Migration is one of the most important phenomena in today’s globalised world. In the light of on-going structural changes and consequent changing contours of the rural economy, the nature and pattern of migration has also been changing over time. During the last two decades, the phenomenon of out-migration from rural areas has increased manifold. People from rural areas are migrating in large numbers in search of better employment opportunities outside the agricultural sector. By the end of 1990s, the highest concentration of migrants is in metropolitan cities and areas adjacent to it, such as Gurgaon, Faridabad and Ghaziabad, which form part of the National Capital Region of Delhi. There has been a general change in the destination of migration from rural-rural to rural-urban. However, the intensity of migration is generally reported to be low in India due to the conventional approach of defining migration. Two major sources of data on migration in India, the Census and the National Sample Survey (NSS) cover only permanent or semi-permanent migration with seasonal migration partly overlapping with the category of short duration migration. Even the definitions of permanent or semi-permanent migration adopted in the Census and the NSS do not consider long term migrants without changing the place of residence as ‘migrant’.

Planning for the poor in the destination cities is conspicuous by its absence. As the mind-set of the urban planners is to treat migrants as outsiders and a burden on the existing civic infrastructure, they get excluded from most urban planning processes and mechanisms, compounding the problems that they are already plagued with.

Among the migrant workers, the women are relatively disadvantaged vis-a-vis the men. The women in the slums or housing colonies face greater hardship than their male counterparts - such as lack of proper bathrooms, lack of privacy, harassment from male residents, landlords, etc. Lack of clean water and electricity are major problems. In the context of labour markets, they face marginalization and discrimination in the form of wage gaps and segregation along tasks on the lower end of the occupational hierarchy as also sexual harassment at the workplaces. In addition, women carry the double burden of wage work, and domestic responsibilities, and also face the consequences of uncared-for and uneducated children as they themselves struggle with employment, and lack of schools and childcare facilities.
Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 was promulgated for the purpose of regulation of the service condition of the migrant workers, but in status today, it is an ineffective piece of legislation. In today's scenario, there is an urgent need to revisit the debate on legislation for the welfare of migrant workers.

**Rationale of the Project**

In order to address the injustice against migrant workers, it is pertinent that the strategies take into account not just the destination states but also the home states of migrants. With this understanding, Society for Labour and Development has begun to link with Bihar, UP, and Jharkhand- the predominant states from where migrant workers come to Gurgaon. This has included visiting the districts from which migration is taking place, meeting with local organizations and also families of those migrants who are especially active in our organization. Migrant workers’ own families and communities in home states know very little about the conditions that their migrant relatives and friends face; this gap in knowledge leads to false notions about the destination states and ignorance about the hurdles of migrant workers. Also, the source states face multinational and corporate encroachment as much as the destination states and yet, there is virtually no sharing of a common agenda for development. Therefore strategies that take a holistic rural-urban approach are needed to address the disparities and develop common agendas.

The four-fold research undertaken by the Society for Labour and Development traces the forward and backward linkages of workers in Haryana who have migrated from villages in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand, in sectors such as construction and garment, as also other informal sector wage workers such as street vendors, hawkers and domestic workers. The research also analyses the factors that drive rural to urban migration, and the socio-economic profile of the migrant workers’ families in the villages. The first part of the research, to be released on 12th March 2014, focusses on the socio-economic conditions of migrant workers in the destination place, namely Gurgaon, Haryana that brings forth several aspects such as asymmetry in their wages and cost of living, gender oppression, lack of citizenship rights and social security net, and lopsided urban development.