

## Return and Resettlement

- \*Extortion and overpricing of services by airport, customs personnel, money changers etc;
- \*Compulsory HIV/AIDS testing for women returnees;
- \*Emphasis on 'moral rehabilitation' for young women who are deported or return voluntarily to sex-segregated contexts in countries of origin;
- \*Higher personal and social costs of migration for women, with potential for further discrimination and abuse:
  - a. more severe impacts on children;
  - b. marital problems –husband's alcoholism and infidelity etc – exacerbated by long periods of separation;
  - c. insensitivity of families to the burdensome and alienating experience of women migrant workers;
  - d. stigmatization of women returnees in sex segregated contexts as all women migrants are perceived to be steeped in moral turpitude
  - e. lack of control over earnings and remittances that tend to be sent to male relatives, most often the husband;
  - f. lack of government services facilitating sustainable economic, psycho-social reintegration or support to access remedies for violations;
  - g. bankruptcy;
  - h. re-migration and vulnerability to trafficking;

## Gendered Vulnerabilities, Discrimination and Abuse throughout the Migration Cycle and its Impacts



Poor and unskilled overseas migrant workers - women and men - face many similar problems and rights violations throughout the migration process. Some of these are excessive charges for travel and job placement; contract substitution and other contract violations; low wages; exclusion from labour law protections in countries of employment; or deportation if undocumented.

*Women* however experience these violations in a qualitatively different way and more acutely than men.

Moreover there are some violations unique to or more commonly perpetrated against women. Poor women migrant workers are thus more disadvantaged than their male counterparts, despite their substantive contribution to countries of origin and employment.

# Gendered Vulnerabilities, Discrimination and Abuse throughout the Migration Cycle and its Impacts

## During *Recruitment* and *Pre-departure*

- \*Women's greater lack of access to information on job opportunities and overall conditions in countries of employment; the costs and benefits of migration; procedures for legal migration;
- \*Women's greater lack of access to reliable contacts who facilitate safe migration;
- \*Illegal recruitment and more trafficking of women and of children;
- \*Inappropriate and expensive pre-departure orientation sessions and training programmes;
- \*No pre-departure orientation and training in countries restricting women's migration. This increases women's vulnerability to trafficking and other rights violations while migrating;
- \*Confinement of women migrant workers by some recruiting agents and/or physical and sexual abuse by them in training centers before departure;
- \*Non-existent jobs and/or not being sent overseas at all;

## During *Transfer*

- \*Lack of information on travel process;
- \*Sexual harassment and violence en route;

This section explores the similarities and differences in the concerns and violations against women and men migrant workers throughout the migration process and the impacts of these.

## In Country of *Employment*

- \*Less skilled, legal and better jobs for women than for men;
- \*Non-recognition of domestic work as work and therefore exclusion of domestic workers from labour law protections;
- \*Recruiting agents or employers withholding women's papers and other travel documents;
- \*Cultural prejudices that label women migrant workers as 'morally depraved and sexually available'. Poor and unskilled male migrants are seen as 'national security threats and criminals';
- \*Lower wages than men; non-payment and unauthorized deductions from wages;
- \*Poor living and working conditions. Domestic work, for instance involves convergence of living and working space, greater control, isolation and alienation that pre-empts access to services, external assistance and redress;
- \*Occupational safety and health hazards, poor general and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, psychological, physical and sexual abuse and violence that may end in murder or suicide;
- \*Illegal, sudden and unjust termination of contracts;
- \*No place to stay before being sent home;
- \*Inadequate services provided by diplomatic missions, especially in relation to trauma counseling and handling cases of sexual and other forms of violence;



*In most countries, those engaged in domestic work do not count as 'employees' under legal definitions;*