant workers. Towards achieving this, there needs to be a regularly updated comprehensive mechanism to forecasts for labour-market gaps in the short, medium- and long-term. Based on such forecasts appropriately qualified immigrant workers need to be brought into Sri Lanka through a well-established regulatory framework. Here, learning from the good practices of the SLBFE in the context of outward labour migration, it is important to have an entity to regulate the inflow of immigrant workers, as well as to ensure their welfare.

Develop a framework to evaluate foreign credentials

Once the skills gaps in the domestic labour market to be filled by immigrant workers are identified, it is important to develop an authoritative framework to evaluate foreign qualifications before immigrant workers are accepted into Sri Lankan labour market. Such a process would ensure the protection of the Sri Lankan origin workers in Sri Lanka and eliminate skepticism and intimidation.

As similar process can be adopted to evaluate the credentials of foreign qualified Sri Lankans seeing employment in the Sri Lankan labour market.

Better data to enable mainstreaming

Currently in the migration sector, disaggregated data is available only on outward labour migrants. The process of mainstreaming cannot be carried out without adequate disaggregated information on migration inflows and outflows. Since the DIE tracks entry and exit at ports, the data already exists, but it needs to be cleaned, collated and made publicly available for analysis and policymaking. Further, a returnee migrant database needs to be developed to identify returnees and cater to reintegration needs as a separate initiative. Similarly, stock data on Sri Lankans abroad need to be developed, while the infrastructure and frameworks need to be developed to capture inward migration data.

Improving remittance data collection systems

CBSL to implement the International Transactions Reporting System (ITRS), a cross-border and foreign currency transactions monitoring system through licensed banks. Since ITRS will provide disaggregated remittances data based on country of origin, currency, remittance receiving districts, demographics of remitters, and recipient banks, this approach will also be useful in identification of new trends, developing policies and promoting remittances, which will ultimately contribute to enhanced migration mainstreaming to national development. However, it is important to make data collected by ITRS to be made accessible for research and policy making and facilitate mainstreaming migration into development.

Mainstreaming migration for beneficial employment outcomes

It is essential that labour migration is integrated and mainstreamed into the labour sector to ensure that decent work, labour market and poverty reduction policies underscore the role of migration in Sri Lanka's development to ensure that current labour demand in the country is met. The nexus between these two is not yet effectively managed with some level of brain drain from the country taking place. However, this could be compensated by a better managed inward labour migration flow, which can plug labour-market gaps for jobs not being filled by Sri Lankans. In this manner, mainstreaming migration into the labour sector through the DOL at institutional level is necessary to fulfil this development need.

Demand driven skills approach

It is recommended that the already well-established skills training systems and related institutions regularly update the curricula in line with changing market trends, improve skills and capabilities of trainers or lecturers, give high priority to industry practitioners to share current knowledge or skills, increase apprenticeships or training experience with accredited industry participants and upgrade infrastructure facilities and training equipment used. This will ensure that migrant worker skills better match international labour market demand.

Social protection for returnee migrants

Establish mechanism to identify or screen returnee migrants or migrant families to make more tailor-made programmes to ensure their socioeconomic wellbeing, since they are disqualified from social protection schemes such as Samurdhi. There is a pressing need to reach out returnee migrants at local level and provide them with necessary livelihood support programmes (e.g., targeting at self-employment and business development), as they could bring expertise acquired through foreign employment, to SMEs and local industries. Similarly, a mechanism is needed to provide an old age pension or a similar social protection for migrant workers.

Mainstreaming migration concerns in agriculture and environmental sectors

Due to the increased frequency of weather events and climate disasters and related impact livelihoods (especially in the agriculture sector), leading increased mobility of people. As such, the nexus between climate and migration is gaining increased prominence, due to displacements from disasters and resorting to migration (internal/international) as a coping strategy. The impact is exacerbated for those with agricultural livelihoods. Therefore, it is crucial that agriculture and environment sectors effectively mainstream migration concerns into disaster management and agricultural policies and frameworks.

ANNEX 1: Other Regional Consultative Processes and Organizations

- APC (Asia-Pacific Consultations on Refugees, Displaced Persons and Migrant)
- Manila Process
- Budapest Process
- Global Commission on International Migration
- Regional Conference on Migration - "Puebla Process"
- 5+5 Dialogue on Migration in the Western Mediterranean
- Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)
- Pacific Islands Forum
- The Southern African Migration Programme (SAMP)
- IGC (Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees)
- Eastern Partnership (EaP) Panel on Migration, Mobility, Integrated Border Management
- UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UNGIFT)
- Alliance 8.7
- Prague Process
- Pan-African Forum on migration (PAFOM)
- Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development (Rabat Process)
- EU-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative (Khartoum Process)
- Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA)
- League of Arab States (LAS)
- Ibero-American Network of Migration Authorities (RIAM)
- Caribbean Migration Consultations (CMC)
- South-American Conference on Migration (SACM) -Lima Process

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