



# GENDERED MIGRATION PATTERNS AND EFFECTS IN THE INDIAN BENGAL DELTA

Out of 1315 households in the delta,  
**18% have sent migrants to**

Domestic destinations 96% International destinations 4%

There are  
different patterns  
for male & female  
migration



**Men migrate mostly for economic reasons whereas women migrate for social reasons**

## MALE

Lack of employment opportunities and unsustainability of agriculture at home

## FEMALE

To join spouse, marriage and moving with family members



**More men are migrating than women**

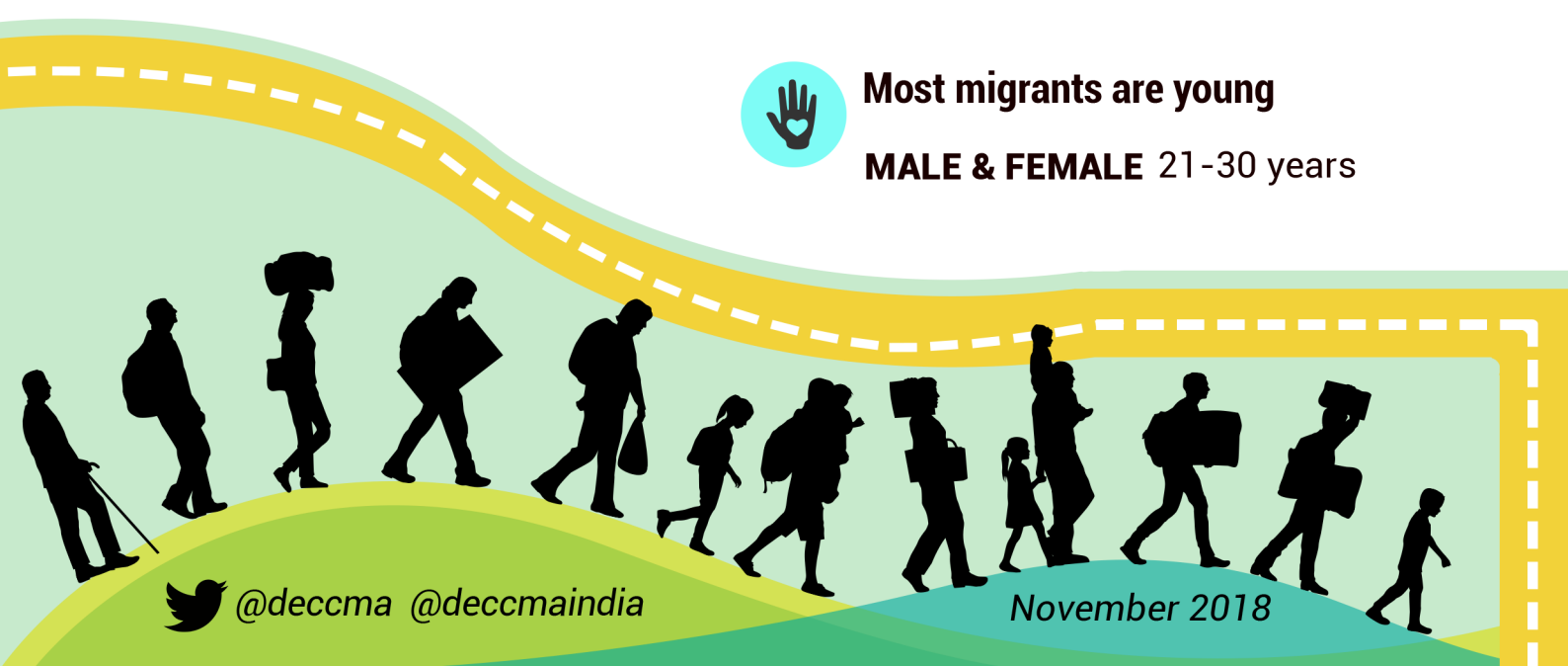
**MALE**  83%

**FEMALE**  17%



**Most migrants are young**

**MALE & FEMALE** 21-30 years



The majority of migration is economic, but social and environmental reasons also play a role



### ECONOMIC REASONS 64%

Unsustainability of agriculture and lack of other economic opportunities



### SOCIAL REASONS 28%

Family obligations, aspirations for better education, marriage



### ENVIRONMENTAL REASONS 7%

Cyclones and flooding can act as stressors

## Seasonal migration is most common

Seasonal migration occurs once or twice a year and the migrants come back to the delta at the time of rice cultivation.

Seasonal **57%**   
moves once or twice a year based on seasons

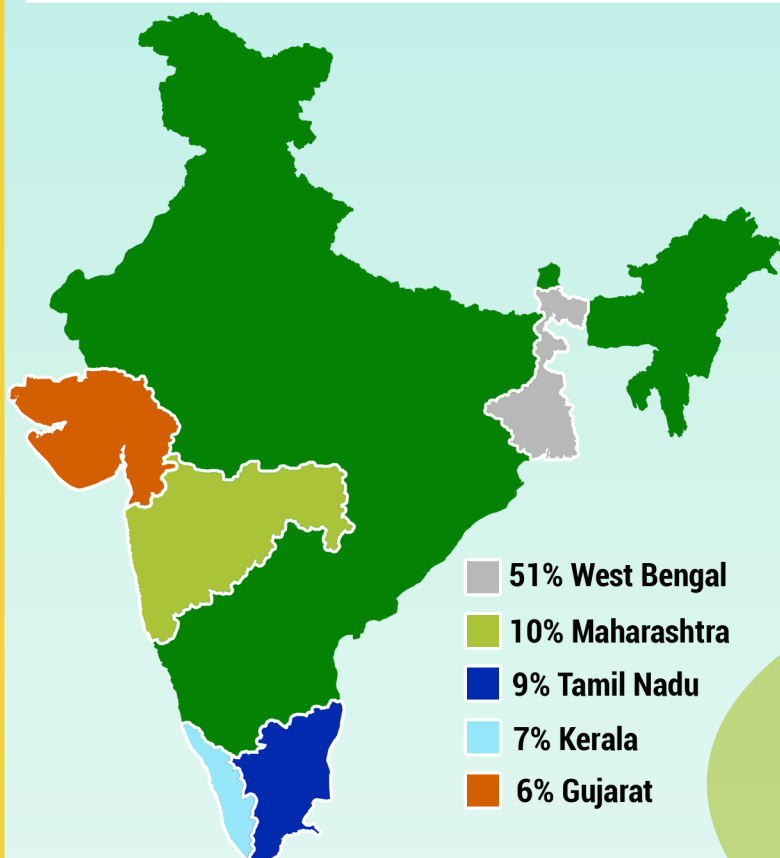
Permanent **24%**   
moves with intention to stay for at least six months

Circular **19%**   
moves more than thrice a year irrespective of seasons

Migrants moving to West Bengal, mainly in Kolkata Metropolitan Area (KMA), exhibit permanent, circular and seasonal natures of migration

Migrants moving to the other states of India mostly exhibit seasonal migration

## Most migrants move to areas in and around Kolkata, the nearest metropolitan city



# MIGRANTS' EXPERIENCES IN AREAS AROUND KOLKATA

## Better employment opportunities

Transport



Hotel



Construction



Domestic help



Caregiver



Household industry

## Aspirations have been fulfilled



86% moved permanently



98% reunited with their families



82% moved permanently



82% gained skills

## Happier in current place

CURRENT PLACE



93%



89%



PLACE OF ORIGIN



33%



25%

## Highly satisfied with food security and access to services

FOOD SECURITY



95%



97%

ACCESS TO SERVICES



94%



98%

## But, gender differences exist in the fulfillment of aspiration

More women are being reunited with family



25%



98%

More men are gaining skills



82%



50%

More women are making sufficient money



38%



66%

# All migrants, but particularly women, find it difficult to assimilate into their new environments

Most are not part of social groups, associations or cooperatives

92% 97%

More women felt that local people were unwelcoming towards them

4% 13%



## People will continue to move in the future

**23%** of non-migrant households intend to migrate for better economic opportunities

**16%** of migrants intend to go back to their place of origin for family obligations

## Policies should address the issues around migration

Given the role of economic insecurity in driving migration, adaptation policies should seek to reduce the vulnerability and improve the wellbeing of people in sending areas. Priorities for this include –



**Promote agricultural adaptation** to reduce livelihood stresses which promote migration



**Alternative livelihood options** to enhance resilience and adaptive capacity of the households

Policies are also required to ensure safe and secure conditions for migrants in receiving areas as migration is likely to continue.

Priorities for this include –



**Skill development opportunities**, particularly for women to improve the likelihood of decent work opportunities



**Social groups, associations or cooperatives** to include migrants to improve their place attachment besides making them feel welcome



**Planned service provision** to account for increasing urban growth through migration (and population increase).

Data is based on emerging results from extensive household surveys conducted in migrant sending (n=1315) and individual migrant surveys conducted in migrant receiving areas (n=512) of the Indian Bengal Delta. This work has been done under DELtas, vulnerability & Climate Change: Migration & Adaptation (DECCMA) project within the Collaborative Adaptation Research Initiative in Africa and Asia (CARIIAA) program, a joint initiative of the UK's Department for International Development and Canada's International Development Research Centre. For more information, visit [www.deccma.com](http://www.deccma.com)