

Labour Migration and Remittances in Uttarakhand



Enabling poor rural people
to overcome poverty

Note

This case study is one of three carried out at selected sites in India, Nepal, and Pakistan to look at the phenomenon of migration, and the flow of remittances, in the western Hindu Kush-Himalayas. A synthesis of the findings has been published by ICIMOD in the document: Hoermann B; Banerjee S; Kollmair M (2010) *Labour migration for development in the western Hindu Kush-Himalayas*. The publication presented here is the full summary of the case study carried out in Uttarakhand, India.

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Introduction

Migration in India

Seasonal and circular migration is an integral livelihood strategy for poor people in India (Deshingkar and Start 2003). In fact, over the years, migration has been an important livelihood option for both the poor and the non-poor in India. As a result of unequal growth, people from agriculturally and industrially less developed states migrate to more developed states in search of job opportunities – for example from the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, the southern part of Madhya Pradesh, western Orissa, and southern Rajasthan to states like Punjab, Gujarat, and Maharashtra (Deshingkar and Akter 2009). For a large number of migrants, New Delhi is a much favoured destination, due to the abundance of job opportunities.

According to the 2001 Census, 30% of the total population of India (307 million) in 2001 were migrants. Among the four types of domestic migration (rural-to-rural, rural-to-urban, urban-to-rural, and urban-to-urban), rural-to-rural migration was highest in 2001, accounting for 54.7% of total domestic migration (Mitra and Murayama 2008). However, the share of rural-to-rural migration has declined over the past few decades, while that of rural-to-urban migration has gradually increased (from 16.5% in 1971 to 21.1% in 2001) (Mitra and Murayama 2008). Among the inter-state migrants, the majority (37.9%) migrate from rural to urban destinations (Mitra and Murayama 2008). However, intra-state is more common than inter-state migration. Women migrants outnumber men; they account for more than 60% of the total migration flows within the country.

These migrants have been making significant financial contributions to their families in their places of origin. There are no accurate data available on the volume of internal money transfers, but international remittances to India amounted to US\$ 17.4 billion in 2003 (World Bank 2009). Moreover, migrants make significant contributions to the national economy by providing human capital in sectors such as textiles, hospitality, construction, mining, brick-making, and small industries (Deshingkar and Akter 2009).



Figure 1: Large numbers of people from Uttarakhand migrate for work

Need for the present study

Migration in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas (HKH), as in other mountain areas of the world, is not a new phenomenon. People have been on the move since time immemorial. However, in recent years, global change has increased migration considerably. Also, mountain people are now, more than ever before, aware of opportunities elsewhere. Better communication technologies and falling transportation costs have enabled previously immobile people to migrate. The economic upturn in the region's urban centres and the demand for cheap and flexible labour, particularly in the Gulf and Southeast Asian countries, focus the spotlight on migration as a livelihood strategy.

For the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), international migration is a major mountain development issue, posing opportunities and challenges for both migrant sending and receiving countries. In the next decade, migration will continue to grow in the HKH and other mountain areas of the world, driven by the global financial crisis, food insecurity, climate change, globalisation, and escalating income disparities.

Migration can be an effective strategy for livelihood adaptation and can contribute to the sustainable alleviation of poverty in mountain areas. Results from macro-economic studies suggest that, on average, a 10% increase in per capita official international remittances leads to a 3.5% decline in the proportion of people living in poverty (Adams and Page 2005). In Nepal, remittances are responsible for almost 20% of the poverty decrease since 1995, against a background of armed insurgency and economic downturn (Lokshin et al. 2007). Hence, for the more than 140 million people living in poverty in the HKH, labour migration is one of the most powerful opportunities for prosperity.

Migration generates financial and human capital, which is a potential driver for poverty reduction. For the mountain poor, remittances are increasingly the most direct, immediate, and significant contribution to their livelihoods. In Nepal, almost half of all hill households receive remittances that represent close to 35% of their income. Afghans in Iran send almost 70% of their wages back home, and many households in Pakistan depend on remittances for survival. Social remittances are those benefits beyond the effects of financial flows. Migrants acquire new ideas, skills, perceptions, and technologies, which they carry back to their home country and which act as powerful forces for modernisation and social change. However, although there is a large development potential from labour migration and remittance flows in the HKH region, the awareness of this potential and action to exploit it remain weak.

In general, little attention is paid to the challenges and opportunities that must be faced to harness the potential of migration and reduce the negative effects for mountain societies. One of the main reasons for this is the lack of information and knowledge on migration and remittance patterns and volumes. Before developing strategies that can help people benefit more from the migration that is taking place, it is important to understand more about the process, the way it affects and is used by society, and the flows of remittances. As mountain migration is a highly engendered process, with mostly men leaving and women staying behind, it is of particular importance to better understand the effects of this mostly male outmigration in order to develop (gender) sensitive solutions to improve the development relevance of remittances. To address the lack of information, three case studies were carried out in India, Nepal, and Pakistan looking at migration in general, and the flow of remittances in particular, at the different sites. The present report presents the results of the case study in Uttarakhand, India.

Study objectives

The objectives of this study were to

- i. collect information on the type, volume, and mode of transfer of remittances in Uttarakhand; and
- ii. understand the impact of remittances, in terms of both financial flows and transfer of new skills and the perceptions in relation to poverty, development, and gender.

Based on this information, ICIMOD and its partners plan to design instruments to improve the development impact of both financial and social remittances in Uttarakhand, in particular, and the region in general.

Methodology

Study area

The study focused on the hill state of Uttarakhand. Primary data were collected from six villages, two from each of the three districts of Bageshwar, Chamoli, and Tehri Garhwal (Table 1).

The districts for the field study were selected from among the districts in which the IFAD-supported Aajeevika project is being implemented. Based on cultural and historic differences, Uttarakhand can be sub-divided into two zones, Kumaon and Garhwal. Therefore, one district from Garhwal (Tehri Garhwal) and one from Kumaon (Bageshwar) were included in the study, with Chamoli, located at the border of Kumaon and Garhwal, as the third.

The village selection was done on the basis of discussions with the District Coordinators of the Aajeevika project for the respective districts based on the following criteria: distance of village from motorable road; distance from nearest urban area/market; and visible trend of outmigration from the village.

Timeframe

The study was conducted from June to August 2009. Field research and secondary data collection were undertaken during June and July, and report writing was done from mid-July to mid-August.

Data collection

This study involved the collection of primary data from the field as well as a review of secondary literature. Primary data collection tools mainly included personal interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) (Table 2). The respondents included migrants, returned migrants, families of migrants and returned migrants (especially wives and mothers of migrants), non-migrant families, and farmers. Discussions were also held with village youth, the elderly, village pradhans, members of the gram panchayat, and local schoolteachers.

Table 1: Study villages

District	Block	Village
Bageshwar	Kanda	Musoli
Bageshwar	Kanda	Dhapola Sera
Chamoli	Dewal	Kothi
Chamoli	Dewal	Sawad
Tehri Garhwal	Pratapnagar	Kangsali
Tehri Garhwal	Hindolakhil	Takoli

Table 2: Sample size according to major respondent types

Village	Focus group discussions	Interviews with domestic migrants/families	Interviews with foreign migrants/families	Interviews with returned migrants	Interviews with non-migrant families	Interviews with farmers
Kangsali	4	12	2	2	10	5
Takoli	4	11	-	3	13	5
Musoli	4	12	1	3	8	5
Dhapola Sera	4	10	-	3	12	5
Kothi	4	11	-	4	10	5
Sawad	4	12	2	3	11	5
Total	24	68	5	18	64	30

Limitations

A study of this nature relies to a certain extent on people's subjective perceptions. Several limitations are, therefore, inherent and could affect the validity of the conclusions. The following should be taken into account when assessing the results. It was very difficult to gain people's trust and confidence within the short timeframe of the study, especially in order to discuss openly sensitive issues such as personal income and expenditure, gender roles and relations, family problems, and so forth. Comparatively small numbers of migrants were actually available in the villages for interviews. Women were quite busy with their work from morning until late evening, which made it difficult to have discussions with them. Therefore, focus group discussions and interviews had to be organised late in the evening and, due to this, there was insufficient time on many occasions for interaction with women.

Migration Trends from Uttarakhand

Migration from Uttarakhand

The geo-physical constraints faced by people living in mountainous regions across the world, especially those living in the HKH, have traditionally been push factors in migration. The hill state of Uttarakhand in the north-western part of India is no exception, with Tehri, Pauri, and Almora districts experiencing outmigration since the 1870s (Singh 1990).

The initiation of migration was perhaps due to the jobs created by the British Indian Army, which led to diversification of the rural economy and initiated a tradition of migration of able-bodied men (Jain and Nagarwalla 2003). Youth from areas like Badhangarhi and Mandal in Chamoli district have been serving in the Army for well over a century now, and have the reputation of being some of the finest in the armed forces. This initial exposure to the outside world had a major influence on building acceptance of livelihoods based on migration (Jain and Nagarwalla 2003).

Migration in the HKH is intra-regional (i.e., from remote rural locations to developed urban centres in the hills) as well as inter-regional (i.e., from the hill regions to the developed plains). Seasonal, rural-urban, and international migration are the predominant types of migration in Uttarakhand. According to the Census of India (2001), the number of migrants from Uttarakhand in 2001 was 3.07 million: 2.06 million women and 1.01 million men (Table 3), with 55% being non-workers.

Table 3: Migration in Uttarakhand

	Male	Female	Total
Main workers	539,231	562,073	1,101,304
Marginal workers	113,565	360,341	473,906
Non-workers	448,508	1,240,539	1,689,047
Total no of migrants	1,010,183	2,060,991	3,071,174

Source: Census of India (2001)

The high proportion of non-workers overall is partly attributable to the high proportion of female non-workers among the migrants. Table 4 shows that the majority of female migrants did not migrate in search of jobs, but for other societal reasons. Some 66% of female migrants migrated due to marriage, while another 19% moved with their families. Interestingly, only about 2% of female migration is due to reasons related to employment. Among male migrants, 39% migrated to seek employment, 27% along with their households, and 4% for reasons related to education.

Table 4: Gender-wise reasons for migrating from Uttarakhand

Reason for migrating	Male	Female	Total
Work/employment	382,986	38,437	421,423
Business	11,284	2,099	13,383
Education	36,670	14,012	50,682
Marriage	7,987	1,361,711	1,369,698
Moved after birth	13,725	9,464	23,189
Moved with household	271,356	387,152	658,508
Other	286,175	248,116	534,291
Total	1,010,183	2,060,991	3,071,174

Source: Census of India (2001)

In terms of age, the government data available are inconclusive (as they are based on only about one third of the total migrants reported from Uttarakhand), but still provide some indication of the average age of migrants. According to the available statistics, 42% of migrants from Uttarakhand were in the age group 20 to 29 years at the time of migration, 18% in the age group 10 to 19 years, 15% in the age group 30 to 39 years, and 12% in the age group 0 to 9 years (Table 5).

The total number of international migrants from Uttarakhand in 2001 was about 87,000, a little less than 2% of the total international migration from India and about 3% of the total migrants from Uttarakhand (Table 6). These figures indicate that the population of Uttarakhand is primarily migrating within the country and that international migration from the state is limited.

Major drivers of migration

The findings suggest that migration in Uttarakhand is fuelled by a combination of push and pull factors. The push factors are economic and force people to migrate from the hills, while the pull factors are mainly spatial differences which induce people to migrate from the rural and semi-urban hill regions to the cities in the plains (Figure 2).

Push factors

Interviews and focus group discussions revealed a combination of push factors forcing people to migrate from the study area.

Low agricultural productivity

Low agricultural productivity emerged as an important push factor and was cited as one of the reasons for migration by 47% of respondents. The communities said that traditional hill agriculture is practised on small and fragmented terraced fields, which are uneconomical.

In addition, the small landholdings are characterised by lack of irrigation, thus crop yields are low and there are limited options for cultivating cash crops. "I feel that it is cheaper to buy food grains than to actually grow them on unirrigated lands," said Laxman Singh from Takoli village, Tehri Garhwal district.

Table 5: Age-wise number of migrants from Uttarakhand

Age at migration	Number of migrants	Percentage
0-9	123,986	11.70
10-19	192,887	18.20
20-29	447,440	42.22
30-39	154,284	14.56
40-49	73,264	6.91
50-59	34,779	3.28
60-69	19,656	1.85
70-79	8,653	0.82
80+	3,666	0.35
Other	1,176	0.11

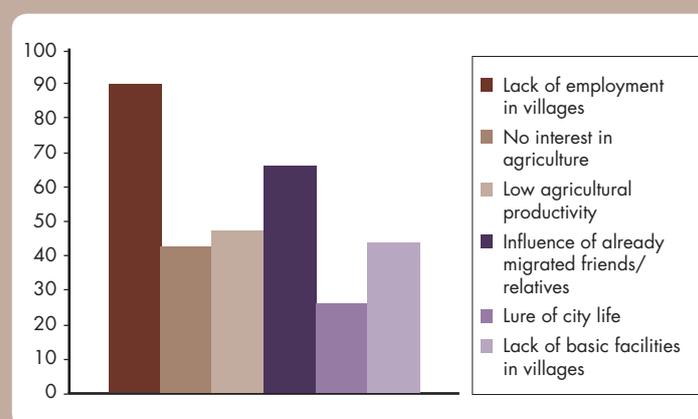
Source: Census of India (2001)

Table 6: International migrants from Uttarakhand

Category	Uttarakhand	India
Male	51,617	2,683,914
Female	35,620	2,471,509
Total	87,237	5,155,423

Source: Census of India (2001)

Figure 2: Main reasons for migration in the study villages



Another important factor is the fragmentation and subdivision of landholdings due to increases in family size. Farmers say that their already small landholdings are becoming increasingly small by virtue of subdivisions in the family. Hence, they are unable to grow sufficient food grain to support their entire family.

The break up of joint families into nuclear families due to 'urban influences' and increasing economic hardship has meant that there is a reduced workforce available for agriculture and animal husbandry. People stated that nuclear families do not have sufficient workforce to put in the required amount of effort for agriculture and maintain sufficient cattle for manure for soil fertility. "Earlier all the brothers, their wives, and their children used to jointly share the burden of the household, but now one person with his wife and small children cannot put in so much effort into agriculture and animal husbandry," Surendra Singh Khatri, Sawad village, Chamoli district.

During the focus group discussions, households said that they meet six to eight months of their household requirements for food grain through agriculture. The general view was that earlier the entire annual household demand for food grain was fulfilled. The people used this reasoning to put forth the view that the productivity of agriculture has declined. However, field observations revealed that although agricultural productivity has indeed declined, rapid increases in population have led to increased family size and the subdivision of landholdings so that the same or smaller landholdings are expected to feed more people.

Lack of employment opportunities

Lack of employment opportunities in the rural and semi urban areas of Uttarakhand emerged as one of the most important factors behind the high incidence of migration. Almost 90% of respondents cited this as one of the reasons for migration. People, especially the young, complained that they were not able to obtain suitable employment in and around their villages. "The livelihood options available for us are either to pursue agriculture, work as wage labourers, or maybe become drivers," Arjun Singh, brother of a migrant from Dhalopa Sera village, Bageshwar district.

This assumes greater importance in light of the fact that almost 43% of respondents also said that they were not interested in pursuing agriculture at all and were looking for alternative livelihood opportunities. Notably, a general feeling among the educated youth was that agriculture is a demeaning occupation and "it is a social humiliation for educated people to work in the fields".

Due to lack of industrial development in the hill areas of Uttarakhand, employment opportunities are extremely limited. At best, educated youth can be employed as teachers, but there is intense competition. Consequently, disillusioned youths complained that they had no option but to migrate to the plains. "After completing my studies I worked with my father for some time but I don't want to become a farmer and since there was no job available here I had to migrate to Delhi," Sujjan Singh, a migrant from Kothi village, Chamoli district.

Lack of infrastructural development

Lack of infrastructural development in the hill villages is visible in the lack of roads and transport, erratic power supply, lack of water supply, the poor quality of housing, inadequate medical facilities, and the absence of markets and marketing facilities. Poor infrastructural development in Uttarakhand is a strong push factor as the youth, upon comparing their villages with urban centres, feel a strong desire to move out of the villages in order to 'enjoy' the city life. Around 44% of respondents cited this as one of the reasons for outmigration to the cities in the plains.

Educational status of migrants

Education also emerged as an important push factor as educated youths reported being totally disillusioned with agriculture. Even those youths who have studied until 10+2 level feel that they could obtain better livelihood opportunities outside their villages and, consequently, are reluctant to take up agriculture.

There is also a strong feeling among these youths that only illiterate and less educated people pursue agriculture. "After studying for so many years it is pointless to go back to agriculture. If I had to be a farmer there was no need to study so much," Shailendra Singh, a young migrant from Dhapola Sera village, Bageshwar district. Perhaps, the current societal value system and the educational system are partly at fault for this trend, in which agriculture has been tagged as a socially demeaning occupation. On the other hand, illiterate and less educated youth (mostly school dropouts) are dissuaded from migrating as they feel that, due to their low education level, they would find it difficult to obtain suitable jobs in the cities. The analysis of the educational status of migrants clearly supports this argument. Among the migrants surveyed there was only one who was illiterate; the largest proportion (nearly 40%) had studied up to 10+2 level (see section below on characteristics of migrants).

Another interesting observation is that parents reported being worried that, by remaining in the village, their children would not have access to quality education. They strongly feel the need to migrate to the cities in order to ensure that their children receive a better education.

Other factors

The presence of other locale-specific push factors was also observed, the most significant example being the mining of chalkstone (khadiya) in Bageshwar district (see Annex). The study found that villagers are either selling their agricultural lands to contractors or undertaking mining activities on their lands themselves. In both cases, the earnings through mining encourage farmers to migrate to cities or nearby towns.

Pull factors

Two major pull factors emerged from the study: spatial differences in the cities and the influence of friends and relatives who have outmigrated.

Spatial differences

A little over 26% of respondents said that, apart from other reasons, the fact that cities have better infrastructural facilities also influenced their decision to migrate. The youth in particular reported being lured by the charm of city life through education, the media, and exposure to cities. They dream of pursuing a successful career in metro centres, such as New Delhi or Mumbai, and enjoying all the luxuries of modern life. Discussions revealed that, on the whole, the younger generation feels that there is no dearth of opportunities and wealth in cities. "What is there in our village? There is not even proper medical care for the ill," Baisakh Singh Kumai, Kangsali village, Tehri Garhwal district.

Friends and relatives

Perhaps one of the biggest factors encouraging outmigration is the influence, persuasion, and encouragement of friends and relatives who have already outmigrated. Local youths were found to be greatly influenced by their migrant counterparts. The outmigrants encourage youth by telling them about the urban lifestyle and the opportunities available. Some 66% of respondents stated that their migrant friends and relatives played a part in persuading them to migrate: in many cases outmigrants also helped others to migrate (see next section). Some of the villagers were not happy with their children migrating and disapproved of migrants who encourage migration. "The migrants are spoiling our youth by telling them all kinds of good stories about the cities which may not even be true. They always tell about their successes but never about their failures," said Meharban Singh, an elder from Sawad village.

Climate change and migration

Migration is an important adaptation strategy adopted by people facing change in their ecological environment. Since time immemorial, human beings have migrated seasonally and even permanently between various ecosystems in order to find suitable livelihood options.

The ecological changes being brought about as a result of climate change have the potential to cause widespread migration the world over. In 1990, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) opined that the greatest impact of climate change could be on human migration, as millions of people the world over could be displaced due to coastal flooding and the disruption of agricultural systems (Loneragan 1998; c.f. IOM 2008). In fact, it is estimated that, during the mid-1990s, 25 million people were forced to migrate due to environmental pressures – pollution, land degradation, drought, and natural disasters (IOM 2008). According to some estimates, by the year 2050, over 200 million people could be displaced due to climate change, particularly those living in fragile ecosystems.

As the site of the present study (the north-west Himalayan region of India) is also a highly fragile ecosystem, an attempt was made to explore the linkages between climate change and migration. However, a scientific analysis of migration induced by climate change was not attempted; instead the study aimed to collect the opinions and perceptions of local communities on this issue. During the focus group discussions and interviews, the perceptions of the communities were collected about the perceived climatic changes they had experienced and whether these had an impact upon migration.

Community perceptions regarding climate change

The farmers said that during the past few years the rainfall pattern had become quite erratic. They complained of very heavy occasional showers during the rainy season (cloudbursts) but a reduction in the overall number of days of rainfall. At the same time, it was reported that precipitation during the winter had declined considerably, causing significant damage to winter crops.

The general feeling was that, although rainfall did happen, it happened in the wrong season. "We need rainfall during the winter (December to February), but there is very little rainfall then, while in March there are heavy showers, which is quite unusual," Hemanti Devi, Kothi village, Chamoli district.

It was also perceived by the communities that the overall frequency and quantity of snowfall had declined considerably. This is adversely impacting the local vegetation. In a couple of villages the communities said that a number of local springs had begun to dry up during the summer, while the general opinion in all the study villages was that the flow of water in the local springs had declined considerably.

The village residents also complained of an increase in temperatures resulting in hotter summers and warmer winters. The elderly in the village said that, earlier, they used to wear warm clothes even during the summer months, but that summer temperatures had increased considerably.

Climate change and impact on agricultural productivity

It was reported that, on the whole, agricultural productivity had declined considerably in the last decade, and this was attributed by respondents to climatic change as well as other causal factors. A sample of the responses of 30 farmers was taken in order to assess their perceptions regarding climate change and agricultural productivity; these responses are summarised in Table 7.

One of the major complaints (by 57% of respondents) was that the average annual rainfall had declined in the past decade. According to the majority of respondents, the total number of days of rainfall had perhaps come down, leading to an overall decrease in the total rainfall.

Forty-three per cent of farmers surveyed also talked about changing rainfall patterns. They complained about the failure of winter rains leading to a drastic decline in winter crops. Farmers from Takoli village in Tehri Garhwal district complained that last winter their entire winter crop was ruined due to lack of adequate rainfall. "Last winter, due to lack of rainfall, the winter crops were so poor that we were not even able to recover the cost of the seed," said Dharm Singh Chauhan, a farmer from Takoli village, Tehri Garhwal.

Farmers mentioned that spells of unusually heavy rainfall during the rainy season were more frequently experienced than previously. This was considered detrimental to soil health and farmers complained of heavy soil erosion during this period. Communities said that heavy soil erosion had led to a considerable decline in crop productivity during subsequent cropping seasons. About 33% of respondents reported this as one of the reasons for the decline in agricultural productivity.

Hill agriculture is mostly rainfed, and only small proportions of agricultural land are irrigated through traditional water channels (guhls), which are used to channel the water from nearby streams and rivulets to the fields. The fields irrigated through guhls have the best productivity in the village. However, about 23% of respondents said that the availability of water in the streams had declined significantly during summer and that very little water was available for irrigation through guhls. For example, in Takoli village, which is located on both sides of a local stream called the 'Takoli gad', the people said that, for the past several years, the runoff in the stream had declined drastically, adversely affecting irrigation. A few farmers (10%) also said that, in recent times, their crops had been subjected to more frequent pest attacks. "Generally we do not experience a lot of pest attacks, but the past few years have been different," said a farmer from Takoli village.

Another concern of the village community in general was that warm and dry summers, as experienced in the past few years, were causing a major decline in the productivity of vegetables. Generally, hill farmers cultivate a number of vegetables during the months from May to July, but late monsoons, high temperatures, and an overall decline in irrigation (through guhls) were having an adverse impact on productivity levels.

Table 7: Cause of decline in agricultural productivity

Cause	Percentage of respondents
Less rainfall	57
Change in rainfall patterns	43
Decline in water available for irrigation	23
More insect and pest attacks	10
Increase in soil erosion	33
Factors other than climate change	77

Some 77% of respondents also attributed the decline in agricultural productivity to other factors, such as a decline in animal husbandry leading to reduced availability of manure, people losing interest in agriculture, lack of maintenance and upkeep of agricultural lands, poor maintenance of guhls, and so forth. However, overall, the field study did reveal that some ecological changes are being perceived by the communities and that these changes, whether in isolation or in tandem with other biotic and abiotic factors, are perceived as leading to a decline in agricultural productivity in Uttarakhand.

The respondents were also asked to quantify the estimated annual decline in productivity of agriculture in the past two to five years. This led to some interesting observations with about 57% of farmers surveyed mentioning that agricultural productivity had declined by about 10 to 25%, with only 23% noting very little change (Table 8).

Climate change and migration

The above analysis suggests that climate change is contributing to a decline in agricultural productivity in the study area. Although hill agriculture has never been very productive in Uttarakhand, and migration has been an integral feature of the hill society, it is felt that in the last decade the further decline in agricultural productivity – for which change in climatic conditions appears to be one of the causes – has been quite detrimental to the interests of the hill farmers and has contributed to outmigration.

Migrant groups

The pattern of migration was significantly skewed in favour of the socially dominant caste groups. The study clearly reveals a much higher tendency to migrate among socially dominant castes such as Brahmins and Rajputs. Out of the total outmigrants surveyed, 66% were Rajputs and 27% Brahmins, whereas only about 6% belonged to the socially weaker Scheduled Castes (Figure 3). During focus group discussions and interviews, communities acknowledged these disparities and attributed them to differences in education, awareness, economic status, and urban contacts. Respondents reported that Brahmins and Rajputs are financially better off than the Scheduled Castes and, hence, members of their families are able to generate the requisite finances to migrate, whereas Scheduled Castes cannot.

Youths from Brahmin and Rajput communities were found to be better educated than youths from the Scheduled Castes who have a general tendency to drop out of the education system after studying for a few years. Poor financial circumstances were cited as a reason for the low educational status of Scheduled Caste households.

A vast majority of migrants were found to depend upon friends and relatives living in the cities for job information, job recommendations, and initial logistical support. The socially and economically dominant groups have better urban contacts (as a greater number of people from their communities have migrated and settled in the cities) than from other sections of society.

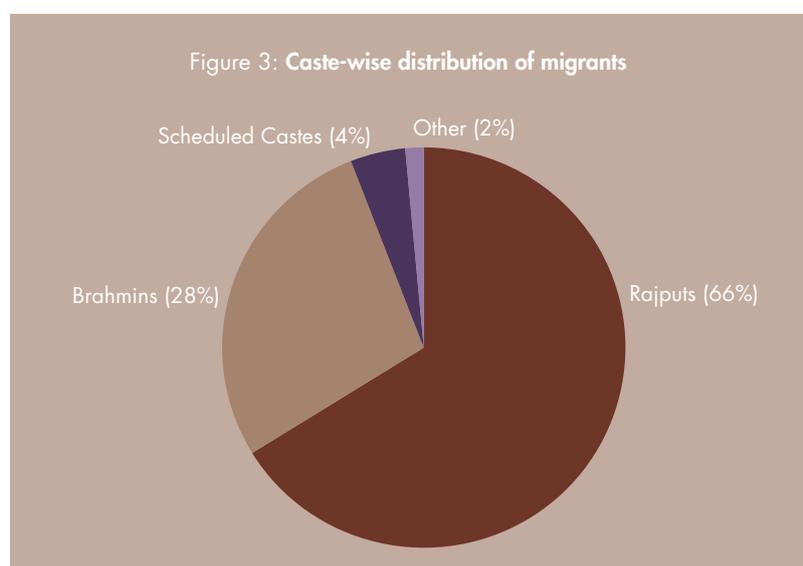
In terms of age of migrants, it was found that young people (20 to 25 years) have a greater tendency to migrate than middle-aged and older people.

Although data available for the state show that a large number of women also migrate to the cities, the study did not find any female migrants who had migrated purely for employment. Female migration was found to be due to other factors such as marriage, migration of the head of the family (husband or father), or, more recently, for educational purposes. In fact, several girls are now migrating to nearby towns and even to the cities in the plains for higher education.

Table 8: **Estimated decline in productivity of land**

Decline in productivity	Percentage of respondents
10 to 25%	57
25 to 50%	10
More than 50%	7
No change	23
Productivity increased	3

Figure 3: **Caste-wise distribution of migrants**



Migrants and the Migration Process

Characteristics of migrants

Information about the characteristics of migrants is essential for any study on migration as a profile of migrants helps to identify the factors behind migration, while also helping to understand the impacts of the migration process. This section presents a demographic profile of migrants from Uttarakhand based on the field survey conducted in three districts. It presents certain key characteristics of the migrants regarding their age, sex, marital status, education levels, occupations, and so forth to help understand the current trends in migration from the state.

Age of migrants

At the time of migration, the vast majority of migrants surveyed were young; the average age of migration was around 21 years: around 20 years from Tehri Garhwal district, a little over 20 years from Bageshwar district, and 22 to 23 years from Chamoli district (Table 9). The average age of migrants at the time the study was undertaken was around 33 years with little district-wise variation (Table 10).

Number of years since migration

Around 60% of the migrants surveyed had migrated more than 10 years ago, and 19% had migrated 5 to 10 years ago (Table 11). On average, the number of years since migration was over 12 years but with regional differences: more than 15 years for Tehri Garhwal and only 10 years for Chamoli district (Table 12).

Education status

Uttarakhand has a fairly high literacy rate. Only one of the migrants surveyed was illiterate, equally only about 9% were postgraduates and 6% graduates (Table 13). The majority of the respondents (40%) had studied up to intermediate level (10+2), while 26% had completed high school. About 18% of respondents had only studied up to standard eight, or had failed to pass the high school examination. Graduate and postgraduate migrants had been able to secure managerial/ clerical jobs, while migrants who had studied up to 10+2 were either in the armed forces or were doing entry level clerical jobs. The majority of the lesser qualified migrants had taken up blue collar jobs like drivers, labourers, and waiters.

Marital status

Most of the migrants surveyed (82%) were married, although large numbers had been unmarried at the time of migration, returning after a few years of migration to get married. Some 82% of the total respondents migrated before marriage; 86% from Bageshwar, 78% from Tehri Garhwal, and 84% from Chamoli (Table 14). The respondents and their families mentioned that migration was preferred before marriage so that new migrants would not be burdened with the additional

Table 9: District-wise average age at the time of migration

District	Average age at migration (years)
Bageshwar	20.45
Chamoli	22.61
Tehri Garhwal	19.91
Entire study area	21.00

Table 10: District-wise present age of migrants

District	Present average age of migrants (yrs)
Bageshwar	33
Chamoli	32
Tehri Garhwal	35
Entire study area	33

Table 11: Number of years since migration

Number of years	% of migrants
0-3	8.82
3 to 5	11.76
5 to 10	19.11
> 10	60.29

Table 12: District-wise average number of years of migration

District	Average number of years of migration
Bageshwar	12.73
Chamoli	9.96
Tehri Garhwal	15.30
Entire study area	12.66

Table 13: Educational profile of migrants

Educational status	% of migrants
Illiterate	1.47
Less than high school	17.65
High School	26.47
Intermediate	39.71
Graduate	5.88
Postgraduate	8.82

Table 14: District-wise marital status of migrants

District	Marital status		% of married migrants
	Single	Married	
Bageshwar	6	16	73
Chamoli	3	20	87
Tehri Garhwal	3	20	87
Total	12	56	82

pressure of supporting their wives (Figure 4). The interviews revealed that migrants usually get married only after getting jobs and settling down. It is also interesting to note that, even after getting married, migrants preferred to keep their wives in the village: only a small number of respondents (16%) reported taking their wives with them after marriage (Table 15). The reasons reported for not taking their wives with them were obvious and practical. Firstly, the migrants said that by staying back in the village their wives could take care of their families (including parents and siblings) and look after agriculture and livestock. Secondly, the migrants also felt that their low incomes were insufficient to meet the costs of maintaining a family in the city.

Occupations

Almost all of the migrants surveyed had found salaried jobs in their respective places of migration; only about 4% were working on a daily wage basis. According to the migrants, salaried employment provides greater financial security and removes the uncertainty and inconvenience associated with finding daily wage employment. In terms of sector-wise distribution of migrants, it was found that migrants were predominantly absorbed in the private sector (60%), followed by the defence services (26%) (Table 16). In fact, traditionally, employment in the defence services has been a much-favoured occupation for the people of this hill state.

It is also evident from the present study that, due to rapid industrial development in India, there are a multitude of employment opportunities in the private sector which migrants are able to get access to through migration to the plains. Consequently, only a handful of migrants are subjected to the hardship of daily wage labour, although in the study village there was evidence that a small number of youths had returned from migration after having failed to find suitable jobs or after having lost their jobs. Interviews with migrants also revealed that they were quite reluctant to take up daily wage labour and would prefer to go back to their villages rather than work as labourers. "We do not migrate to the cities to work as labourers, that work we can do in our own village," said one of the migrants from Dhapola Sera village in Bageshwar district.

An in-depth study of migrant's occupation types was also undertaken. The majority of migrants (29%) are currently employed with the armed forces; about 16% are engaged in clerical jobs with private companies; 11% are employed as waiters in New Delhi and Mumbai; about 6% each are working as mechanics, drivers, and teachers (all the teachers are working within Uttarakhand state); a few migrants (around 5%) are employed as chefs; and about 3% have secured managerial jobs (Figure 5). This indicates that the education and skill levels of migrants are insufficient to help them secure managerial positions, and most migrants are only able to obtain low paid jobs as waiters, drivers, wage labourers, and clerks.

Monthly salary

The weighted average monthly salary (includes the average monthly 'earnings' of people engaged as wage labourers) for the migrants surveyed came to IRs. 9,429, but this figure is inconclusive as there were wide disparities in salaries across sectors and occupations. In sectoral terms, the average monthly salary of domestic migrants was highest for those working in the armed forces, followed by other government jobs, and private sector jobs (Table 17). The monthly earnings of daily wage labourers were only IRs. 3,000. In contrast, the weighted

Figure 4: Percentage of respondents migrating before marriage

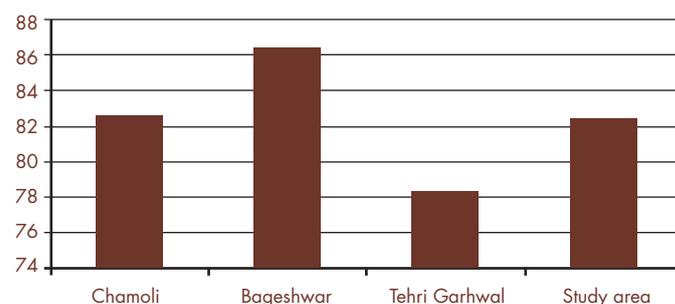


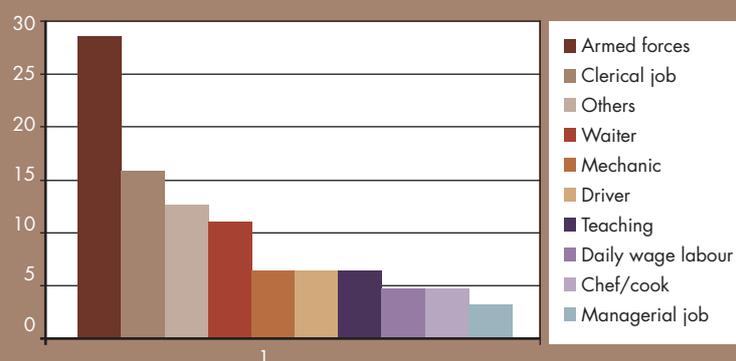
Table 15: District-wise details of married migrants

District	Percentage living with wife
Tehri Garhwal	5
Bageshwar	50
Chamoli	0
Study area	16

Table 16: Sector-wise distribution of migrants

Sector	Percentage of migrants
Armed forces	26.47
Government job	8.82
Private job	60.29
Daily wage labour	4.42

Figure 5: Occupation-wise distribution of migrants



average monthly salary of international migrants came to INRs. 77,600, significantly higher than for domestic migrants.

In terms of occupations, those employed with the armed forces have the highest earnings. Among the other occupations, the average monthly salaries of teachers and managers rank among the highest; chefs and cooks, clerks, and waiters occupy the middle rank; and mechanics, drivers, and daily wage labourers earn the least (Table 18).

Savings

Monthly savings are highest among those working with the armed forces (77% of total salary), partly because defence personnel are provided with accommodation and other facilities, thereby reducing their expenditure (Table 19). Teachers can save nearly 64% of their salaries, partly because they have good salaries, are posted in small towns and villages in Uttarakhand where the cost of living is low, and also because some of them are provided with government accommodation. Migrants in the hospitality industry reported being able to save 35% (waiters) and 43% (chefs) of their earnings, partly because waiters are able to earn additional income through 'tips', and both chefs and waiters are entitled to free meals, saving a major proportion of their living costs. White-collar workers like clerks and managers save 36 and 33% of their earnings, respectively. These migrants reported that they incurred more expenses in terms of clothes and lifestyle than blue-collar workers in keeping with their job profiles. Daily wage labourers are hardly able to generate any savings (11%) due to their low salaries which are insufficient to meet even the cost of living in places like New Delhi and Mumbai. In contrast, the average monthly savings for foreign migrants were found to be between INRs. 12,000 and 30,000 per month, considerably higher than those of domestic migrants (Table 19).

Migration process

The steps in the process of migration include seeking information about jobs, arranging funds for migration, identifying potential destinations, and the actual manner of migration. There was no recruitment or placement agency in the study area to help outmigrants secure jobs in the cities.

Moreover, local communities do not seek the support of external recruitment/placement agencies (either based in Uttarakhand or outside) in securing jobs. Those wishing to migrate rely heavily on informal channels to seek information about jobs or to obtain recommendations.

Source of information about jobs

It was found that, for nearly 60% of migrants, friends (25%) and relatives (35%) who had migrated already were the main source of information about jobs (Figure 6). Such friends and relatives inform village youths about

Table 17: Sector-wise average salaries of domestic migrants

Sector	Average monthly salary (in Indian Rupees)
Armed forces	18,555
Other government jobs	8,600
Private jobs	5,167
Daily wage labour	3,000

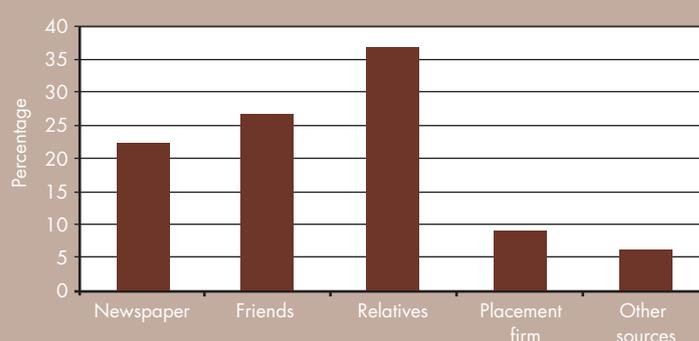
Table 18: Occupation-wise percentage of savings and salary

Occupation	Average monthly salary (Indian Rupees)	Average monthly savings (Indian Rupees)	Savings as % of salary
Armed forces	18,555	14,353	77.4
Teacher	12,750	8,125	63.7
Chef/cook	6,167	2,667	43.2
Driver	4,000	1,450	36.3
Clerk	5,750	2,056	35.8
Waiter	5,286	1,829	34.6
Manager	9,000	3,000	33.3
Others	4,313	1,275	29.6
Mechanic	4,625	875	18.9
Daily wage labourer	3,000	333	11.1

Table 19: Occupation-wise average salary and savings of foreign migrants

Occupation	Average monthly salary (in Indian Rupees)	Average monthly savings (in Indian Rupees)
Chef	73,333	30,000
Research and development	150,000	NA
Labour	18,000	12,000

Figure 6: Sources of information about jobs for migrants

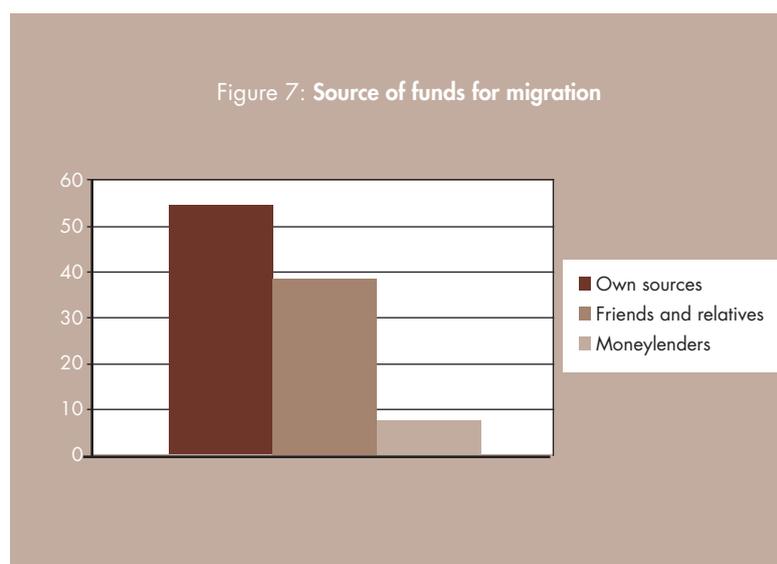


possible job opportunities, and this leads to further outmigration. Moreover, in many cases, village youths travel to the cities where their relatives are living to seek their support in searching for a job. Newspapers emerged as a further major source of information about jobs – particularly as the majority of the population of Uttarakhand is literate and there is a wide circulation of Hindi newspapers. A little over 20% of the migrants said that they were able to get information about job opportunities through advertisements and notifications in the newspapers. Newspapers primarily provide information about vacancies in the armed forces and some other government jobs, such as those in the state education department. However, newspapers are not regarded as a preferred source of information about job vacancies in the private sector. Only a little more than 5% of the respondents mentioned that they had obtained information about jobs through recruitment agencies, which clearly indicates the limited outreach and preference for such agencies in the study area. The fact that migrants from the study area are cash starved is one of the reasons for the low preference for recruitment agencies which charge between 15 days to 1 month's salary of the job secured for the candidates.

Arrangement of funds

On average, domestic migrants from Uttarakhand carry IRs. 2,000 - 5,000 with them when migrating to the cities. A part of this is to cover travel costs (IRs. 500 - 1,000), and the remainder is to meet initial boarding and lodging expenses. Discussions with migrants and their families revealed that migrating youths do not require a lot of funds as they generally stay with relatives and friends until they are able to get a job.

Migrating youths arrange the funds required for migration from within their own households (54%) or borrow from other villagers (38%) (Figure 7). Formal and informal credit institutions do not play a big role in funding migration in the study area. This is partly due to the fact that national banks are located at a considerable distance from the villages, and banks do not provide credit for migratory purposes, and they require collateral to grant loans which the villagers may not be able to furnish. Village moneylenders charge exorbitant rates of interest (5-10% a month) and are reluctant to extend credit to poor families for fear of bad debts. Hence, it emerged that lack of finances is a factor in dissuading financially weaker families from migrating.



Destination of migrants

Distance did not emerge as a barrier in the context of migration from Uttarakhand. The selection of a destination for migration is based primarily on the presence of friends and relatives. International migration was uncommon, only about 7% of the total migrants surveyed had migrated abroad, and even these had first migrated to metropolitan cities within the country and moved abroad from there (Table 20). The majority of the respondents (71%) had migrated within the country but outside the state of Uttarakhand, while the remainder had migrated within the state. Among the intra-state migrants, the majority were teachers who had obtained jobs with the state education department.

An analysis was made of the inter-state destinations of migrants (Table 21). The greatest number of people (42%) had migrated to the national capital, New Delhi, followed by Mumbai (21%); towns in the states of Punjab and Haryana (19%); and towns in the state of Uttar Pradesh (14%). The preponderance of migration to New Delhi is due to several factors including a) the relative proximity of New Delhi to

Table 20: Migration by region

Location	Percentage of migrants
International	7.4
To other states	70.6
Within state	22.06

Table 21: Inter-state migration

Location	Percentage of migrants
New Delhi (national capital region)	41.67
Mumbai	20.83
Punjab and Haryana	18.75
Towns in Uttar Pradesh	14.58
Other	4.17

Uttarakhand (300 to 400 km); b) the presence of a large number of friends and relatives in New Delhi; and c) ample job opportunities. Mumbai is also one of the preferred destinations as it is one of the largest metropolitan cities in India, offering a number of job opportunities. Migration to the agriculturally dominant states of Punjab and Haryana is preferred by comparatively less educated youths who look for job opportunities in agro-based industries or in the agricultural sector.

Manner of migration

After deciding to migrate, the migrants leave their villages in one of the following ways.

- They either wait for their migrant relatives to come to the village during holidays and travel to the cities with them. In the cities, they stay in the house of such relatives until they are able to find a suitable job (in a few cases, new migrants continue to stay with relatives even after obtaining jobs). Such an arrangement is most preferred by young people, as they feel more secure migrating with someone 'from the city'.
- The next most preferred method is to take the address of friends/relatives in the city and then migrate alone.
- In some exceptional cases, where the migrant does not have any urban contacts, they migrate in groups of two to three, as alone they feel insecure.

Remittances

Financial remittances

Outmigrants from Uttarakhand remit a certain percentage of their savings to their village homes in order to support their families. The financial remittances sent by outmigrants comprise one of the most important outputs of the migration process. This section examines in detail the process of sending remittances and the volume of remittances sent by outmigrants.

Percentage of migrants who send remittances

Out of the migrants surveyed, 69% were sending remittances to their families in the villages; thus cash inflows were accruing to the hill villages from the vast majority of outmigrants. Table 22 shows the reasons why the remaining 31% were not sending remittances to their village households. Of this group, 43% had migrated with their wives and 33% (10% of the total number of migrants) had no surplus after meeting daily living expenses. The latter number is quite significant as it indicates that, for these people, migration has not proven to be financially rewarding, especially as they have also foregone their earnings from agriculture and/or labour in their villages. The remainder cited other reasons such as the good financial status of their families, other recurring family income such as a pension, and so forth.

Table 22: Profile of migrants not sending remittances

Reason for not sending remittances	Percentage
Migrated with wife	43
No surplus	33
Other reasons	24

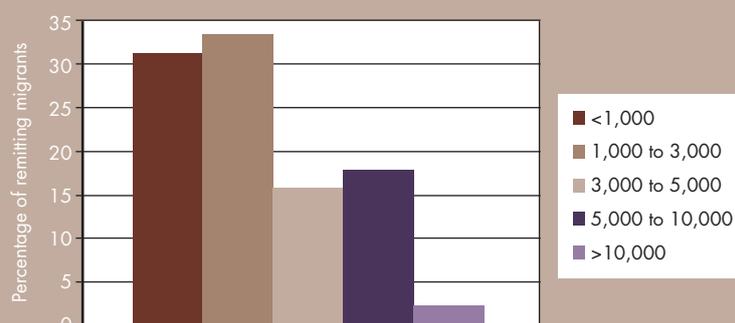
Volume and interval of remittances

The total volume of remittances sent by the majority of the migrants was very low: less than INR. 3,000 per month for over 64% of those migrants sending remittances (and less than INR. 1,000 per month for 31%) (Figure 8). Some 16% of migrants sent INR. 3,000 to 5,000 per month, and about 18% INR. 5,000 to 10,000. Only one migrant was remitting more than INR. 10,000 per month, and that was a case of international migration. Thus it seems that migrants are not making a very significant financial contribution to their families (discussed later in this section).

Occupation-wise volume of remittances

An analysis of the volume of remittances sent by migrants according to their occupations leads to some interesting findings (Table 23). The average monthly remittances

Figure 8: Average monthly remittances by migrants



were highest for those in the armed forces and those with managerial jobs (IRs. 3,333 per month for both), followed by chefs (IRs. 2,667). Those working as waiters were sending around IRs. 1,700 per month, drivers IRs. 1,200, and clerks IRs. 1,000 per month. The average remittances by labourers and mechanics were lowest (IRs. 800 and IRs. 650 per month, respectively). Thus the volume of remittances is quite low for some categories of workers, and migration may be proving financially non-viable for such families. People who migrate forego their current potential earnings (by virtue of engagement in agricultural operations and through daily wage labour in their villages) in expectation of higher earnings. It appears that the volume of remittances may be too low for some categories of workers to justify this trade-off.

Interval between sending remittances

The interval between sending remittances varies greatly: 32% of the migrants send remittances monthly, 44% quarterly, and 18% half-yearly (Table 24). Migrants with low monthly savings do not send monthly remittances, but prefer to send quarterly or half-yearly. This is because in 3 to 6 months they are able to save a reasonable amount to send to their households in the village. "I only save about IRs. 500 to 800 per month, which is too small a sum, therefore, I let my savings accumulate and then after 6 months I send about IRs. 3,000 to 4,000," says Khayali Dutt from Musoli village of Bageshwar.

Mode of sending remittances

All the international migrants use a bank transfer system to remit funds. The major modes of remittance used by domestic migrants are banks, post offices, and hand-carrying (Figure 9). The popularity of each of these modes, and their comparative advantages and disadvantages as perceived by the migrants and their families are discussed below (Table 25).

Hand carrying

The majority of migrants (55%) prefer to remit money through informal channels (i.e., hand-carrying). They send money through friends and relatives visiting their village or carry the money with them when they visit. People prefer to use this channel as they incur no additional cost and the money arrives directly at their village homes. Women especially, who are heading their households in the absence of male migrants, said that they prefer to receive money in this manner rather than through banks, which are often located in other towns. Moreover, migrants also said that they preferred to go home with money rather than go empty handed as it is a matter of pride and self-esteem.

Bank transfer

Only about 23% of the migrants use banks to send money. Out of these, about 15% used computerised banking, depositing money into the bank accounts of their family members who are then able to withdraw money from their account in the local bank (bank transfer). A very small number (7.5%) send money through demand drafts in the names of their family members.

Table 23: Occupation-wise average monthly remittances¹

Occupation	Average monthly remittance (in Indian Rupees)
Armed forces	3,333
Managerial job	3,333
Chef/cook	2,667
Waiter	1,693
Other	1,219
Driver	1,208
Clerical job	1,024
Daily wage labourer	833
Mechanic	667
Teacher	NA

¹ Figures do not include migrants who are not sending remittances; international migrants were excluded.

Table 24: Interval between sending remittances

Interval	Percentage
Monthly	32
Quarterly	44
Half-yearly	18
Yearly	2
Other	4

Figure 9: Mode of sending remittances

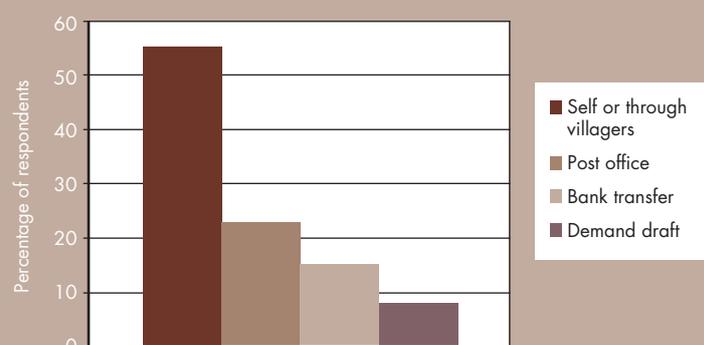


Table 25: Comparative advantages and disadvantages of various modes of remittance transfer

Remittance system	Advantage	Disadvantage
Hand carrying	No transaction costs Money reaches house directly People prefer to take money home with them, rather than go empty handed (self-esteem) More convenient for women	Reported cases of robbery, pick pocketing, and misuse of money by friends Delays in sending remittances
Bank transfer	Safest method of transfer Fast No transaction costs Migrants are able to send regular remittances.	Not all rural bank branches are computerised. Banks are located far away from villages. Family members incur IRs. 30–100 in travel costs for each transaction. Women cannot travel alone to banks.
Bank draft	Safe method of transfer Migrants are able to send regular remittances.	Time consuming – takes 15 days to reach by post and then 15 days to clear Banks are located far away from villages. Family members incur IRs. 30–100 in travel costs for each transaction. Women cannot travel alone to banks.
Post office	Safe method of transfer	High transaction costs – 5% of total sum Time consuming (up to one month) Staff at post office unduly delay the delivery of remittances.

By using the bank transfer system the migrants do not incur any additional cost, but recipients have to travel to the nearest bank (in most cases 10–25 km away from their villages) and incur about IRs. 30 to IRs. 100 in travel costs. Nevertheless, where banking facilities are available, migrants prefer to use this channel to send remittances.

Some migrants (all from one study village) also send demand drafts; this is done in cases where the nearest bank branch is not computerised, thereby preventing direct bank transfers. This method is not preferred due to a) the long transfer period as migrants first send the draft by post to their village (7–10 days) and then they are sent for clearing by the bank concerned (15 days) before the amount is finally credited to the account of the recipient; b) travel costs (IRs. 30–100 per visit) incurred by the recipients and the time spent in travelling to the bank; and c) bank charges paid by the remitting migrant amounting to approximately IRs. 15 per IRs. 1,000 remitted.

Post office

The post office was cited as another formal channel for the transfer of remittances. Some 22% of respondents said that they send remittances through money order facilities provided by the post office. The high transaction cost (5% of the total sum) was cited as one of the drawbacks to sending remittances via the post office. It was also found that, in some cases, post offices in Uttarakhand can take a lot longer than normal to transfer funds. One particular case reported in Kangsali village in Tehri Garhwal reported delays of up to 30–45 days, allegedly as a result of misappropriation by the local postman.

Mode of sending remittances and intervals

The mode of sending remittances has a direct relationship to the intervals between remittances. Migrants using formal channels sent remittances much more regularly than others.

- It is generally the more educated migrants who send money through the post office or banks and, hence, they are able to send remittances more regularly than others. Illiterate and less educated migrants prefer to send money through friends or to carry it themselves, as they are not comfortable with using banks and post offices. Armed forces' personnel prefer to send monthly remittances, as they have substantial monthly savings and good access to banks and post offices.
- Those migrants who send half-yearly or yearly remittances generally prefer to carry the money personally with them whenever they visit their village. According to the migrants, this gives them greater self-satisfaction and self-esteem than sending the money through other means. "I do not want to go empty handed to my village and also feel happy and proud to give money personally to my family," Badri Prasad, Takoli village in Tehri Garhwal.

- c) Migrants living in cities such as New Delhi or Mumbai generally send money by hand as many people from their villages are settled in these cities. This means that migrants have to wait until someone is going to the village, making regular remittance impossible.
- d) People with low savings do not wish to send remittances through formal channels to avoid transaction costs, particularly those charged by the post office and, hence, prefer the hand carrying system. This means that remittances are delayed.

Proportion of remittances to salaries and savings

The remittances sent by migrants comprise roughly 19 to 31% of their salaries (Table 26). The migrants earning the lowest salary (up to INRs. 3,000 per month) remit a comparatively higher proportion of their salary to their households (30%), while those earning over INRs. 10,000 remit the lowest proportion of their salary (19%).

On average, migrants remit about 39% of their total savings to their households (Table 27), although this proportion is significantly higher among the low salary earning group (daily wage labourers, drivers, and waiters), which indicates that low-income earners are unable to accumulate any savings after sending remittances to their households. The highest income earners (i.e., armed forces' personnel) are remitting only about 29% of their savings, and are thus able to accumulate considerable savings themselves.

Recipients and actual users of remittances

Over 62% of migrants send remittances to their wives, about 20% to their mothers, and 18% to their fathers (Table 28). Although this is quite positive from the gender viewpoint, many women (especially the wives of migrants) complained that they did not have control over the remittances as they were taken from them by their father-in-law/mother-in-law and spent as per their priorities. In almost all the households where the migrant's wife is living with her in-laws, the entire remittance is taken from her. According to the wives, they could ask their husbands for money to meet personal expenses but are too shy to ask their in-laws. This has resulted in severe financial deprivation of the wives of migrants, and it has emerged as a critical weakness in the process of migration and remittance.

Use of remittances

Discussions with the households of migrants revealed that the majority of remittances are spent on food for the household (48%). Although households are able to meet the majority of their food grain requirements through domestic agricultural production, cash remittances are spent on clothes, groceries, and other necessities (Figure 10). Most importantly, 19% of the cash remittances are spent on hiring agricultural labour for cultivation. This is an additional expense incurred by the households of

Table 26: Remittances as percentage of salary

Monthly salary range (in Indian Rupees)	Average remittance (in Indian Rupees)	Percentage of salary
Up to 3,000	833	29.62
3,000 to 5,000	1,092	23.79
5,000 to 10,000	2,258	30.85
More than 10,000	3,333	19.19

Note: Based on domestic migrants sending remittances

Table 27: Occupation-wise percentage of remittances to savings

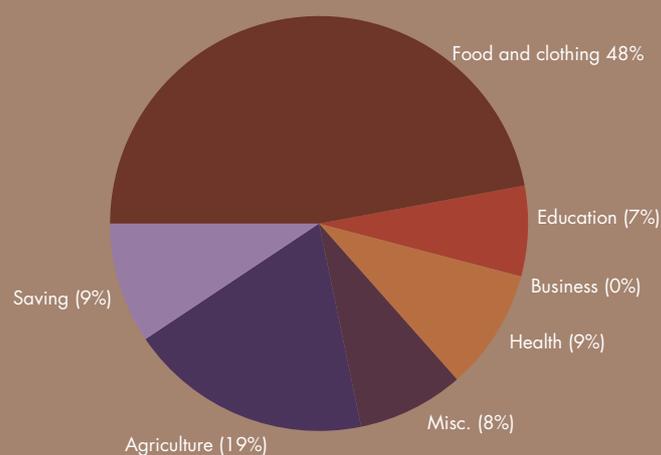
Occupation	Remittance as a percentage of savings
Defence services	26.19
Driver	83.33
Mechanic	57.14
Teacher	NA
Chef/cook	66.67
Waiter	82.01
Clerical	49.43
Managerial jobs	100.00
Daily wage labourer	100.00
Other	83.66
Total	39.38

Note: Based on domestic migrants sending remittances

Table 28: Recipients of remittances

Relationship to migrant	Percentage of migrants sending remittances
Father	17.78
Wife	62.22
Mother	20.00

Figure 10: Utilisation of remittances by households



migrants due to the absence of the working male member of the family, and it actually reduces the total surplus generated through migration (to only 81% of the total remittance).

Interestingly, although the majority of migrants stated that they are desirous of better education for their children, only about 7% of remittances are spent on children's education. Even though the respondents said that practically no part of remittances is used for medical expenses for family members, discussions revealed that in cases of sickness, cash remittances are indeed used for such expenditure, although this is not common. Only about 8% of remittances, on average, are invested by households in business ventures, such as animal husbandry, opening and/or running small shops or roadside eateries, and so forth, and only a fraction of the total households surveyed were able to invest their remittances in businesses.

Only about 9% of total remittances are saved by migrant households, and only 24% of the households surveyed were generating any savings. Most households that are able to save a part of the remittances belong to migrants working in the armed forces.

Social remittances

'Social remittances' are skills, attitudes, ideas, and other social contributions that flow from the migrants to their original place of residence. The present study found the level of social remittances to be rather limited in the context of Uttarakhand. The nature and extent of social remittances are discussed in this section.

Skill development of migrants

In terms of skill development, the majority of the migrants are performing semi-skilled jobs and the skill development of most migrants is rather limited. Thus on a broader level, there have been very few social remittances in the form of new skills brought back by migrants to their places of origin. A deeper analysis does reveal some specific skills being acquired and brought back by some migrants. Migrants working as waiters and chefs bring back a lot of knowledge about food and beverages and the hospitality industry; those performing managerial and clerical jobs acquire knowledge about computers, English language, and office work; and drivers bring back driving skills. Still, perhaps a much greater level of skills could have been acquired by migrants if they had been performing skilled jobs in the cities.

Use of skills

Only a few returned migrants were found to be using their skills. A few – those who had worked in the hospitality industry – had opened up roadside eateries near their villages and were catering to tourists and jeep drivers, but overall the direct use of acquired skills is quite low as, apart from hospitality and transport skills, the limited skills of migrants are of little use in their own villages. Dissemination of some skills has also taken place; for example, drivers are teaching the village youths to drive.

Awareness and knowledge

Members of migrant households, as well as other villagers, admitted that the awareness and knowledge of returned migrants was much greater than that of other villagers. Migrants were said to be much more aware about employment opportunities, politics, government policies and programmes, health and hygiene, and other issues related to day-to-day life. Village society does benefit from the increased awareness and knowledge of migrants. Upon their return, migrants are regarded as the 'opinion leaders' of the village, and the villagers seek frequent advice from them. In fact, a number of ex-army men have been elected to various panchayat (local self-governance institutions) posts.

Personality and confidence

Another quality observed in migrants was an improved level of confidence. Exposure to the outside world and living in the cities had made returned migrants much more confident and open-minded. This has had a positive impact upon the village community, as the people, especially the youth, are keen to emulate the migrants and have learned a lot from them. During the focus group discussions, some youths candidly admitted that their own personalities had improved as a result of the influence of migrants.

Receptiveness of the village community

On the whole, the villagers in all of the study villages were found to be quite receptive to the ideas, perceptions, viewpoints, and whatever limited skills the migrants had to offer. The younger generation seemed to be most influenced by the migrants, as they hold similar plans for their own future. Under the influence of migrants/returned migrants from their villages, most youths had developed a keen desire to migrate themselves. The migrants are looked up to as 'opinion leaders', as they are considered to be more knowledgeable and aware than the rest of the villagers. While this is good, as it opens up possibilities for migrants to become 'change agents', it could also prove to be counterproductive as the migrants have their own perceptions and priorities, which may not always be in the interests of their communities. As the migrants are mostly working as unskilled and semi-skilled workers in the cities, they have limited knowledge and exposure, and, at times, their opinions may not be in the best interests of their communities.

In order to save face, the majority of migrants do not discuss the hardships faced in the cities, but instead give the impression to their families that they are doing very well. Even some of the non-migrants complained that migrants brag unduly about city life and about their professions in order to impress. "Even truck drivers have influenced our youths to take up driving, but we don't want our youths to become drivers," said Umedh Singh from Takoli village in Tehri Garhwal.

The young people are very impressed by migrants and dream of migrating and living a lifestyle similar to that portrayed by their migrant friends and relatives. Upon migrating, they are shocked when their dreams do not match up to reality. Migrants should be urged to share their true experiences with village youths in order to enable them to make informed choices about migration and prepare themselves mentally for city life.

From a development perspective, non-government organisations and government agencies could involve migrants in disseminating knowledge and information among their village communities as people are receptive to ideas from migrants and returned migrants.

Contribution of migrants to improving livelihoods

The direct contribution of migrants to improving local livelihoods is limited, apart from the fact that they encourage self-employment opportunities like roadside eateries and impart skills such as driving. However, several indirect contributions were observed resulting from the increased awareness levels, urban exposure, and knowledge. These are discussed below.

Supporting youth to migration

The migrants clearly provide encouragement, guidance, and even direct support to youths who migrate to the cities. As discussed previously, the majority of youths depend upon migrants to find them suitable jobs and to arrange lodgings in the cities until they are able to secure a job.

Encouragement to undertake higher education

By virtue of their exposure to the cities, the migrants realise the importance of education in obtaining good jobs in the cities. They therefore play an extremely positive role in influencing the villagers to send their children for higher education.

Emphasis on learning English

In the cities, the migrants realise the need to know English to obtain a good job. A few of the migrants currently working at managerial or clerical levels in the cities had to learn English in order to obtain their jobs. Such migrants advised their own children, as well as others, to study in English medium schools or join English-speaking courses in the nearby towns. In fact, during the field study, it was found that 4 young people (1 from Sawar, 1 from Dhapola Sera, and 2 from Takoli village) had recently obtained clerical jobs in the cities after taking English-speaking courses.

Encouragement to obtain computer knowledge

Migrants are also encouraging teenagers to undertake computer courses to obtain at least a working knowledge of computers. Many villagers said that during the summer (when the schools are closed) they send their children to live with relatives in cities like Srinagar, Gopeshwar, Bageshwar, and Chamoli to do computer courses. It is expected that in the coming years the computer-literate migrants from the study area will be able to find better livelihood options in the cities.

Gender, Empowerment, and Drudgery

Women's perceptions of migration

The following analysis is based on focus group discussions and personal interviews with wives of migrants in the study area. Sixty-three per cent of the women categorically stated that they were quite happy with the migration of their husbands. They gave several reasons for this (Figure 11), which included the dream of a better future for their children (92%), increased household income (88%), improvement in social status in the village (79%), increased decision-making power (46%), and more freedom (21%).

On the other hand, the wives who were unhappy with the migration of their husbands (37%) cited reasons such as increased workloads (93%), problems with their in-laws (71%), separation from their husbands (57%), and the low income of husbands (36%); a few had fears that their husbands were having extra-marital affairs in the cities (7%) (Figure 12).

Migration and gender roles and relations

Taking non-migrant households as the control group, visible impacts were apparent on gender roles and relations within migrant households. The migration of males was found to have significant impacts, both positive and negative, on the social status, drudgery, decision-making power, and self-confidence of women.

Social status of women

The overall social status of women from migrant households has improved in their communities, as migrant households are considered to be generally well-to-do. However, women living in joint families complained that their social status within the family had declined. They said that, in the absence of their husbands, they have little say in decision making in the family, and most decisions are taken by their male relatives. Some women even complained that their mothers-in-law harass them more as their husbands are not there to protect and support them.

Decision making

The decision-making power of wives of migrants heading nuclear households has increased and they have greater control over the financial decisions in their households. They receive the entire remittance from their husbands, which they use to run the household with the guidance of their husbands.

However, migration has had an adverse impact on the decision-making power of migrant wives from joint families. Pre-migration, wives from joint families had a say in decision making, particularly related to their children and the management of the household. Now, in the traditionally patriarchal society, they are too shy and scared to speak in front of the male relatives heading the household. Similarly, although 62% of migrants reported sending remittances in their wife's name, women from joint families said they have little or no control over remittances, as the entire remittance is taken from them by their in-laws. Some women complained that they do not even receive a small proportion of the remittance to meet personal expenses. Hence, it emerged that the financial autonomy of women living in joint families is lost due to migration.

Figure 11: Reasons for wives of migrants being happy with migration

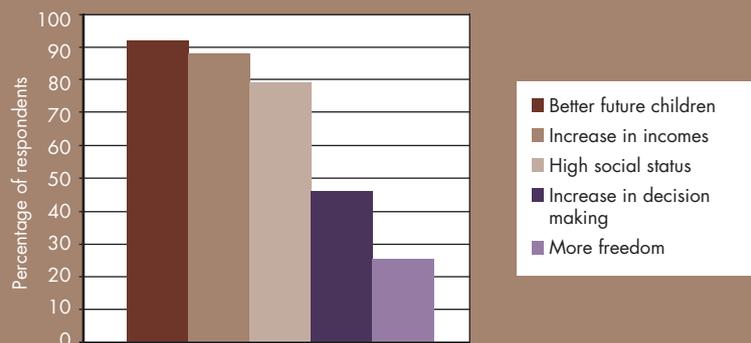
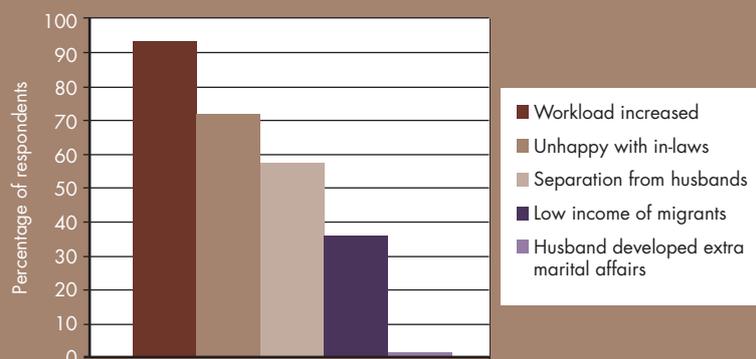


Figure 12: Reasons for wives of migrants being unhappy with migration



Women's drudgery

Clearly the drudgery of women whose husbands are migrants increases. Wives of migrants, especially those who are head of a nuclear family (and also those where the father and mother of the migrant are old), assume an extra workload. In addition to fulfilling their routine tasks like cooking, fetching water, collecting fuelwood and fodder from the forests, and taking care of children, they also have to perform all the roles of their husbands inside and outside the home. In particular, the workload of such women has increased due to their greater involvement in agricultural operations. They are now required to hire labour to plough and harvest the fields, perform routine agricultural operations, collect the produce post harvest, and, if required, sell the produce. In addition, they also have to look after livestock and purchase household goods from the market.

An attempt was made to estimate the increase in working hours of wives of migrants, from both nuclear families and joint families. It was found that, on average, before their husbands migrated, these women worked 8 to 10 hours a day (including their involvement in household chores), now wives from nuclear families were found to be working 12 to 14 hours a day, an increase of about 4 hours, and wives from joint families 10 to 12 hours per day, an increase of about 2 hours. Moreover, wives from nuclear families were required to perform more physically demanding tasks and play a more active role outside the house, and many women felt quite uncomfortable with these new roles. In joint families, male relatives (father-in-law, brother-in-law) generally assume the roles of the migrant husbands, leaving wives better off in this respect. However, in the absence of one of the household's working male members, the women still have to carry out additional tasks.

NREGP and women's drudgery

Interestingly, while the ongoing National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP) programme is considered to be benefiting the rural masses by offering guaranteed employment for women, it has also increased their drudgery. Some women from migrant households complained that they are under a lot of pressure from their families to seek employment under the NREGP to supplement household income. In such cases the women work for the entire day under NREGP and then carry out routine household chores and take care of their children. They are therefore under immense pressure from work during the period they are employed in the NREGP.

Self-confidence of women

Male migration has definitely led to an increase in the self-confidence of women, as they have to undertake a number of tasks outside the house such as shopping, going to the market, selling agricultural produce, enrolling children in school, hiring and supervising labour in their fields, and the like. All these activities have meant that women, particularly from nuclear families, have developed greater self-confidence.

Impact of delays in receiving remittances

Delays in receiving remittances and insufficient remittances have an important bearing upon women. Financial constraints caused by delayed or insufficient remittances lead to loss of social status, humiliation, and anxiety for wives of migrants. To cope with such situations, women borrow money from relatives or buy goods on credit, while also cutting down on consumption. Women said that when remittances are delayed they have to get daily provisions on credit from local shopkeepers. The women reported feeling embarrassed when requesting credit and humiliated if the shopkeeper reminded them to make the payment.

Women's health

Migration was found to have an adverse impact on women's health for several reasons. Firstly, the increased drudgery coupled with the mental tension of taking care of the household affects the physical wellbeing of women in general. Secondly, due to the increased workload, women are ignoring their health needs and many of the respondents said, "we have no time to think about ourselves". Thirdly, when the women fall sick, they reported being too shy and scared to go to the hospital alone (especially those from nuclear families), particularly if the nearest primary health centre is not located in their village. If given a choice, they would prefer to go with their husbands. Moreover, the wives of migrants also said that they were too shy to discuss their health problems with their mothers-in-law or sisters-in-law and, consequently, despite falling ill, many women ignore their illness or take home remedies, which in the long run may prove detrimental to their health.

Children's issues

Wives of migrants were found to be very worried about their children's education, and many of them complained that their children do not listen to them and do not study properly. They also said that, because of their increased workload, they are unable to pay a lot of attention to their children. Discussions with schoolteachers in the villages revealed that the academic performance of children from migrant families is poorer than that of their counterparts from non-migrant families. "Children from migrant households are frequently absent from school and are also not performing very well at school," said Darshan Singh, a schoolteacher from Sawar village.

Migration and Development

The relationship between migration and development is widely discussed, and it is often argued that migration results in a loss of human capital in rural areas and, thereby, retards the development process in such places. However, it is now being increasingly realised that migrants compensate for this loss of human capital through social and economic remittances and through the transfer of skills and knowledge to their home towns. This section examines the impact of migration on poverty, social capital, and gender relations in the context of hill villages in Uttarakhand.

Impact on poverty

Clearly migration has the potential to reduce the incidence of poverty in Uttarakhand. Among the migrants surveyed, those earning salaries of INR 5,000 or more (Table 26) are able to send home substantial remittances thus making a significant impact on the economic condition of their households. A comparative analysis of the financial situation of migrant households before and after migration based on the national poverty line indicates a significant reduction in poverty among migrant households (Table 29).

Findings indicate that, at the time of migration, about 68% of households were living below the national poverty line and were listed as below poverty line (BPL) families by the Government of India. The incidence of poverty at that time was so high that in villages like Takoli (91%) and Kangsali (75%) migrant families were registered as BPL at the time of migration. Currently, only about 35% of migrant families are still registered as BPL families, indicating a decrease of about 48%. This indicates clearly that migration has had a significant impact on reducing poverty among migrant households.

Table 29: Financial status of migrant households before and after migration

Village	Before migration			Post migration		
	BPL families	APL families	% of BPL families	BPL families	APL families	% of BPL families
Kangsali	9	3	75.00	6	6	50.00
Takoli	10	1	90.91	5	6	45.45
Musoli	8	4	66.67	3	9	25.00
Dhapola sera	6	4	60.00	3	7	30.00
Kothi	6	5	54.55	2	9	18.18
Sawad	7	5	58.33	5	7	41.67
Total	46	22	67.65	24	44	35.29

Note: BPL – below poverty line; APL – above poverty line

Impact on education

In the case of young children, there was little difference in expenditure on education for children between migrant and non-migrant households. This reflects the fact that, despite the willingness of migrant households to spend more on education, there are limited educational opportunities available in the villages apart from government-run primary schools. However, among children in their late teens, there were visible differences in expenditure on education between the migrant and non-migrant households. Firstly, the majority of non-migrant households stop incurring expenditure on children's education after high school or intermediate level. In comparison, families of migrants were keen to ensure higher education for their children. Second, youths from migrant households also have the option of migrating to the cities where they live with their fathers. These young people are able to attend specialised courses in computers, management, and so forth.

Impact on health

Migration has not had any significant impact on the health status of the families of migrants. In fact, the health status of the wives of migrants was found to be adversely impacted, and the use of remittances for health was negligible. This indicates that there is little emphasis on health issues among migrant families.

Various forms of migration and poverty reduction

There are three main forms of migration in Uttarakhand: seasonal, rural-urban, and international. Each contributes differently to poverty reduction.

International migration

International migration was found to be the most effective in terms of poverty alleviation. Five cases of international migration were observed in this study. The average monthly remittance sent by international migrants to their families was INRs. 7,500, much higher than that sent by the majority of rural-urban migrants. Moreover, due to their high salaries, international migrants were able to accumulate considerable savings as remittances were only 10% of their salaries. Such migrants are able to provide additional financial support to their families for capital expenditure such as the purchase of land or a house, house construction, or the establishment of a business.

Rural-urban migration

This form of migration has the potential to contribute towards poverty alleviation depending upon the nature of the job and the salary received. It was found that migrants who worked as daily wage labourers, mechanics, drivers, and even clerks were not able to send significant monthly remittances to their village households. However, armed forces' personnel, managers, and those in the hospitality industry can make significant financial contributions to their households, and the economic situation of their households was found to be much improved. As the predominant form of migration, rural-urban migration can have a potentially much more widespread impact on poverty alleviation if the earnings of migrants improve.

Seasonal migration

Seasonal migration is generally preferred by those who are involved in agriculture. These migrants migrate for a few months during the summer to supplement their agricultural livelihoods. Due to the low earnings over a short period, seasonal migration has had a limited impact on the incidence of poverty in Uttarakhand. Although earnings through seasonal migration are the primary source of cash income for households engaged in subsistence agriculture, they are insufficient (generally INRs. 3,000-10,000 for the entire season) to propel the migrant's household above the poverty line. Moreover, since the implementation of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, the rural population is able to get guaranteed employment for 100 days in and around their villages, and this is a deterrent to seasonal migration.

Factors behind successful migration

This study attempted to compare the benefits of migration across various migrant households and identify the variables that determine the nature of the impact of migration upon the families of migrants.

Joint versus nuclear family

The impact of migration is dependent upon the family structure; it was observed that extended families benefited more from migration than nuclear families. The primary reason for this is that, in nuclear families, the wives of migrants (who become the de facto heads of household) find it difficult to manage agricultural operations on their own. Despite hiring labour for agricultural operations, in most cases they are unable to cultivate their entire landholding, and fallow land comprises an economic loss. In comparison, in joint families (especially where the migrant has siblings who are living in the village), the other male members of the household are able to compensate for the loss of human capital through the migration of one of their members. The father or brother(s) of the migrant continue agricultural operations and productive agricultural land is not left fallow.

Education and income of migrants

Migrants with higher academic qualifications are able to secure better job opportunities than school dropouts. Such migrants generally earn higher salaries and are, therefore, able to extend greater financial support to their households. In such cases, migration has a positive impact upon the migrant's household. Migrants who earn a higher salary are able to compensate their households for the foregone earnings from their labour and agricultural input in the village after meeting the costs of living in the city. On the other hand, daily wage labourers, drivers, clerks, and so forth are barely able to meet the cost of living in the cities, and, hence, their remittances are generally insufficient to support their families financially.

Self-confidence of women

The wives and mothers of migrants who were members of the Aajeevika supported self-help groups (SHGs) had greater self-confidence, financial management skills, knowledge, and awareness levels. This has been achieved through the mentoring and exposure received through the initiatives of Aajeevika. They have also developed a regular saving habit through the SHGs. These women are able to conduct the day-to-day activities of their households with greater efficiency, and their households have been able to benefit more from the migration of their male members.

Impact of livelihood interventions on migration

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme of the Government of India seeks to provide guaranteed wage employment for at least 100 days per year to rural households in certain districts. The revised wage payment under the programme amounts to INR 100 per day, which means that each rural household can potentially earn up to INR 10,000 per year under the programme.

The study found that this programme has reduced the need for seasonal migration and also, to some extent, for rural-urban migration from Uttarakhand, particularly for unskilled and less-educated persons. This is because the NREGP has given people an option to earn a reasonable cash income working in and around their villages.

Unskilled and less-educated youths generally work as daily wage labourers, drivers, or mechanics in the cities. Findings indicate that such migrants send yearly remittances of INR 7,200 to INR 12,000 after meeting the cost of living in the cities. Under the NREGP, these young people can earn up to INR 10,000 by working for 100 days near their village, and at the same time supplement their family's income through agriculture, animal husbandry, and other daily wage labour. Thus, overall, the benefits accruing to them through NREGP plus supplementary incomes from other sources are greater than those generated through migration. Consequently, during the focus group discussions, many youths from non-migrant families said that they were not keen to migrate anymore. However, some of the migrants argued that the benefits of employment under NREGP can be availed by other family members, including their wives, and, hence, there was no need to give up migration.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter summarises the major findings of the study and makes policy recommendations.

Summary of findings

Form of migration

- Rural-urban migration appears to be the predominant form of migration in Uttarakhand with only a small proportion of the total number of migrants migrating to other countries.

Profile of migrants

- The majority of migrants are unmarried, young men aged around 21 years at the time of migration and belonging to socially and economically dominant caste groups like Rajputs and Brahmins.
- Although the vast majority of migrants are literate, there are significant differences in the nature of the job opportunities available to those having completed full schooling (10+2) and others.

- The armed forces have traditionally been the most preferred occupation for Uttarakhand youths. Apart from that, the majority of migrants are employed by the private sector as managers, clerks, chefs, waiters, and even drivers.
- Migrants prefer to seek salaried employment; only about 4% of migrants were working as wage labourers.

Drivers of migration

- Push factors: Low agricultural productivity, lack of alternative employment opportunities in rural areas, lack of infrastructural development, and educational status of migrants emerged as the most important push factors for migration. Most importantly, educated youths were found to be completely disillusioned with agriculture and regarded it as a 'demeaning' occupation.
- Pull factors: Spatial differences in the form of better infrastructural facilities in the cities and the influence of other migrants emerged as the most important pull factors.
- Climate change was also attributed to be one of the drivers of migration, as people feel that changes in climatic conditions have led to a decline in agricultural productivity in recent years.
- The percentage of migrants from economically and socially weaker sections of society was quite minimal, and migration patterns in Uttarakhand appear to support the general global trend that the 'poorest of the poor' are unable to migrate. Youths from Rajput and Brahmin families, the socially dominant caste groups, have a greater tendency to migrate due to availability of funds for migration, better education, and also better urban contacts.
- The study failed to find female migrants who had migrated purely for work. Female migration was attributed to factors such as marriage, migration of the head of the family (husband or father), or for higher education.

Destination of migrants

- New Delhi was the most favoured destination, followed by Mumbai. However, migrants serving in the armed forces do not have a choice over their destination and are posted to various cities in the country.
- Intra-state migration was found to be low due to the limited job opportunities available within the state. Dehradun, the state capital, is the most preferred destination for such migrants, due to the rapidly expanding job opportunities after the formation of the new state of Uttarakhand.

Incomes

- The earnings of rural-urban migrants vary greatly from IRs. 3,000 per month to about IRs. 18,000 per month.
- Among the domestic migrants, those employed in the armed forces had the highest monthly salaries.
- International migrants were found to earn between IRs. 25,000 and IRs. 150,000 per month.

Financial remittances

- In terms of the volume of remittances, the average for 64% of the migrants was less than IRs. 3,000 per month, with 31% of the migrants sending remittances of less than IRs. 1,000 per month.
- Ten per cent of migrants surveyed were unable to generate sufficient surplus, after meeting the cost of living in the cities, to send remittances to their households.
- Remittances are the highest for migrants working in the defence forces and those employed in a managerial capacity with private companies.
- The majority of migrants (55%) preferred to carry remittances by hand, while 23% remitted money through banks, and an equal number through post offices.
- Bank transfers emerged as the safest and fastest mode of money transfer, although the distance of banks from villages was cited as a major drawback.
- In terms of the cost of remitting, the hand-carrying system involved no additional costs for migrants; however, the cost of transferring money through banks ranged from IRs. 30 to 100 and, through post offices, was 5% of the total amount remitted.
- Forty-eight per cent of remittances are used to meet domestic consumption expenses, and only about 9% are retained as savings by the households. The majority of households reported very little or no savings.

Social remittances

- Skill development was found to be rather limited as the majority of migrants are performing semi-skilled jobs, although some migrants do acquire skills related to the hospitality industry, computers, and driving.
- Significant improvements were observed in the personalities, self-confidence, awareness, and knowledge of returned migrants, and migrants were found to have a positive impact on village youths.
- Villagers were found to be highly receptive to returned migrants who are often regarded as 'opinion leaders' within their villages. Many retired army men have also been elected to the local panchayats.
- Non-migrants complained that migrants unduly influence village youths to migrate by sharing only the positive aspects of migration and withholding experiences of hardship.
- Migrants contribute to society by supporting other young people during migration, encouraging higher education, and promoting the need for knowledge of computers and spoken English among village youths.

Source of jobs

- Friends and relatives are the main source of jobs for migrants, and there is very little interest in recruitment/employment agencies. Newspapers are the main source of information on jobs for those interested in joining the armed forces or securing a government job.

Funds for migration

- Funds for migration are arranged by the migrants from within their family or through friends or relatives. There is little dependence upon local moneylenders and none at all upon the banks due to their limited outreach and policy of not giving loans without collateral. Moneylenders charge exorbitant interest rates (5-10% per month) and many young people are unable to migrate due to lack of funds.

Gender empowerment, drudgery, and vulnerability

- Overall, 63% of the wives of migrants reported being happy with the migration of their husbands.
- The overall social status of women from migrant households has improved outside their homes, but women from joint families complained of a decline in their social status within their homes.
- The decision-making power of wives of migrants heading nuclear households has increased, but migration has had an adverse impact on the decision-making power of migrant wives from joint families.
- Women living in joint families have little control over the remittances sent by their migrant husbands; however, those heading nuclear families have greater financial autonomy.
- Women's drudgery has clearly increased due to migration. Those heading nuclear families (in the absence of migrant husbands) worked 12 to 14 hours a day (an increase of about 4 hours per day), while those living in joint families worked for 10 to 12 hours a day (an increase of about 2 hours per day).
- Women found themselves uncomfortable with more physically demanding tasks and with their increased role outside the house.
- The National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme is adding to the drudgery of women as, under pressure from their families, some of them have to take on the responsibility of doing daily wage labour under this programme in addition to their household responsibilities.
- Financial constraints caused by delayed or insufficient remittances lead to loss of social status, humiliation, and anxiety for wives of migrants.
- Migration is viewed as having a detrimental impact upon women's health as it increases their workloads and leads them to ignore their health concerns. Women with migrant husbands also reported feeling shy and reluctant to approach hospitals when ill.

Migration and development

- Findings indicate that migration has indeed contributed towards poverty eradication in Uttarakhand. Among the sample households, it was found that the percentage of families living Below Poverty Line (BPL) decreased from 68% (at the time of migration) to 35% (at the time of the study).
- In terms of high volumes of remittances, international migration was found to be the most effective for poverty reduction. Rural-urban migration also has the potential to alleviate poverty, provided the migrant obtains a good job and earns over INRs. 5,000 per month. However, seasonal migration was found to be insufficient to propel people above the poverty line.
- Joint families, having additional labour, are able to benefit more from migration as they are able to compensate for the loss of human capital due to migration. Consequently, agriculture, animal husbandry, and allied activities are not adversely impacted by migration.
- It can also be concluded that the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme of the government has proved to be quite effective in generating additional livelihood opportunities in the villages and reducing the need for migration.

Policy recommendations

Development programmes have so far failed to reduce rural-urban income and infrastructure differentials, and as a result they have failed to prevent outmigration from Uttarakhand. At the same time, government policies have also failed to fulfil the needs of the youth for adequate education, proper orientation, and effective skill development, so that, in the event of migration, they can find suitable livelihood options in the cities.

Issues related to migrants and migration have been repeatedly ignored by policymakers and planners, with regional, state, and national policy agendas failing to address issues related to migration adequately. Although each year an estimated INRs. 3,200 million in remittances flow into the small state of Uttarakhand (Bisht, nd), migration has not been given due attention. In the Indian context, the only visible policy response to migration has been to try and prevent it through increased rural employment opportunities by way of programmes like the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme.

While mostly it is a case of policy 'non-response' (Bird and Deshingkar 2009), the contributions of migrant labour to economic development remain unrecognised. Migration is perceived as having negative economic, political, and social effects, resulting in the fact that the governments remain hostile towards migrants (Deshingkar 2005).

It is in this light that a two-pronged policy strategy is recommended under the present study: a) policies aimed at reducing outmigration and b) policies aimed at preparing and augmenting rural youth to better avail themselves of livelihood opportunities at the place of immigration.

Policy recommendations for reducing outmigration

Agricultural development

Over 70% of the population of Uttarakhand is engaged in agriculture. Small and fragmented landholdings, lack of irrigation, shallow soil, and lack of mechanisation are some of the factors that have limited the yield from agriculture in Uttarakhand. Low incomes, and the fact that the majority of agriculture is still subsistence-oriented, fuel the need for migration as a source of cash income to fulfil domestic requirements. The development of the agricultural sector and allied sub-sectors is possible through policies and programmes aimed at the following.

- Promotion of the cultivation of cash crops and agricultural diversification to include floriculture, horticulture, cultivation of off-seasonal vegetables, beekeeping, and pisciculture not only could increase employment opportunities in the agricultural sector, but also could provide a source of much needed cash income for hill farmers.
- Extending greater support to farmers for soil and water conservation, irrigation improvement, and agricultural credit, marketing, and extension facilities would lead to enhanced productivity of agriculture.
- Women play a major role in agriculture as they are involved in a number of agricultural operations, as well as in animal husbandry activities. The identification and propagation of adequate time-saving techniques for women should be a priority area for the government.

- The promotion of organic cultivation and setting up suitable linkages for the certification, promotion, and marketing of organic agricultural produce
- Strengthening the dairy sector and the promotion of poultry as agricultural sub-sectors
- The promotion of mechanisation in agriculture through the introduction of suitable replacements for traditional implements
- Within each village a sizeable chunk of land is lying barren due to the permanent migration of landowners. Government policies to facilitate the leasing of such lands to the Scheduled Castes and other socially and economically weaker sections of society would lead to the utilisation of these fallow lands, while at the same time enhancing the incomes of the poorest of the poor households.

It should be mentioned that the Government of India has already embarked upon an ambitious plan to support agriculture and allied sectors within each district to achieve a minimum of 4% growth in agriculture. Under this programme, a Comprehensive District Agricultural Plan (CDAP) is to be prepared for each district with the active participation of local communities, and special funds are channelled to the states based on the CDAP for each individual district. The Government of Uttarakhand has, however, been lagging behind in terms of preparation of the CDAP plans for its 13 districts.

Promotion of rural-centric tourism

Uttarakhand is essentially a tourism state, and a significant proportion of state GDP comes from tourism activities. On average, 18 million tourists visited the state annually during the period from 2004 to 2007 (Table 30). The average growth rate in the number of tourists is around 14% per annum.

Table 30: Year-wise number of tourists in Uttarakhand

Year	Number of tourists
2004	13,904,806
2005	16,373,509
2006	19,454,717
2007	22,260,400

However, most of the revenue from tourism accrues to large tour operators and hotel and resort owners who are not even bona fide residents of Uttarakhand. The rural population of Uttarakhand is, at best, able to obtain low-salaried employment in the transport and hospitality industries.

There is a need to channel the economic inflows from tourism towards rural areas and to village populations, particularly as the hill villages around major glaciers in the state have no dearth of natural beauty. The state government should come up with policies and programmes aimed at the development of rural tourism pockets in various parts of the state – offering adequate facilities to tourists in terms of lodging, as well as options for sightseeing and entertainment. For this, the state government needs to extend subsidies and soft loans and provide technical know-how to the village communities. Adequate publicity and promotion should be taken up by the State Government through various tourism fairs and festivals in different parts of the country.

In the long term, such measures could provide additional employment opportunities, prevent the outmigration of disillusioned youths and supplement the incomes of village communities.

Rural infrastructural development

Spatial differences between cities and villages have emerged as one of the most important pull factors for rural-urban migration. Infrastructural development of villages and towns in Uttarakhand in terms of improved access to health, education, drinking water, transport, and markets could prevent outmigration of the young who are disillusioned by poor infrastructural development in their villages.

Effective implementation of NREGP

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme has been able to generate additional rural employment, and this has acted as a deterrent to seasonal migration and to some extent to rural-urban migration of unskilled and less-educated youths. However, the communities have complained of delayed payments, the issuance of bogus job cards, the granting of jobs to labourers from outside the state, and demands for bribes by Panchayat Raj functionaries. Some people even complained that some village development work undertaken by the NREGP, like the construction of roads, soil and water conservation works, and so forth, were only shown on paper, with the wages for the same being secretly shared between Panchayat Raj functionaries and government officials. The villagers from Chamoli district were most unhappy with the implementation of NREGP in their district and some of them had even stopped working under NREGP due to long delays in making payments.

As the NREGP has shown great promise in generating additional income for communities at the local level, it is recommended that the state as well as the central government take effective steps to periodically monitor and evaluate the progress of NREGP. Physical verification of development work under the programme, timely payment of wages, verification of wage payments, prevention of issuance of bogus job cards, and so forth must be ensured at all costs; especially as they are important for enabling a greater number of people to take part in the programme.

Policy recommendations for improving migrants' livelihood opportunities

Values imparted by the educational system

The current system of education being imparted through government schools is inappropriate in the present sociocultural and socioeconomic context. It fails to impress upon the young the importance of agriculture and the role being played by farmers in the Indian economy. Rather, textbooks and even teachers encourage children to become doctors, engineers, lawyers, and scientists. The general impression being given to the students is that farming is practised generally by the illiterate and ignorant. Youths who have grown up with such an orientation are today totally disillusioned with agriculture. During the personal interviews some of them categorically stated that, "farming is not for educated youths". Consequently, most rural youths, who are unable to become doctors or engineers, do not want to become farmers either. Therefore, it is highly recommended that the focus and orientation in education be changed in order to instill the importance of agriculture as a viable and respectable occupation, even for the literate, into the young.

Vocational training

Under the current education system, no vocational skills are imparted to students. This means that even those who migrate after completing their schooling (10+2) have no additional skills to offer to their prospective employers. At the same time, rural youths lack computer skills and knowledge of English, and they lack awareness in comparison to their urban counterparts.

To make rural youths competitive in urban job markets, there is an urgent need to introduce specific vocational training in schools such as training in computers, television repairs, motor mechanics, air-conditioner and refrigerator repairs, plumbing, carpentry, masonry, and so forth. Vocational training will not only enable young people to obtain skilled/semi-skilled jobs easily in the cities, but, if desired, it will allow them to pursue self-employment opportunities in the cities or their own villages.

Restructuring institutional credit mechanisms

The present outreach of banks in Uttarakhand is quite limited due to the hilly terrain and remote location of villages. Moreover, there is no specific policy of banks to extend credit for migration (other than for higher education), or to extend credit without collateral. At the same time, the lending mechanisms of banks are cumbersome and time consuming. Policy changes are recommended to extend the outreach and institutional credit mechanisms of nationalised banks in the hill state of Uttarakhand. The need for banks to increase their outreach through more rural branches, the introduction of soft loans for migration purposes, and introduction of alternatives to collateral are suggested to support migrants.

Insurance for migrants

The Uttarakhand government must realise the important financial contribution being made by its outmigrant population to the State and provide risk cover to the families of migrants through special migrant insurance schemes. Under these schemes, the State should provide life and accident insurance cover to migrants either free of cost or at subsidised rates. Such an initiative would provide greater financial security to the dependents of migrants in case of death or accident.

Issuance of identity cards for migrants

Currently, rural-urban migrants comprise an unorganised sector for which no specific policies or guidelines have been issued by the government (only recently has the Ministry of Overseas' Affairs issued a policy for international migrants), and, consequently, migrants have to face identity issues in cities which have been compounded by security concerns in relation to terrorism. Migrants are frequently harassed by the police as they have no proof of identity. They are also not able to obtain benefits from government welfare programmes in the cities due to lack of proof of identity. It is recommended that the Uttarakhand Government formulate a policy and clear-cut guidelines for issuing identity cards to migrants, in order to give them official recognition as bona fide residents of Uttarakhand. An identity card would not only prevent police harassment, but also help migrants in case of emergencies or accidents.

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Annex

Case study: Chalkstone mining as a push factor for migration

The villages of Musoli and Dhapola Sera are located in the Kanda block of Bageshwar district. These and about 8 to 10 other nearby villages are rich in chalkstone (locally called khadiya), which is widely used in the cosmetic industry for making talcum powder, toothpaste, creams, and soap. The mining of chalkstone is prevalent in the area and mining is emerging as a major push factor for migration in Dhapola Sera and other nearby villages.

The mining process

The mining of chalkstone is done by digging deep trenches in the ground – sometimes as deep as 15 to 20 feet (5-6 m). The chalkstone is dug out of the ground, put into sacks, and transported by mule to the nearest roadhead, from where it is transported by truck to the town of Haldwani. The chalkstone is then sold to J.D. Company in Haldwani. The contractors either purchase the land or undertake mining on behalf of the landowner. In the latter case, they pay around IRs. 12 to the landowner for each sack (measuring around 50 kg), and the entire cost of mining is borne by the contractors. The contractors make a significant profit from the whole deal as they are able to sell the chalkstone for between IRs. 60 to IRs. 100 per sack, depending upon the quality of the chalkstone.



Mining as a push factor

Due to the high economic potential of mining, the price of agricultural land has increased significantly. For a land area of about 0.02 ha, the villagers are able to obtain about IRs. 150,000 to IRs. 200,000 if they sell it to a local contractor for mining purposes; the normal market price for the same land is only around IRs. 20,000, or IRs. 50,000 if it is irrigated. Thus, local farmers are quite keen to sell their agricultural land to contractors and migrate outside the village. Those who do not sell their land enter into agreements with contractors for mining and receive payments based on the amount of chalkstone extracted from their land. Once the mining is complete, the land is rendered unfit for cultivation and the landowners have no option but to look for alternatives to agriculture such as migration.

According to a brother of Hira Balav, a farmer who sold his land for Rs 180,000 to a contractor and migrated, “the capital earned through the sale of land is quite sufficient to set up some business in the city”. He says that his brother is quite happy and is running his own shop in Kashipur. “I will get about IRs. 300,000 to IRs. 400,000 out of mining on my land, and I will subsequently migrate to the plains and do some business there,” says B.S. Dhapola, who has given his land for mining to a contractor.

According to the villagers, about five people have sold their land for mining in Dhapola Sera, and about six to eight people have entered into agreements with contractors for mining. Similarly, in Musoli it was estimated that about four people had entered into agreements with contractors, and about four had sold their land. Gradually, more and more people are becoming interested in mining.

The volume of extraction can be judged from the fact that a trolley has been installed by the contractors for transporting chalkstone from the village to the roadhead.



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The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, ICIMOD, is a regional knowledge development and learning centre serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan – and based in Kathmandu, Nepal. Globalisation and climate change have an increasing influence on the stability of fragile mountain ecosystems and the livelihoods of mountain people. ICIMOD aims to assist mountain people to understand these changes, adapt to them, and make the most of new opportunities, while addressing upstream-downstream issues. We support regional transboundary programmes through partnership with regional partner institutions, facilitate the exchange of experience, and serve as a regional knowledge hub. We strengthen networking among regional and global centres of excellence. Overall, we are working to develop an economically and environmentally sound mountain ecosystem to improve the living standards of mountain populations and to sustain vital ecosystem services for the billions of people living downstream – now, and for the future.





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