

## **UNESCO Report: Migration and Literacy Level**

### **What is the issue?**

An UNESCO study found that the literacy levels in rural India suffer due to migration.

### **What are the findings of the report?**

- UNESCO global education monitoring report 2019 has observed that literacy levels in rural households of India dipped with seasonal migration.
- The report brings out the educational challenges thrown up by migration.
- In India, 10.7 million children aged 6 to 14 lived in rural households with a seasonal migrant in 2013.
- Inter-State migration rates have doubled between 2001 and 2011.
- An estimated 9 million migrated between States annually from 2011 to 2016.
- About 28% of youth aged 15 to 19 in these households were illiterate or had not completed primary school.
- About 80% of seasonal migrant children in seven cities lacked access to education near work sites.
- Also 40% are likely to end up in work rather than education, experiencing abuse and exploitation.
- It also warns of the negative impact on education for children who are left behind as their parents migrate.

### **Does construction sector play a major role in migration?**

- The report says that the construction sector absorbs the majority of short-term migrants.
- A survey in Punjab state of 3,000 brick kiln workers in 2015-16 found that 60% were inter-State migrants.
- The migration determines the literacy level and the education received by the migrant's Children.
- Between 65% and 80% of all children aged five to 14 living at the kilns worked there seven to nine hours per day.
- About 77% of kiln workers reported lack of access to early childhood or primary education for their children.

## What are the steps taken to address the issue?

- The Right to Education Act in 2009 made it mandatory for local authorities to admit migrant children.
- National-level guidelines were issued, allowing for flexible admission of children.
- Other steps such as providing transport and volunteers to support with mobile education, create seasonal hostels are also taken.
- Further steps to improve coordination between sending and receiving districts and states are taken.

## What are the other challenges?

- The report sees the growth of slums and informal settlements — where schools are often scarce — due to migration as a challenge.
- For instance 18% of the students displaced by a riverfront project in Ahmedabad dropped out and an additional 11% had lower attendance
- The report shows there is only one urban planner for every 1,00,000 people in India, while there are 38 for every 1, 00,000 in the United Kingdom.

## What can be done further?

- Some of the states in India has devised and implemented particular policies to address the issue arising out of migration.

**Some relief** Some States in India have begun initiatives for the welfare of children of migrant parents

- **T.N.:** The govt. provides text-books in other languages to migrant children
- **Gujarat:** It has introduced seasonal boarding schools to provide education to migrant children
- **Gujarat:** It is also collaborating with NGOs to begin online tracking of the children on the move
- **Maharashtra:** Authorities have enrolled volunteers to provide after-school psycho-social support to children left behind by migrating parents
- **Odisha:** It has taken up the responsibility of seasonal hostels run by NGOs
- **Odisha:** It also works with Andhra Pradesh to improve migrant well-being

The infographic features a central illustration of diverse, colorful silhouettes of children with their arms raised, set against a grey background.

- These policies can be analyzed and studied by NITI Aayog to be implemented throughout the country.

**Source: The Hindu**



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