



A1 HIDDEN ISSUES – INFORMATION FOR FACILITATORS

Tools in this section of *Reveal* provide background information on hidden issues for facilitators. Tools in other sections are designed to be used with communities.

Revealing migration: background information for facilitators

Questions for a facilitator to consider:

Who has left the community in the last year? Are there particular groups that are leaving? Why are people moving away?

Who has been left behind? How have they been impacted by people leaving?

What happens when people return?

Who has arrived in your community in the last year? Have new groups of people moved in? How has the church and community responded?

Migration is the movement of people from one place to another. For some groups of people, such as nomadic pastoralists, migration is a way of life as they search for pasture or other livelihood interests. Other people migrate in order to leave difficult situations such as poverty or conflict or in search of livelihoods and a 'better way of life' for themselves and their families.

People often disagree about whether migration is good or bad. Because of this, it can become an issue that is not talked about or is 'hidden' in a community. However, it is important that migration is openly discussed and that people understand both the positive and negative impacts migration can have, and both the opportunities and risks involved.



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Explaining the words we use

- **IDP (Internally displaced person)** – a person who has been forced to leave their home, but who remains within the borders of their country.
- **Human trafficking** – the transporting or abduction of people for the purposes of exploitation, using coercion, fraud or deception. It is a modern form of slavery.
- **Migration** – the movement of people from one place to another, often with the intention of settling in the new location.
- **Refugee** – a person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster.

What does the Bible say?

The Bible includes many stories of migration. In the Old Testament, God's chosen people, Israel, are a migrant people, wandering through many places in search of their promised land. We also read of individual migrants: in Exodus Moses flees to Midian and finds shelter in the house of a Priest (Exodus 2:15-22). In the book of Ruth we see Ruth and Naomi travelling to a foreign land and finding favour in the eyes of Boaz (Ruth 2).

Throughout the Bible, we can see that God cares for migrants and refugees. They are people made in God's image and are worthy of respect and dignity (Genesis 1:26, 28). There are specific commandments that clearly show God's heart. For example,

- "When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not ill-treat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God." (Leviticus 19: 33-34).
- "He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt." (Deut 10:18-19).

In the New Testament, Mary and Joseph flee to Egypt with Jesus as a baby. Later on, Jesus and his disciples travelled to many different towns during three years of ministry. And the book of Acts maps the stories of Paul, Peter and their companions travelling from one place to the other to preach the good news. There are clear instructions for Christians to 'be hospitable'. This word in the original greek means to 'love the stranger' or the alien/migrant (Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:2; 1 Peter 4:9). God wants all of his people to experience life in all it's fullness. When people are considering migration, it is important to think and pray through all of the risks and opportunities involved and all of the negative and positive impacts.

For Bible studies on this issue, please see **Section B** of *Reveal*.

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Understanding migration

Migration can be international - between different countries, or internal - movement within a country, often from rural to urban areas. Sometimes migration has positives impact for the people who migrate and on the area they leave or move to. At other times, it causes harm.

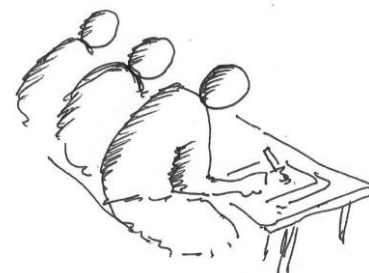
More people are migrating today than at any other point in human history. Migrants travel in many different ways and for many different reasons. There are factors which **push** people to migrate, such as drought, famine, lack of jobs, over-population, civil war, persecution in their home country. And there are also factors which **pull** people towards a certain place such as job opportunities, better education, freedom and family links. People often move hoping to improve their standard of living and to give their children better opportunities.



How does migration impact the people left behind?

Advantages

- Migration relieves any population pressure and reduces any unemployment, which can reduce stress on the local or national economy. It may also reduce the demand on natural resources.
- Families left behind may benefit from any money that migrants send to them. Families may spend such money on food, other household essentials and education. International migrants send home billions of dollars in remittances each year. For some countries, this money has a huge benefit for the national economy.



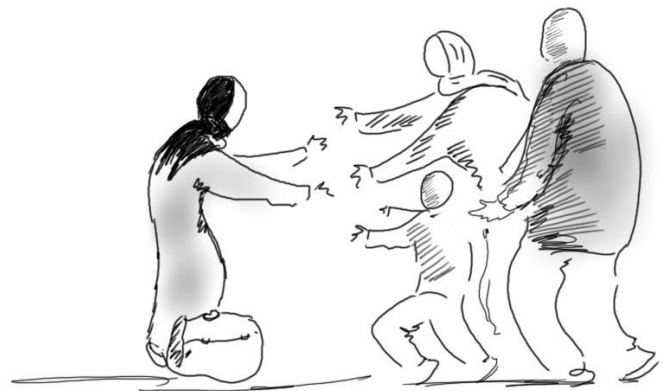
Disadvantages

- Communities lose some of the people they have invested in, such as nurses and accountants. This is sometimes known as 'brain-drain'.
- In some regions, the majority of migrants are young men, many of whom are married. Their wives remain at home, but carry a much heavier burden than before as they maintain the household alone.
- Where migration is common, human trafficking can increase as traffickers see an opportunity to make money. Parents who are poor may be encouraged or tricked into sending their children away in exchange for a small payment. Please see **Tool A1: Revealing human trafficking** for more information.
- A significant proportion of migrants attempt to return home after several years. Returning migrants are often wealthier than the people around them and they often behave differently, which can cause friction within communities. Often, a high percentage of money brought back by migrants is spent on consumables (such as flat screen TVs) rather than being invested in things that help decrease poverty over the longer term.
- There can be an increase in sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) as migrants bring HIV and other other STDs home with them.

How does migration impact those that migrate?

Advantages

- Some people migrate to earn more money .
- If a person is escaping conflict or persecution, they might migrate to another country for safety, although the asylum process can be long and complicated.
- Some people migrate to join family members.
- People may have access to better health care and other welfare services in the place to which they migrate.
- People may migrate to receive better education or training for themselves or their children.



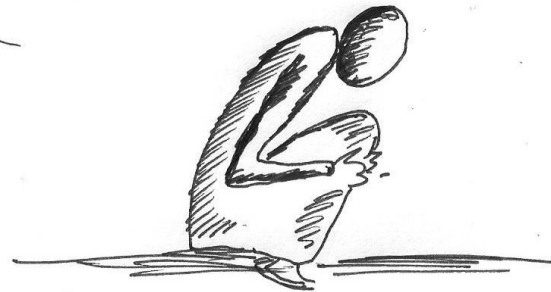
Disadvantages

- The work that is available may be temporary, unpredictable, dangerous, exploitative or illegal.
- Despite earning more money, the migrant will often earn little compared to the standard of living in the new place. They may not achieve the high standard of living that is often described in the media. Migration means leaving behind support networks of friends and family, and a culture that they are used to, and moving to a new, different and sometimes hostile place.

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- Migrants face stigma if the community to which they move does not understand them or mistrusts them.
- Children, who are either left behind or sent away by parents, are more vulnerable to abuse.
- International migrants may not have legal status and, therefore, do not have access to support such as health care or social services.
- Sometimes migration puts people at risk of being exploited and trafficked, particularly where people do not have legal status in the country they move to. Please see **Tool A1: Revealing human trafficking** for more information.



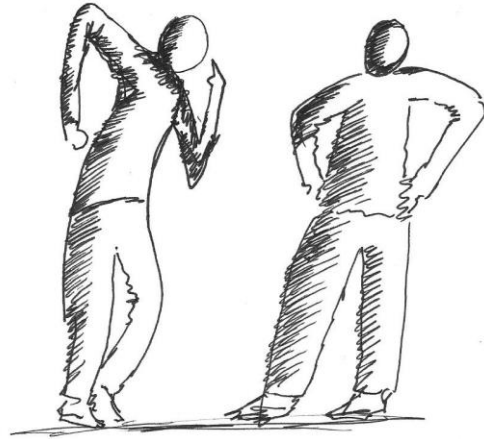
How does migration impact the receiving (or host) community?

Advantages

- Migrants frequently go to places that do not have enough local people with the skills to do the jobs that are available. The gaps that migrants fill are focused in either highly skilled jobs, such as doctors, or manual jobs, such as construction workers. This helps to support the local economy.
- Migrants are often more willing to do jobs that local people are unwilling to do. These include roles such as fruit-picking, child care and cleaning services.
- The integration of migrants into the culture of the area or country hosting them can lead to cultural diversity in areas such as food and music.

Disadvantages

- Migrants often experience racial abuse and discrimination which divides communities and can increase crime.
- Migrants often live in neighbourhoods where there are others from the same area. A large migrant community may put extra pressure on local services (such as schools and health services), and prevent people from integrating with their local community.
- Countries that receive migrants often have to respond to the sudden arrival of a large number of refugees, many of whom have risked their lives by travelling in lorries and boats.
- Migrants can bring illnesses such as tuberculosis and HIV with them.



It is important for churches and communities to be informed of the risks, opportunities and impacts of migration, and to provide guidance to those considering moving. There is also a key role for churches and communities to welcome and support migrants and refugees in their midst.

Using Reveal

Please see **Section A2** for tools to help communities to talk about migration with young people in the community. Please see **Section B** for Bible studies.



Notes

The 'Understanding migration' section explaining the impacts that migration has, was first published in Tearfund (2009) *Footsteps 78 – Migration*, article called 'What is migration' http://tilz.tearfund.org/en/resources/publications/footsteps/footsteps_71-80/footsteps_78/what_is_migration/



Finding out more

- Footsteps 78 - *Migration*
http://tilz.tearfund.org/en/resources/publications/footsteps/footsteps_71-80/footsteps_78/

Related tools:

- A1 – Revealing human trafficking (slavery): background information for facilitators [A1: *Migration & trafficking-2*]
- A2 – Understanding vulnerability to human trafficking (slavery) [A2: *Migration & trafficking-2*]
- A2 – The lies traffickers tell [A2: *Migration & trafficking-3*]
- B – Migration (Bible study) [A2: *Migration & trafficking-1*]

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