Social Integration of Migrant Communities

Issues and Challenges

International Alert's Global Experience and
Case Studies from Pakistan

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Social Integration of Migrant Communities: Issues and Challenges – Alert's Global Experience and Case Studies from Pakistan

Social integration of migrant communities has long been an issue of concern for governments, particularly in the capitalist democracies of the West, which have been receiving migrants from various parts of the globe with different religious, ethnic, cultural, and civilizational backgrounds. In the United Kingdom, for example, the history of integration policy goes back to 1960s, when the policy was mainly targeted at migrants from New Commonwealth countries. The issue in the West, thus, has largely been related to 'the emigrants' – the people who have permanently left their countries to settle in others. Lately, however, there has been a growing interest, both academic and policy, in social integration of 'internal migrants' – the people who move from one part of the country to another. The issue has been catapulted to the forefront of international policy agenda mainly due to dramatic increase in its incidence in several countries. According to the UNDP Human Development Report 2009, the number of those who moved across the major zonal demarcations within their own national boundaries was nearly four times larger (740 million) than those who moved internationally (214 million).[1]

However, more than anywhere else, it's the growing incidence of internal migration in China and India, the world's two most populous countries, that accounts for growing international interest in the phenomenon. In the wake of both countries' spectacular economic success, hundreds of millions of people have migrated from countryside to cities in order to exploit the newly available economic opportunities. Most of these migrants lack access to basic social services such as housing, schooling and medical. In Pakistan too, internal migration has increased in recent years due to the growing urbanization. However, very little attention has been paid to understand the phenomenon and its implications for the country's stability.

This research report is a modest effort to fill that gap. Drawing on the baseline and action research carried out in districts Jacobabad and Kashmore as part of DAI-EDACE-funded project Strengthening the Role of Business in Supporting Peace Sensitive Social Integration of Migrant Communities, with Special Access to Security and Justice, the report discusses challenges and issues vis-à-vis migrant communities' social integration.

The structure of the report is as follows: the introductory remarks, which set the context of the study, are followed by a brief section on the definition of the concept of integration. This section is followed by the one on internal migration in Pakistan. The next section discusses the issues and challenges vis-à-vis migrants' social integration with special reference to Jacobabad and Kashmore. Last section consists of case studies from target districts.

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[1] *'Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development', Human Development Report 2009 at* http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/269/hdr_2009_en_complete.pdf.

Social Integration of Migrants: Exploring the Concept

The concept of migrants' social integration has been defined in various ways.[2] Some have viewed it as a one-way process whereby migrants adapt to the host society, while others view it as a two-way process in which not only the migrants adapt to the host society, the host society also adapts, for example by addressing barriers to integration such as discrimination. A report by European Forum for Migration Studies (EFMS) defines integration as a process of strengthening relationships within a social system, and of introducing new actors and groups into the system and its institutions. The integration of immigrants is primarily a process: if this process succeeds, the society is said to be integrated.[3] A Council of Europe publication argues that regardless of definition or concept of integration applied, the integration of migrants into their respective host societies has at least three basic dimensions concerning the social, economic and cultural role migrants play in their new environment.[4]

According to a broad definition offered by Rudiger and Spencer integration means the process by which people who are relatively new to a country (i.e. whose roots do not reach deeper than two or three generations) become part of society.[5] Some of the concepts that frequently come up in the literature on integration are:

- **Assimilation:** the integration of migrants means their assimilation to a pre-existing, unified social order, with a homogeneous culture and set of values. Integration is perceived as a one-way process, placing the onus for change solely on migrants.

- **Inclusion and Participation:** Inclusion denotes democratic notions of access, agency and change, though it does not directly refer to relationships between social groups. Inclusion is directed at eliminating the exclusion of all disadvantaged groups to enable everyone to develop a sense of belonging to a particular society.

- **Cohesion:** The role of social interaction is crucial in the process of integration. It is through social contacts and the climate created by the possibility of such contacts that people develop a sense of belonging in a particular social space.

- **Equality:** If cohesion thrives on the interaction of different communities, this interaction must be guided by the principle of equality. While the building of social networks based on a recognition of difference is essential for the process of integration, this will fail if migrants and ethnic minorities are not treated as equals.

Major international bodies dealing with the issue of migration also offer their own 'definition' of integration. International Organization for Migration (IOM), for example, defines it as the process of mutual adaptation between host and migrant communities. The process implies a sense of obligation and respect for a core set of values that bind migrants and their host communities to a common purpose. IOM believes integration is essential for all stakeholders, not only as a way of providing economic and cultural benefits but also for ensuring the security and stability of societies as a whole.[6]

[2.] The definitions given in the present research report are from the literature on integration of immigrants. However, these remain largely valid in the debate on integration of internal migrants, and hence their reproduction here.

[3.] European Forum for Migration Studies, 'Integration of migrants: Contribution of local and regional authorities', at http://eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_files/pubdocs/2006/22/en/1/ef0622en.pdf.

[4.] Council of Europe, 'Measurement and indicators of integration', at http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/migration/archives/documentation/Series_Community_Relations/Measurement_indicators_integration_en.pdf.

[5.] Anja Rudiger and Sarah Spencer, 'Social Integration of Migrants and Ethnic Minorities: Policies to Combat Discrimination', at http://www.oecd.org/migration/mig/15516956.pdf.

[6.] IOM and Migrant Integration', at http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/iom_and_migrant_integration.pdf.

For the purpose of this research report, social integration of migrants is defined as a level of mutual adaptation between migrant and host/local communities that leads to a stage where migrants are not discriminated against by local/host communities or by public officials due to their migrant status, and where migrants are able to enjoy all their constitutionally guaranteed rights.

Internal Migration in Pakistan

Internal migration in Pakistan has been going on since the early years of its existence. It has mostly followed similar patterns: people from labour abundant rural areas of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) provinces migrate to urban centers of Punjab and Sindh. In the regions of out-migration, incomes are low and uncertain, whereas in areas of in-migration, due to industrialization and resultant increase in economic activities, there are more opportunities to earn. Patterns of migration in Pakistan thus, according to Haris Gazdar, conform to a basic poverty-migration linkage. The link between poverty and migration rests on certain assumptions about how the labour market operates. First, there are more opportunities for male migrants than for females. Moreover, there are significant differences in demand for workers in the formal public sector, formal private sector and the informal sector, and each is manifest through distinct social networks. Third, the greatest demand is for cheap labour (casual daily wage labour in construction and) workers for occupations on the social margins (e.g. sex work, begging).[7]

Lately, internal migration in Pakistan has assumed a new dimension as many people from tensions-ridden affected areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) have moved to Islamabad and Karachi, giving the phenomenon a security dimension. These internal migrants have created new sets of problems in the cities, which earlier were never thought of linked to internal migration in any way. One example is spike in sectarian tensions. Recent research on the phenomenon has shown that increase in sectarian violence in two districts in Punjab – Bhakkar and Rawalpindi – is partly due to migration from tensions-ridden areas of KP particularly from Dera Ismail Khan.[8]

However, despite the growing incidence of the phenomenon and its various implications for the country's economic, political and social stability and security, internal migration continues to be off the radar of policymakers. There is no mention of internal migrants in 2010 Labour Policy. There is no law that protects the rights of migrant workers in the country. There has been any efforts to integrate multi-ethnic migrant workers in the cities. Urban policies too have failed to respond to the challenges posed by internal migrants. There is hard to identify any civil society initiative exclusively for the benefit of internal migrant workers.

Social Integration of Migrants[9] : Issues and Challenges

Invisibility
A major issue with regard to migrants' social integration, particularly with regard to their access to justice and security, was their invisibility. Migrants in the targeted districts

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[7] Haris Gazdar, 'A Review of Migration Issues in Pakistan', at http://www.eldis.org/vfile/upload/1/document/0903/Dhaka_CP_4.pdf.

[8] . Kashif Mumtaz, 'Sectarianism in Pakjstan – A Case Study of Bhakkar', unpublished conference paper.

were not a particularly visible community. This was not only due to their small numbers, but also because of their being scattered. Even when they were present in significant numbers at a single location, that location happened to be, in most cases, away from urban centers and at the periphery of district's social, economic and political life. The level of invisibility of migrant communities can be gauged from the fact that most of our key informants,[10] including high ranking officials of justice and security departments, were not even aware that these communities existed in their districts. This invisibility was a serious challenge for migrants' social integration. With their even existence not in the knowledge of many relevant government functionaries, their problems could not be expected to be on the agenda of these functionaries, much less to be one of their priorities. And it was not only the government functionaries who were ignorant of the existence and hence problems of migrant communities in their areas, local media and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) too were largely unaware of the phenomenon. This meant that these two important actors – Media and NGOs, which generally have the potential to help marginalized communities in a society through, inter alia, highlighting their problems and making them known to a wider audience, helping them connect with duty-bearers, and improving service delivery for them, were not rendering any such service for migrant communities in districts Jacobabad and Kashmore. Migrants' invisibility, thus, cost then heavily as the issues and challenges they faced also remained invisible.
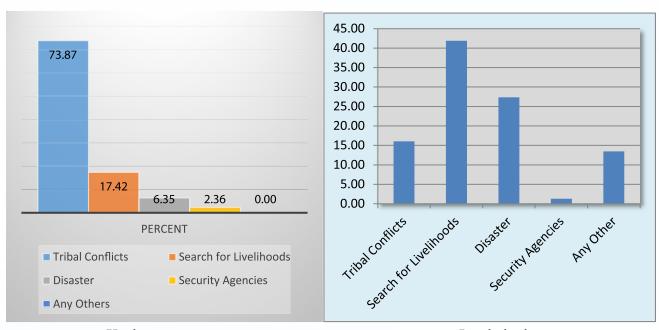
Lack of Database on Migration

Another serious challenge in terms of securing migrants' social integration was the lack of database on migrants that could inform policy makers, government officials, media and NGOs about various dimensions of the phenomenon of the migration: its history, patterns, magnitude, causes, consequences, etc. The lack of such a database is closely linked with the issue of migrants' invisibility: it is a direct outcome of migrants' invisibility, but it also ensures that the phenomenon of migration continues to remain invisible or off the radar of policy makers. The need for such a database is paramount to ensure social integration of migrant communities as it can provide public departments, media and NGOs with necessary and authentic information about the issues and challenges of migrant communities, which can help these organizations to make efforts to ameliorate the conditions of such communities. In the absence of such a database, public departments can hardly be in a position to pursue the policies warranted by the changed demographics of an area in the wake

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[9.] *Defining a migrant in the context of Pakistan is not a very easy and straight forward academic task as most of the inhabitants of this region are migrants in one sense or the other as they had moved to this part of the world from some other part at some point in history. It is therefore tricky to offer a definition of migrant which does not get troubled by this factor. The task was more difficult in Jacobabad and Kashmore as the two districts are home to a large number of Baluchi people who at various point of time had moved from present day Baluchistan to these areas. The present study, however, adopted a simple methodology. It treated a respondent as a migrant if she described herself as a migrant. So people were simply asked if they were migrants or locals, and those who identified themselves as migrants were treated as migrants. The subsequent question showed that overwhelming large number of these migrant respondents had migrated less than 12 years ago. Thus this simple methodology helped to identify the 'real migrants' whom this study wanted to engage i.e. the recent migrants who were faced with the issues of access to justice and security and not the ones who had moved to these areas in some distant point in history and are no quite deeply entrenched in the local society. Many of them even dominate the local politics and economy. .*

[10.] *These key informant interviews were conducted in early September 2014 at the start of the DAI-EDACE-funded project. The information shared by these key informants, and which is being shared in these lines, thus, depicted the situation of migrants' social integration and the level of their visibility as a community at the start of the project. The situation has improved since thanks to this project, which has aimed to mainstream the issues of migrants' social integration, particularly their access to justice and security.*

of arrival of migrants, and to ensure service delivery for the migrants. Nor can other actors like media and NGOs can play any helpful role for migrants.

The fact that migration is not a homogenous phenomenon makes the need for such a database all the more pressing, and its absence all the more serious an issue. This absence of homogeneity was highlighted by the findings of our baseline, which showed that there was a wide disparity in the patterns of migration in two districts. In Jacobabad, for example, majority of the migrants were economic migrants, whereas in Kashmore, majority of the migrants had been forced to leave their ancestral areas due to tribal disputes. In Jacobabad, majority of the migrants were recent: 79.9% of migrant respondents had moved to their present locations less than five years ago. In Kashmore, on the other hand, majority of the migrants were old: 58% of migrant respondents had moved to their present locations more than seven years ago. Similarly, there was wide disparity in the reasons the migrants mentioned for their decision to not return to their native areas. The following graphs show the diversity in reasons of migration in two districts.

Kashmore   Jacobabad

Lack of Conceptual Clarity: Migrant or TDP

Another challenge posed to migrants' social integration was the lack of conceptual clarity about the dynamics surrounding the reality of these internal migrants as most people would conflate them with Temporarily Dislocated Persons (TDPs). This misconception was probably due to the growing incidence of the phenomenon of temporary dislocation in Pakistan in recent years, and the enormous media coverage accorded to it. Pakistan has experienced several TDP crises in recent years. The biggest crisis was the Swat TDP crisis in 2009 that saw almost entire population of Swat getting dislocated in the wake of Pakistani forces' operations against Pakistani Taliban who had seriously challenged the writ of the state in the area. The crisis was termed as one of the world's greatest TDP crises in recent years. Since then the country has witnessed a number of other TDP crises, including the most recent one in 2014, which saw nearly two million people getting dislocated from Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in the wake of Pakistani forces' operations against the Taliban.

It is worth mentioning here that generally the phenomenon of TDPs is understood to include three types of dislocations: dislocation caused by armed clashes, climate-induced dislocation and development-induced dislocation. However, in Pakistan it's mostly understood in terms of the first type, which has obvious security-related connotations. This kind of TDPs are seen by many as a security concern. The Sindh government, for example, declared in June 2014 that it would not allow TDPs from FATA to enter the province.[11] The lack of understanding that internal migrants could be and, in most cases, are different from TDPs dislocated due to armed clashes has militated against the mainstreaming of the concept of internal migration, and against the adoption of good policy measures to deal with their problems. What is often overlooked in this context is that internal migrants are, in overwhelming cases, economic migrants, who have left their native areas on their own volition, and to build new lives for themselves. They have a stake in the peace, prosperity and stability of the areas they have migrated to. They are always keen to integrate in local communities (this point was highlighted by our baseline research). Realization of these realities can go a long way in securing migrant communities' social integration. This realization, however, seemed to be missing in both target districts.
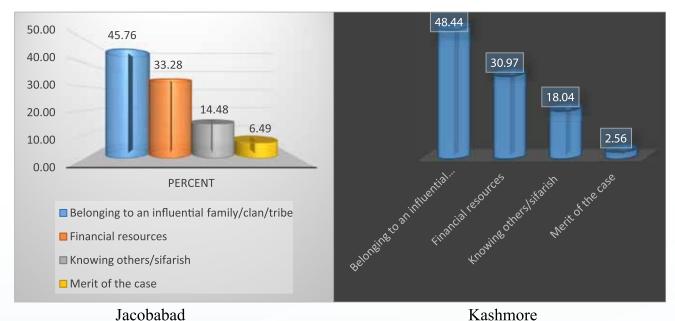
Lack of Social Services

Both baseline and action research showed that the migrant communities had very little access to most basic social services. In fact, both Jacobabad and Kashmore are among the least developed districts in Sindh, with some of the lowest Human Development Indicators (HDIs), which include life expectancy, education and income. The state of public services delivery is generally very poor; it's worse for migrant communities. In both target districts, the migrants particularly resented the lack of access to social services like education, health, transport and clean drinking water. Our trend analysis has listed these grievances raised by migrant communities in both target districts. This lack of social services is yet another hurdle in the way of greater social integration of migrants as provision of social services is universally regarded as an important prerequisite to secure migrants' social integration. Decent health services, for example, help migrants attain good health which helps their integration into local job market. Migrants' peculiar circumstances – lack of proper housing and sanitation facilities, food insecurity, lack of financial resources, etc – generally result in less favorable health outcomes for them, which calls for special attention to be paid to such communities' health needs. Education, another basic social service, also is regarded as an important pathway towards integration particularly for the children. Baseline showed that the overwhelmingly large number of migrants in both districts were illiterate, yet the same illiterate people were heard complaining about the lack of educational facilities for their children. These circumstances underline the importance of educational services to secure greater social integration of migrants.

Lack of Access to Justice and Security

Access to justice and security plays a very crucial role in migrants' social integration. When a migrant community has access to justice and security, it develops trust in the core set of values governing the functioning of that society. This also helps migrants develop a sense of belonging to the society. Even more importantly, this provides

[11]. Dawn, June 17, 2014.

a dispute resolution mechanism that ensures peace in the society, and peace is the fundamental prerequisite for economic progress. On the other hand, when a community is denied access to justice and security, it fails to develop a sense of belonging to the society and the belief in the core values that guide its functioning. Such a society fails to offer its members a mechanism of peaceful dispute resolution mechanism. In such circumstances, many people may feel compelled to resort to extra-legal means to get their grievances redressed, thus undermining the rule of law, the very basis of a civilized society which ensures every member of a society is equal before law.

Our baseline research and peace effectiveness review showed that the migrant communities in both districts had a serious lack of access to formal justice and security mechanism, neither did they believe that these mechanism worked efficiently, fairly and transparently. This lack of access to justice and security was yet another serious challenge for migrant communities' social integration. The following graphs from our baseline research showing respondents' perceptions about what they needed to access the police clearly show the lack of access for migrants who, in overwhelming cases lacked the 'required' attributes i.e. belonging to an influential family, financial resources and a strong reference *(sifarish)*.

Jacobabad   Kashmore

Lack of a Collective Voice

As mentioned earlier, migrant communities in both districts were scattered. Most of the migrants were illiterate and poor, and lacked even most basic services. Living at the periphery of the society, they lacked voice to communicate their concerns to relevant public officials, nor did they have sufficient physical and social capital to impress upon the government functionaries to cater to their legitimate needs in terms of service delivery and access to justice and security. The poor quality of governing institutions and the extremely low level of public trust in them as shown by our baseline research, peace effectiveness review and trend analysis, made the lack of a collective voice a particularly serious challenge. All these factors conspired against the migrant communities' social integrating by ensuring they continued to live at the periphery of the society.

Case Studies from Pakistan

Mr. Mohammad Khan during interview

Mr. Mohammad khan is living in the underprivileged community in the Thul area of Jacobabad district. He had migrated with his family from Baluchistan during the devastating floods of 2010, which had destroyed their livelihoods. Unable to make both ends meet, Muhammad Khan decided to shift his family to Thul city with the hope of starting a peaceful and secure life there. He and his family lived in Thul city for one year before moving to village Shambo Brohi for temporary settlement. He has developed a sense of belonging to the area, and considers himself as part of the local community, but the locals still consider him a migrant.

Mr. Hazar Khan and his family have been settled in District Jacobabad for the last three years, after migrating from Baluchistan. They went through a tough time after migrating. They were utterly unknown to local communities. They were in need of job to make both ends meet. They were allowed by a landlord to work on his lands. Though he had found a job, he still faced a plethora of challenges. His family lacked access to basic facilities like health and education as there were no school or hospital in their locality. The people in his area had not much knowledge of human rights or their other constitutional rights. They had no access to forma justice system. In case of any dispute, they would always go to the wadera.