

# Beyond the Seas...

## Perils and Potentials of Long Distance Migration

[Recapturing the original Hindi research study “Jaana Sagar Paar” (2007) in English]

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### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Post independent India’s various policy schools of thought, dominated by the academia and the state, have often offered only a tunnelled view of various major societal phenomenons. Treating Migration - movements of people in large volumes across space mostly in search of better living - as a dysfunctional and pain-inflicting socio economic phenomenon is a good case in point. For long, the state and the intellectual community have recommended that rural poverty could be effectively curbed if migration is curbed. The existence of poverty in the villages was largely attributed to the communities lacking resources and assets. It was believed that if enough assets are created in the villages and resources are more equitably divided, people will stay put; will not venture out; will settle down in their respective villages instead; be self sufficient and in turn, prosper.
- 1.2 Unfortunately, ground realities have always run parallel and mostly contrary to such assumptions, hypotheses and models; and, the twain have never been able to meet. All across the country, for generations, migration has gone unhindered, oblivious to what the policy makers and others make of it. Different contexts may attribute migration to different reasons but in essence it underlines the undying spirit of human beings who do not want to be tied down to their roots and strive for mobility instead. It is this willingness to travel long distances, undergo hardships while you are at it, reach destinations that are alien, threatening, inhospitable and hostile; and, yet they beckon. And, when they do, the human spirit can not just resist. The act in itself may bring perils to self and the family but the mind sees a potential too; to make good living, to settle down in alien lands and grow.
- 1.3 Migration as a phenomenon can be typified simply into short distance migration and long distance migration. Both originate from a source and both conclude at a destination. The difference, however, lies in the distance if one were to look at the differences in order to discern between the two. Short distance migration may take you from your village to the block and then onto the district headquarters and to the state capital as well. You stay away from your family for a short period only to return in due course. You are away but the family firmly remains in sight. Long distance migration is a short distance migration leap-frogged. It may mean the migrant is able to travel to far flung places, even beyond the seas, in search of work and good living. But with the leap, may comes a jump in the perils as well. The potentials and prospects of life may increase two fold but the parting from the family may lengthen, the frequency of return may decrease.
- 1.4 The present study focuses at this discerning factor of distance that distinguishes long distance migration from its shorter version; with all the perils and prospects associated with it.

- 1.5 The present report is divided into an appropriate set of sections and sub sections. Following a routine introduction to the topic under consideration (1.0), it goes onto narrate the background – of the bureau's work experience with southern Rajasthan's migrant communities, their very noticeable "outward" attitude to life, their history and reputation as a very mobile mass, their struggles both at home and at the destinations to make ends meet, especially when they move to long distances for long periods etc. - from where the idea of the study was culled out and turned into a research proposition (2.0). The research proposition was then discussed at a number of consultations of the bureau's staff in Udaipur. Once the team was convinced that this particular proposition would require some answering to do through systematic research, it was categorised into a set of research questions (3.0). These are the queries that the study should eventually get closer to answering. The staff consultations finalised the research methodology too (4.0) before undertaking the surveys in the source villages and at the destination (Mumbai) as well. The results of the analysis are presented in a long winding section termed analytical findings (5.0).
- 1.6 During the course of the surveys, the team came across certain other facets of the phenomenon that the survey instruments / methodology did not address. These were: the all pervasive influence of communication technology on the mobility of people, and a set of life influencing realities that existed at the destination. The respondents also confirmed their critical nature in shaping and changing the phenomenon (of migration) itself. The team then decided to include them in the present narration and were titled as "leveraging the modern technology" (6.0) and "other realities at destinations" (7.0), respectively. The report signs off by giving concluding remarks in the last section (8.0).

## 2.0 Study Background

- 2.1 Southern Rajasthan constitutes one of the major source areas of inter state migrations in India. There are numerous studies, even conducted by the bureau itself, to support this contention. Of course, people from this and other parts of the state have ventured overseas as well.
- 2.2 The quest for sustainable and profiting livelihoods elsewhere has always drawn people of Rajasthan out; from rural areas to urban areas, within the state and without. It is very common, for example, in a "non-descript" place like Kelwada (Udaipur district) to meet the natives who proudly wear the name "Mumbai" on their sleeves. Mumbai is where the livelihood is for them. Other names that adorn other sleeves are "Bangaluru", "Karnataka" and "Andhra Pradesh" in the villages of Gogunda and Relmugra blocks respectively.
- 2.3 The above phenomenon, of large groups of workers from the far flung villages of Rajasthan moving out of the state in search of occupations and livelihoods, is both large and strong enough to be almost all pervasive. It raises more questions than it cares to answer: Why do they travel as far as they do? What do they do it for? How do they overcome language barriers? What about their lodging and boarding in alien places? How often and when do they go back to their native villages and homes? How does their going away for long periods affect their families who reside back home?

- 2.4 As per one estimate, the block of Gogunda solely sends more than 500 labours every year to Bangalore, to work in the marble fitting industry. In the same vein, workers from Kumbhalgadh and Relmugra areas migrate in very large numbers to far flung states of Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamilnadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.
- 2.5 Aajeevika Bureau's view has always been to closely examine and finely understand the migrants' situations and take an appropriate position as a facilitator and a provider of services to them. One major requisite, this demands is frequent, topical trade-based, destination-based and other migration driven inquiries, surveys, studies and research.
- 2.6 There have been forerunner studies to the present one. These include: Ice-cream vendors of Relmugra; Brick kiln workers from Kotda; Loaders and porters in the wholesale and retail markets of urban Gujarat in general, and the workers in the textile industry of Surat in particular have all been studied at various levels and in different lengths. These research studies have not only offered very good insights into the perils that long distance migrants often face but have also underlined the unexplored potential of risks that go with it; often getting turned into opportunities and eventually leading to economic gains and prosperity.
- 2.7 Before extending the above research series further with the aid of present study, it may be mentioned here that with it, the bureau's research canvass also gets extended considerably. Earlier, our research attempts were confined to studying the processes of migration within the state, or at the most in the neighbouring state of Gujarat. The present attempt, however, looks at the phenomenon situated more than 600 kilometres away but impacting the local economy and social fabric more emphatically nonetheless. Thus, making us contend that long distance migration is a very different cup of tea and unless it is studied comprehensively, the bureau also may end up offering only a tunnelled view of the phenomenon.

### 3.0 Research Questions

- 3.1 While the idea of present research was being mulled at different levels in the organization; it had its roots formed in the ways we have read and understood a variety of situations pertaining to long distance migration that emanates from southern Rajasthan. These situations offer good insights into the complexities on which the migrants' "calling", as it were, are constituted. Also, these complexities pose more questions than what they offer to explain.
- 3.2 The research study, therefore, purports to answer the following research questions:
- **RQ One:** What are the prime factors of long distance migration that clearly distinguishes it from short distance migration?
  - **RQ Two:** What processes facilitate long distance migrants in finding livelihoods; associating with occupations; or eventually occupying a trade niche?
  - **RQ Three:** What are the defining factors of their working environs at the destinations?

- **RQ Four:** How does the “void” created by the continuing absence of long distance migrants at home, impact their families?
- **RQ Five:** What possible steps can Aajeevika Bureau take in fortifying the long distance migrants’ quest for sustainable livelihoods in distanced lands?

3.3 For each of the questions posed above, there is not a single answer; and, as the truth is said to be always lying “somewhere else”, nor did we expect that such answers awaited us beyond the seas. We had to look for the answers in our own ways, by our own methods. The following section describes the methodology that the team eventually adopted at the end of a consultative process.

#### 4.0 Methodology Adopted

- 4.1 The first question that required a well defined answer was, “Who qualifies as a long distance migrant?” Our consultations yielded that all those who travel at least 600 kilometres either in buses or in trains, in search of livelihoods; occupations; or trades, could be termed as long distance migrants. Traversing this much distance by the available public transportation modes will require at least twelve hours of travel time. When one counts the accompanying breaks, waiting, emergency situations etc, the resultant journey time will be even more. Either ways, the major known destinations that a 600 kilometres or a twelve-hour travel sweep can capture, with progressive distance, were found to be: Vaapi, Daman, Mumbai, Goa, Bangaluru, Hyderabad and Vishakhapattanam. These centres span across six (06) states of the country. .
- 4.2 Earlier block level inquiries and surveys in the organization's operation areas in southern Rajasthan have yielded, as major destinations of long distance migrants, the above mentioned cities and states. The surveys could also establish a strong correlation between the destinations and the type of trades/occupation the migrants find a shelter with as the following table reveals.

Table 4.2: Long distance migration to specific trades in specific destinations

Sr. No.	Source areas from the Bureau's areas of work in Rajasthan		Destinations: Cities (States)	Major occupations / Trades
	Block	District		
01	Gogunda	Udaipur	Mumbai (Maharashtra)	Furniture, Dairy, Jewellery, Cooking, Shopkeepers, Ice-cream making etc.
	Kumbhalgadh	Rajsamand		
02	Gogunda	Udaipur	Bangaluru (Karnataka)	Marble fitting, Masonry work, Ice-cream making
	Relmugra	Rajsamand		
03	Gogunda	Udaipur	Vapi (Gujarat)	Scrap recycling, Industrial estates
	Kelwada	Rajsamand		
04	Relmugra	Rajsamand	Hyderabad	Ice-cream making
05	Relmugra	Rajsamand	Vishakhapattanam	Ice-cream making

Source: Bureau Surveys, 2005 onwards

- 4.3 Based on this information base, a group of 33 long distance migrants were identified for the present survey. They represent (Annex One) a good combination of both the trades/occupations and the destinations mentioned above table. These persons were then interviewed, rather intensively, by the survey team using a pre-determined check list (of topics). The check list is annexed (Annex two). The sample respondents have hailed from both southern (Dungarpur, Rajsamand, Udaipur districts) and middle (Dausa and Jaipur districts) parts of Rajasthan.
- 4.4 Interviews were conducted both at the source (Gogunda, Kelwada, Relmugra) and destination centres (Mumbai).
- 4.5 From the destination centres, Mumbai was the only centre the survey team covered. It is situated at about 800 kilometres from Udaipur and is known to harbour thousands of migrants from southern Rajasthan who are variously occupied. From both the viewpoints – distance and the size of the migrant population – it was a good fit. The team had taken enough references and contacts from the bureau's work area so that it could meet a good number of long distance migrants easily. As it turned out, the team could meet migrants from Dausa, Dungarpur and Jaipur districts as well.
- 4.6 The interviews were conducted in the months of September and October, 2007.

## 5.0 Analytical Findings

5.1 In this section, select analytical findings are presented. Of all the variables critically impinging on the lives of long distance migrants, those highlighted here appear to be more representative. These include: (a) Their general profile (b) migration cycle (c) decisive factors that induce long distance migration (d) issues that dominate the home front, and (e) factors that beckons the migrants. The details follow.

### 5.2 Long distance migrants: A profile

#### 5.2.1 The source areas

- As mentioned earlier (4.5), the survey were conducted both at the sources (Udaipur and Rajsamand) and one destination centre, Mumbai. Over there, the survey team met a group of migrants who hailed from Dausa, Dungarpur and Jaipur. The representation of these areas in the sample was found to be:

Table 5.2.1 Source areas of the sample migrants

Sr. No	Source Areas	No. of Migrants Interviewed	% representation
01	Dausa	01	03.00
02	Dungarpur	01	03.00
03	Jaipur	01	03.00
04	Rajsamand	13	38.00
05	Udaipur	17 <b>33</b>	53.00 <b>100</b>

Source: surveys done for the present study, 2007

- It may be mentioned here that from all the migrants the team interviewed, only ( ) were found to have registered themselves with the Bureau and carried the photo identity cards issued by the organization. .

### 5.2.2 The destination areas

- Long distance migrants, residing in Mumbai or living there at the time of the study were the only ones to be interviewed. They were all from Rajasthan and reported various destinations where they have been for a long time. The following table has the details.

Table 5.2.2 Destination areas of the sample migrants

Sr. No	Destination Areas	No. of Migrants Interviewed	% representation
01	Orissa	01	03.00
02	Punjab	01	03.00
03	Andhra Pradesh	02	06.00
04	Gujarat	02	06.00
05	Karnataka	06	18.00
06	Maharashtra	21 <b>33</b>	66.00 <b>100</b>

Source: surveys done for the present study, 2007

- The exact cities (from the above states) these migrants have been to, were: Amritsar, Vishakhapattanam, Bangaluru, Surat, Vaapi and Mumbai.

### 5.2.3 Current occupations / trades

- The migrants were found to be occupied in various trades at the respective destinations. About ten (10) types of occupations were reported as shown in the following table.

Table 5.2.3 Current occupations of the sample migrants

Sr. No	Trade/Occupation Types	No. of Migrants	% representation
01	Shop keepers	07	22.00
02	Marble fitting	07	22.00
03	Cooking/Catering	05	16.00
04	Tea/Food Vendors	03	09.00
05	Ice cream Vendors	03	09.00
06	Dairy	02	06.00
07	Jewellery	02	06.00
08	Office Help	01	03.00
09	Drivers	01	03.00
10	Helpers	01 <b>32</b>	03.00 <b>100</b>

Source: surveys done for the present study, 2007

- Among the shop keepers, they were occupied with selling/marketing hard wear goods, cloth and utensils.
- Our previous studies had indicated a high and frequent turn over among the migrants in terms of location and trade/occupation. The present study further confirmed this contention. The migrants reported that they have changed their occupations at least once during the reported migration period. In most cases economic or financial pressures were the common denominators for the high / frequent turn over. They are always on the look out for occupations that earn them more and yet, more.
- The average threshold of the turn over is about six to seven years. Once a migrant spends that length of time in one occupation/trade, there are good possibilities that s/he has come to occupy a niche from which it is difficult to nudge him/her unless under exceptional circumstances. .

#### 5.2.4 "Professional" experience

- Looking at the length of the period the sample migrants have stayed away from their homes, it would be apt to remark that migration itself is one of their professions. As the following table conveys, most of the migrants that the team interviewed have had a "professional" experience (of migration) of 06 – 10 years. From those interviewed, the least experience was reported to be of 02 years, the most that of 20 years.

Table 5.2.4 Migration period of the sample migrants

Sr. No	Migration Experience (No. of years)	No. of Migrants	% representation
01	02 – 05	09	28.00
02	06 – 10	10	31.00
03	11 – 15	06	19.00
04	15 +	08 <b>33</b>	22.00 <b>100</b>

Source: surveys done for the present study, 2007

- As mentioned in the previous section, an average migration period sees a number of changes in terms of location/s and occupation/s. It may also be noted that as their experience lengthened, the distance they migrated has also increased. It was also reported that "once a long distance migrant; always a long distance migrant.
- These "professionals" also contended that long distance migrations, especially to big cities almost always fetch them better wages and better (trade /occupation) alternatives. Long distance migration has at least yielded enough to them to able to look after their families reasonably well. They all agree, however, that this has been possible only because their families have remained behind. It would not have been possible to support their families *at* the destinations.

### 5.3 Long distance migrants: The migration cycle

#### 5.3.1 Factors that facilitate; factors that impede

- The biggest and most common facilitating factor (of long distance migration) is migrants' own contacts and networks, both at the source and the destination. It seldom happens that a long distance migrant's first long journey (for work) is a "shot in the dark". Every one of the respondents reported that had they not known other migrant/s or the contractor/s or the proprietor/s or a combination of them, they would have never ventured so far out. Moreover, they look to the long distance migrants from their own villages/blocks who have had experienced a cycle or two for support and help, especially at the destinations.
- Vice versa, the contractors and the proprietors too are always on the look out for not only cheap labour, but labour that they could rely on (at that great distance) and who could be retained easily. They also have/presently do have to, counter more or less the same perils (of being an outsider; of being so much dependent on cheap and "recommended" labour); may be only of a different scale. In the early years at least the labours do not shift loyalties easily. It is a relationship that not only grows because of both but also feeds onto itself once commenced.
- On the other hand, there are equally strong - if not more - factors that easily could impede the smooth sailing of a long distance migrant, by rubbing the migrant the wrong way, as it were. These include: marriage (self); agricultural operations back home, other home front responsibilities, stresses related to occupation, inevitable and unavoidable social events back home etc. They can quickly undo any well-oiled migration cycle.
- Among the migrants, those who do not have a well defined support system back home are more prone to suffering breaks in between. It was reported that if a long distance migrant has a support mechanism in the village that is run by males, the chances are that this particular migration cycle would run unhindered.
- It seems that the institution of marriage could act as a watershed in the life of a migrant. If he is not married but has already been consumed by the migration cycle, he has to be prepared for a break of at least two years once he ties the nuptial knots. Similarly, birth of a child could also influence the migrant in a negative way in the sense he would have to break the cycle for a long period. It is common for a migrant with an extended post-marriage stay to forgo his chances of return.
- It may be noted that occupation/trade related pressures and stresses at the destinations often impede a migrant's sustainability / retention. These are: completion of work with a contractor and not able to quickly find another; unsuitable destination; delay or lack of payment; abrupt termination etc.
- Often, the nature of the occupation itself negatively affects the migration cycle. The ice-cream vendors are a case in point. It is indeed a seasonal

occupation, heavily dependent on the vagaries of weather at the respective destinations. This period of inaction for the migrant, who invariably has to return home for three to four months to take up mundane and casual jobs, differs at different destinations. In Andhra Pradesh, it is between June to September, while in Gujarat and other locations in North India it is between September and December.

- It is obvious that any break in the cycle would lead to a severe or serious break into the migrant's annual earnings. Bigger the break, bigger are the losses and smaller are the chances/possibilities that he would be able to go back to his earlier occupation/the contractor at the destination.

#### 5.4 **Long distance migrants: Other decisive factors**

5.4.1 The above factors were personal and to an extent controllable by the concerned migrants. There are factors, however, that are often distant in appearance, macro in nature, and are not in the hands of the migrants to influence or control. They have often to do with the recruitment processes, the preparatory phase for a fresh migrant and post migration situations at the destinations.

##### 5.4.2 **Recruitment processes**

- Contractors and proprietors prefer those who are known to them; who hail from the same village/area/region and who come with the strongest of recommendations.. It becomes easier for them to orient the migrants to the concerned trades/occupations. Another reason has roots in the language barriers the contractors often face in some parts of the country. A Rajasthani contractor would not like to wash his hands off a lucrative contract in south India just because he is not able to deal with the local labours there, mainly because the two of them speak different tongues. He therefore resorts to migrant labours from his own known areas.
- A number of contractors / proprietors confided to the survey team that in their opinion, the migrant labours from Rajasthan outpace and outlast everyone else when it comes to sheer hard work. As the contractors are always short on time, they do not want to deal with the local labour who have more reasons to remain absent or skip work for innocuous reasons and also have more domestic responsibilities. They are also prone to abruptly leave work. On the other hand, with little or apparent more facilities, he could get twice as much, or more work done from the migrants.
- Of course, the fact that a migrant works with a known contractor/proprietor insulates him/her ever from difficulties. A number of migrants – especially those associated with shop keeping and catering – reported that they have from time to time take into their stride "situations" that their owners artificially generate and which test the migrants' working ability, honesty and integrity to the limit.

#### 5.4.3 Pre-travel information

- The bureau's experience with the short duration migrants suggests that almost by default, they leave their homes as soon as they are apprised of a job in the offing. Long distance migrants generally do not fall for such temptations. In the process, the former often gets duped and have to spend heavily on returning back as well.
- It has been also observed that a potential long distance migrant does take a number of precautions before s/he decides finally. Besides the likely income to be incurred, s/he often looks at WHICH destination it entails going and WHAT the nature of occupation is.
- Interestingly, as it is reported, the final decision to go (or not) is generally taken by the migrant himself/herself. There is no scope for any participation (in decision making) for the family members who would be left behind.
- More interestingly, neither the migrant/s nor the contractor/s ever demands or makes a written agreement. It is one of those, "just not done" things.

#### 5.4.4 Retaining the migrants

- The survey team came across numerous incidents, as reported by the respondents, of the contractors / the owners overworking the migrants for low wages; at the back of their minds they are also scared to loose the hard working labour from Rajasthan. He, therefore, devise a number of means and ways so that the migrants do not run away. Some of these are narrated below.
  - In most cases, the contractor arranges for accommodation, for which he knows that the migrants would ever be grateful. With accommodation, the facility of boarding is also generally attached.
  - Those contractors who has more than one site to deal with sometimes bends over in providing facilities or offer incentives, especially to those migrants who are known to him.
  - Similarly, contractors often give in at the time of disputes or conflicts because he just could not afford to let the migrants leave him and go to someone else or leave the destination itself.
  - Arranging for advance payments frequently is yet another trick the contractors resort in order to retain the labour by binding him "morally".
  - Many contractors are not averse to giving long leave / holidays to the migrants; One, because the wages are cut against the same, and two: in return, the migrants are likely to come back to the same site / occupation or not have the holidays extended. This comes as a big relief to the contractors.

## 5.5 **Long distance migrants: Managing the home front**

5.5.1 Coming now to the other side of the phenomenon, the home front of the long distance migrants, it is evident that several factors accord their own pull on the cycle. Mainly, they relate to the family composition, i.e. whether it is a joint family or a small one; the quality of communication channels the migrants have with their families while they are away; the domestic financial front that requires constant attention; other family matters, and last, but not in the least, how the migrants' families view the entire phenomenon (of migration).

### 5.5.2 **Family composition**

- It was reported that many of the long distance migrants belong to joint families, which itself is a facilitating factor. Once at the destinations, the migrants are less worried about the fate of his immediate family members, assured he is of the support system back home.
- Those migrants who belong to single family system or are a part of extended families are never at peace once at the destinations. They do not have support systems in place back home and this weighs on their minds heavily, often making them to break the cycle and visit homes more frequently, incurring heavy expenditures.

### 5.5.3 **Communication channels**

- Yet another influencing factor whether the migrant remains at peace or not at the destination is the quality of communication channel he has built with the family back home. In this age of mobile phones, this may sound totally out of place but often the mobiles phones are of not much use if either side does not possess one. In such cases, the family and the migrant have to depend on others to strike communication with each other.

### 5.5.4 **Managing the financial front at home**

- It was reported that most (migrants) keep back some good amount of money before they leave for the destinations. This amount may form a part of the advance he has received from the contractor. Besides, in emergencies, the family may pawn some its assets with the local money lenders to borrow the requisite amount. The village grocer is also often instructed to look after the families' needs on credit basis. Normally, a part of his earnings goes in returning these various borrowed amounts once he comes back or sends in some money. The life of the long distance migrants is many a times marked by borrowings that might overtake his earnings and he is not out of the debt for extended periods.
- The bureau's past inquiries and studies also indicate that a large number of long distance migrants get entrapped in considerable debts. The present study also found that because of the inability of the migrant to clear their debts at one go, irrespective of what they earn at the destinations, those who lend them the amount charge outlandish interest on the principal.

### 5.5.5 **Managing other domestic fronts**

- Many a times, it is the rest of the home front management that taxes the migrant more than the "money" management. If the migrant happens to be the head of a family, it suffers more because in the society they belong, younger or non earning male members are seldom taken seriously. They are not expected to and they do not take critical or big decisions. In many other ways, the younger children and the female members of the family suffer because they happen to be the direct responsibility of the person who has gone away and in his lieu only a superficial support is available to the next of his kin, if at all. These factors often lead to the migrant breaking his cycle and return home to sort out matters, incurring both; heavy expenses and may be the contractors' wrath as well.

### 5.5.6 **The family view**

- It was reported that a long distance migrant generally contributes more than half of the total income of the family and in the event of not any other alternative being available the family has to take his long periods of absence in its stride. In such cases, it really did not matter as to how far the destination is.
- But there were other views as well. Some of the long distance migrants of the cooking and catering sector reported that they are often disturbed by the fact that within the family their travails to far flung places are viewed differently. Their brothers, parents, even children are ready to accept the parting but their wives give in quite reluctantly. Every time the migrants come back, they have to face yet another barrage of insistence from the wives to take them also along.
- It was also brought to the notice of the survey team that in many cases, the peer group pressures, even among the women, have often done the trick in this regard.

## 5.6 **Long distance migration: Beckoning factors**

5.6.1 The analytical findings may have brought out to surface certain perils that all long distance migrants get to face but migration – short distance or long distance – continue to happen unhindered. This reality may make us conclude that factors that beckon or draw large populations out from one situation to another; from one region to another are more powerful and forceful than those that hinder the process. In conclusion to the section on analytical findings, the present study would like to dwell on the following factors that beckon migrants to move across large distances. These factors, among other things, include: (a) better earning opportunities at the destinations (b) plus, stable work and enabling work conditions (c) quality of relationship between the migrant workers and the contractor/the proprietor (d) acquaintances at destinations (e) post migration scenario, and (f) a tendency to escape from the local realities that bind them. In the following paragraphs, these factors are given a closer look.

### **5.6.2 Better earnings and advance payments**

- The respondents were of the opinion that long distance migration, if concludes in big cities like Mumbai and Bangalore, the chances of higher earnings are very bright. Mumbai was again pointed out, by those involved in cooking and catering, to be a city that demands hard work but pays equally well in return. If the migrant is able to get a placement with a big contractor, the chances of his lodging and boarding requirements getting met and receiving advance payments are very high. If a migrant stay put with a contractor for a long time, such facilities and incentives become very easy to come by.

### **5.6.3 Enabling work conditions**

- Stable work along with reasonable work conditions is yet another attraction to the long distance migrants. Cities such as Mumbai, Bangaluru, Indore, Surat never turn away migrants for of lack of work. Once a migrant gets into the strong and established networks of seasoned migrants, work continues to pour, as it were.

### **5.6.4 Amicable relations with the contractor / the proprietor**

- Over the years, in big cities, unbelievably close relations have been nurtured and built among multiple sets of migrants, contractors and proprietors. These relations across generations and the ensuing networks have been great beckoning factors. The utility of these networks is realised when migrants after having breaks in the cycles are not only able to get back to their old jobs, but on the strength of these relations bring fresh migrants too in its wake. .

### **5.6.5 Old and previous acquaintances at destinations**

- Akin to the networks and relationships between the migrants and the contractors; there are networks amongst the migrants as well. They facilitate a great deal in not only giving work for a fresh set of migrants but help them in settling down as well.

### **5.6.6 Returnees as inspiration**

- When "returnees" come back to their native villages, more often than not they are "changed" in more ways than just in appearance. Every time they come back, they influence a new set people at the local level who get inspired and move towards taking a decision to leave.

### **5.6.7 Escape from the domestic fronts**

- A number f respondents opined at short distance migration induces frequent breaks in the cycle as they have to return home at very small pretexts, inviting in its wake additional expenses, loss of pay and time and also the risk of loosing work and employment. Long distance migration saves you from all these trivia.

## 6.0 **Leveraging the modern technology for long distance migrants**

6.1 In this age of communication technology revolutions, the natives of southern Rajasthan have still remained marginalised. There are no reliable telephone lines in the area nor is an operative mobile telephone network. Its mountainous topography discourages setting up mobile network towers. Besides, in spite of growing needs of such facilities (when majority of the males are located away from homes), the resource poor community at the source would not have been able to afford a high-end service either.

### 6.2 **Telephone / Mobile phones**

- The realities on ground, however, differ between two blocks of the same district. The villages in Kelwada and Gogunda blocks are still devoid of any such facilities. Its long distance migrant population at the destinations, however, is well versed with the technology and many of them have purchased the sets as well. This disparity does not help at all in communication. The villagers still have to depend on land based telephone cable network which is highly unreliable in these areas. Even when these lines function, the service providers charge money from the locals to receive calls from outside.
- Relmugra block on the other hand has just begun to taste the fruits of the technological revolution. The migrants from these areas have done well in life and are now able to spend on communicating to their source areas. The telephone network is more reliable in this area and even mobile network towers are being erected.
- Besides, the migrants utilize these facilities fully at the destinations and build their own networks through these communication technologies.

### 6.3 **ATMs and Core Banking Services**

- At present, the bureau's work areas which also constitutes majority of the source areas of long distance migrants from southern Rajasthan is almost uniformly devoid of these two facilities. Despite the general availability of the technology all around, the migrants have to still depend on conventional means to remit their earnings home.

### 6.4 **Better commuting facilities**

- Majority of the migrants use railways for long distance travelling though there are exceptions to it. For example, a number of parts in Udaipur district have service providers who generate bus trips to Mumbai and they get passengers who are ready to endure almost twenty four hours long travelling.
- The bus operators, by providing a direct link between Mumbai and a set of villages of Gogunda and Kelwada block have captured the attention of the long distance migrants but eventually, the migrants are the losers. They have to pay as high as Rs. 450 – Rs. 500 for a ticket. The fare gets doubled during the festival days and because of the heavy rush, the migrants do not get to travel comfortably despite paying high amounts.

- Those migrants who travel to Bangaluru and Andhra Pradesh invariably use railways. They could easily travel with comfort in the train by reserving the tickets in advance but they do not. They move in such large groups and many a times at the behest of the contractors so they end up travelling by general class.

## 7.0 **Other Realities at the destinations**

7.1 And then, there are other realities as well that the long distance migrants have to counter at the destinations. These relate to: (a) housing (b) health and hygiene, and (c) environmental and cultural differences.

### 7.2 **Housing**

- A major reality looms large for most of the long distance migrants when they first enter a big city in the form of housing, or rather the lack of it. For fresh migrants, cities like Mumbai could be very inhospitable.
- If the migrants want to rent a room or two, they are not easily found or given. The owners invariably ask for the migrants' identity and other documents which most of them do not possess. It is also equally difficult to find a shelter without contacts or recommendations.
- But, as usual, housing related ground reality also differs from occupation to occupation. Rajasthani migrants who work as domestic help, cooks, gardeners wit the rich class of the city, generally get a place to stay as well. There are other occupations such as shop keeping, catering where rudimentary facilities are available and the contractors also help in arranging some accommodation or the other. It is the remaining 20 per cent of long distance migrants who come to big cities and have to really fend for themselves for housing. They usually end up staying in slums or ven on footpaths, especially in Mumbai.
- In lesser big cities such as Vishakhapattanam, Indore etc. the migrants get to stay but have to put up with congested and unhygienic living conditions.

### 7.3 **Health and Hygiene**

- Yet another reality for the migrants exists in the form of difficulties associated with health, hygiene and health services. For example, the ice-cream vendors from Rajasthan who venture out to far off cities in search of living, deal constantly with water, edible colours and ice besides other chemicals and materials. Within a city they have to walk constantly pushing their ice-cream carts with them in all weathers and hence most of them become prone to leg pain, muscle pain, skin diseases, headache and fevers.

### 7.4 **Culture and Environmental Realities**

- Cultural and environmental realities for the long distance migrants relate to differences they find in cuisine, language, weather, work environment etc. in the distant lands. These differences often occur as a "culture shock". In the early phase of

their stay in the city, most of them find it very difficult to adjust because of different food habits of the locals, their language and dialects, and also the weather.

## 8.0 Concluding Remarks

8.1 In conclusion, the study would like to make two major remarks. One: How distinguishing are the problems and issues that long distance migrants face as compared to their shorter counterparts? Two: If they indeed do; how different are the support and referral services they require from short distance migrants? The following sub sections attempt to answer these remarks.

### 8.2 Long distance versus Short distance migration

**Please note: Table Missing!**

### 8.3 Support and referral services for long distance migrants

8.3.1 The study recommends the following support and referral services for the long distance migrants:

- **Telephone facilities at the source**
  - Installing telephone booths even with the migrant's household at select places in the source villages will do a world of good for those who stay away in the distant cities. It will not only improve the frequency and quality of communication between the migrants and their families but would also provide an opportunity for this kind of telephone service provider households to earn some extra income.
- **Travel facilities**
  - Long distance migrants invariable flock to heir native villages during festivals. As seen earlier, they are at the mercy of the bus and travel operators, especially when they have to reach back in time. There is an urgent need to talk to both private bus operators and the government transport divisions to look into this matter.
- **Journey support**
  - Journeys (to the destinations for the long distance migrants are often very taxing. The travel hours are long (20-22) hours and so are the journey hours with many lay offs and changing of transport modes. For example, a migrant from Gogunda travelling to Bangaluru has to deal first either with the bus operator (to reach Ahmedabad) or use the railway; on reaching Ahmedabad he has to face the auto rickshaw drivers while changing from bus to train; then endure the entire journey to Bangaluru, and once he reaches the city another round of difficulties in reaching the exact destination with in the city or elsewhere.

- The Bureau may provide both logistical and moral support to such migrants for city to city travel which is the most critical period for those travelling.
- **Communication material**
  - The bureau can prepare and publish a mini travel manual for long distance migrants in simple language/s and with pictures and drawings. A kind of pictorial "Dos" and "Don'ts" while travelling; information on the destination centres; railway and bus time tables, fare lists of rickshaws in various cities and so on.
- **As volunteers/community workers at destinations**
  - It will certainly prove to be a good idea if veteran migrants at destinations are involved in the bureau's work there. Those who have been in the migration business for more than a decade can prove to be extremely helpful in facilitating the bureau's work and even taking it further, especially with fresh migrants.
- **Financial services**
  - Provision of remittance services; short term credit/loan facilities
- **Health security**
  - Equipping the migrants with health insurance schemes like Medi-claim and any personal accident insurance
- **Supplementary placement service and training**
  - This particular service can support those migrants who have had a break in the migration cycle and have come back home for a medium term period. They generally do casual work during these days. The bureau can target these migrants to arrange some skill based training for them or apprise them of even local employment opportunities, so that before he goes back he might just have some alternatives to consider.