

Study on Temporal Migration Patterns in India



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Executive Summary

Seasonal and Distress Migration in India: Origin Dynamics, Destination Realities, and Corridor-Level Implications for Livelihood Stabilisation.

1. Purpose and Analytical Framing

Seasonal and circular migration is a defining feature of India's rural labour economy. For millions of households, particularly in tribal, rainfed, and low-income regions, migration is neither a temporary aberration nor a linear pathway to urban integration. Instead, it represents a recurrent livelihood strategy, shaped jointly by constraints at origin and conditions at destination.

This study adopts a corridor-based analytical framework, treating migration as a system that links rural origin economies with urban and semi-urban labour markets. It gives equal analytical weight to:

- Origin-side conditions that shape the decision to migrate
- Destination-side realities that determine whether migration reduces or reproduces vulnerability

The core objective is to identify where along this corridor livelihood stress accumulates, where risks are mitigated, and where policy and programme interventions can most effectively stabilise household welfare.

PART I: ORIGIN-SIDE DYNAMICS

2. Study Coverage and Origin-Focused Sample

The study is based on primary data from 1,920 migrant households and individuals, with five major origin states forming the backbone of the analysis: Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan. These states represent some of the most persistent seasonal and distress migration geographies in the country.

At origin, households were selected only if at least one member had undertaken temporary migration of three months or more in the preceding 12 months, ensuring that findings reflect active migration-linked livelihood systems, not historical or incidental mobility.

3. Social and Economic Profile of Origin Households

Across origin states, the study finds a high concentration of migration among structurally marginalised groups. Scheduled Tribe households dominate the sample in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Jharkhand, while Scheduled Caste and OBC households form a substantial share in Odisha.

Household incomes are tightly clustered in lower income brackets. The majority of origin households report annual incomes below ₹2 lakh, with a significant proportion below ₹1 lakh. Migration does not propel households into higher income categories; instead, it functions as a mechanism to prevent income collapse during lean periods.

Livelihood portfolios are diverse but inherently unstable. Most households rely on a combination of:

- Low-productivity cultivation (own or leased land)
- Agricultural and non-agricultural wage labour
- Livestock and small ruminants as supplementary buffers
- Remittances from migrant members

- Pensions and public transfers

This diversification reflects risk management rather than surplus generation.

4. Village-Level Migration Saturation

A key origin-side insight is the scale and normalisation of migration at the village level. In most origin states, respondents report that migration involves between one-fifth and one-half of village households, and in some locations a majority of working-age adults.

Migration is therefore no longer viewed as exceptional. It is socially normalised, routinised, and often expected as part of household livelihood planning—particularly during agricultural lean seasons. This normalisation lowers entry barriers and embeds migration deeply into rural economic systems.

5. Drivers of Migration from Origin Areas

The study finds that migration decisions are driven primarily by push factors at origin, operating in combination rather than isolation:

- Limited availability of stable local employment, even where land and livestock are present
- Seasonality of agricultural incomes, with long lean periods
- Incomplete utilisation of local safety nets, including uneven MGNREGA access
- Climate stress, especially rainfall variability and drought
- Health shocks and debt, which frequently precipitate migration

Importantly, migration is rarely a household's first choice. It is activated when local systems fail to provide predictable income or shock absorption.

6. Debt, Credit, and Household Fragility at Origin

Debt plays a structurally important role in shaping migration. While a majority of households report no outstanding loans at the time of survey, a sizeable minority—particularly in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra-linked corridors—remain indebted.

Borrowing is dominated by informal and semi-formal sources, including friends, relatives, SHGs, and microfinance institutions. Migration often becomes the means through which households service debt obligations or recover from shocks, rather than a pathway to accumulation.

PART II: DESTINATION-SIDE REALITIES

7. Destination Contexts and Labour Absorption

The destination-side analysis focuses on three major labour-receiving regions: Tamil Nadu, Delhi/NCR, and Maharashtra. These regions absorb migrants into construction, manufacturing, textiles, leather, logistics, markets, and seasonal agricultural work.

Each destination exhibits a distinct labour regime:

- Tamil Nadu is characterised by industrial and manufacturing clusters, with significant reliance on contractors and longer-duration seasonal or circular migration.

- Maharashtra combines urban construction and industrial employment with rural seasonal corridors such as sugarcane harvesting.
- Delhi/NCR functions as a high-absorption urban labour market, with semi-permanent migration and frequent repeat trips.

8. Migration Typologies and Duration at Destination

Migration at destination is not uniform. The study identifies clear typologies:

- Seasonal migration (3–8 months) dominates in Maharashtra-linked corridors
- Longer-duration seasonal and circular migration is most common in Tamil Nadu
- Semi-permanent migration is most pronounced in Delhi/NCR

High-frequency migration—often more than six trips over three years—is particularly evident in Delhi/NCR, indicating strong labour market pull but also prolonged separation from origin households.

9. Living and Working Conditions at Destination

Despite higher nominal wages, destination conditions remain precarious:

- Employment is overwhelmingly informal, with limited job security
- Housing conditions are often overcrowded and insecure
- Sanitation access is uneven, particularly in urban settlements
- Health risks are elevated due to living and working environments

While experienced migrants may navigate these systems more effectively, vulnerability remains persistent, especially for newer migrants, women, and those arriving through contractor-mediated pathways.

10. Access to Services and Entitlement Portability

A central destination-side finding is the gap between documentation ownership and actual service access.

Most migrant households possess ration cards and bank accounts. However:

- Awareness of portability mechanisms remains uneven
- Administrative facilitation is limited
- Many migrants experience partial or complete loss of welfare access during migration

Demand for support varies by destination. Health and shelter needs are most pronounced in Delhi/NCR, while banking and remittance services are particularly salient in Tamil Nadu. These patterns highlight the need for destination-specific support models rather than uniform interventions.

PART III: SYNTHESIS AND STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

11. Origin–Destination Interlinkages

Taken together, the findings show that origin and destination are mutually reinforcing systems. Weak livelihood stability at origin pushes households into migration, while incomplete protection at destination limits migration's ability to generate sustained security.

Migration reduces short-term income stress but often reproduces long-term vulnerability, locking households into repeated cycles of movement.

12. Strategic Framework for Action

The study proposes a three-pillar framework that explicitly addresses both ends of the corridor:

Pillar 1: Livelihood Stabilisation at Origin

Strengthen market-linked livelihoods, skilling-to-employment pathways, and enterprise continuity to reduce distress-driven migration.

Pillar 2: Household Resilience and Shock Absorption

Address debt, health shocks, and financial fragility that precipitate migration.

Pillar 3: Protection and Portability at Destination

Improve safety, dignity, and service continuity for migrants who continue to move.

All three pillars are interdependent; progress at one end of the corridor cannot substitute for neglect at the other.

13. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that seasonal migration in India is neither solely an origin failure nor a destination opportunity. It is a corridor-level livelihood system, shaped by constraints and coping mechanisms at both ends.

Effective responses must therefore move beyond origin-only or destination-only solutions and instead invest in integrated, corridor-aware strategies that stabilise livelihoods, reduce distress, and ensure that migration—where it continues—occurs under conditions of safety, dignity, and choice.

Chapter 1

Context and Study Sampling Framework

1.0 Introduction: India's Migration Story and the Centrality of Temporal Migration

India's internal migration story was vast, layered, and deeply intertwined with its rural economy. At the heart of this story lay temporal migration—short-term, seasonal, and circular movements of people seeking work beyond their villages. Unlike permanent migration, this form often escaped the lens of official statistics and policy visibility. Yet, for millions of rural households, temporal migration was not merely an economic choice; it was a livelihood necessity and, in many cases, a survival strategy. Driven by chronic poverty, agrarian distress, debt cycles, and uneven regional development, seasonal mobility continued to shape how rural households smoothed consumption, coped with shocks, and accessed income opportunities beyond local labour markets. This movement remained among the most critical but under-recognised dynamics of India's rural economy, especially across low-income, climate-stressed regions and marginalised social groups.

1.1 National Estimates of Internal and Seasonal Migration

India's internal migration footprint was enormous. The 2011 Census recorded 453.6 million internal migrants, accounting for 37% of the total population. Within this, approximately 139 million individuals were classified as having moved for work, employment, or business. However, official capture of short-term mobility remained limited. Only 0.9% of the population, or about 4.1 million people, were counted as having migrated for work in the year preceding the Census. This mismatch reflected a core limitation of standard data systems: temporal and circular migration was often missed because migrants frequently retained ties to their origin homes, did not permanently change residence, and may have migrated multiple times within a year.

Evidence from the National Sample Survey (64th Round, 2007–08) estimated 13.6 million short-term migrants, largely originating from rural India. Yet, the scale of seasonal migration was widely understood to be much larger than what household surveys or census definitions historically captured. During the COVID-19 lockdowns, the visible scale of return migration pointed towards a much higher and more fluid pool of migrants, leading to more recent estimates placing seasonal migrants in the range of 100 to 140 million, if not more. These estimates underlined the importance of understanding migration beyond static definitions and highlighted that seasonal migration formed one of the largest and most economically significant labour flows in the country.

1.2 Key Source States for Temporal and Distress Migration

Seasonal migration flows primarily originated from states and districts that faced a convergence of constraints: limited rural employment, low agrarian productivity, fragmented landholdings, weak industrial bases, and recurring climate stress. These regions tended to send workers to higher-growth corridors during agricultural downtimes, especially during lean seasons.

The major source regions included the eastern and central belt of India. Uttar Pradesh, especially its eastern districts such as Azamgarh, Ballia, and Ghazipur, remained a persistent labour-sending geography shaped by high population pressure and constrained livelihood options. Bihar had historically been among India's largest out-migration states, with workers concentrated in brick kilns, construction, and seasonal farm work across multiple destination regions. Jharkhand and Odisha—particularly tribal and resource-dependent districts—generated steady streams of migrant labour driven by poverty, insecure land tenure, and limited local non-farm opportunities. West Bengal, especially districts such as Murshidabad and Uttar Dinajpur,

also showed large outward mobility, with migration corridors extending southward to Kerala and westward to Maharashtra. Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh contributed substantially through forest-based and agrarian communities facing constrained productivity and weak market integration. Parts of Assam and the North-East, though still relatively under-studied in migration literature, were increasingly emerging as labour-sending pockets due to limited employment diversification.

Across these source geographies, migrants were typically young and economically active adults, and their incomes often formed the backbone of household survival, meeting needs related to food, education, health expenditure, and debt repayment. While men dominated many migration streams, women's migration was also present and frequently undercounted, especially in domestic work, construction, informal agriculture, and home-based or factory-linked labour.

1.3 Major Destination States and Employment Sectors Absorbing Migrant Labour

Destination areas for migrant workers were typically defined by labour-intensive industries, urban construction booms, and high seasonal demand for informal labour. Over time, India's destination map expanded beyond a few traditional hubs, driven by industrial clustering and the rise of regional labour markets.

Kerala emerged as one of India's most prominent destination states, hosting an estimated 5 to 5.5 million migrants by 2020. Migrants in Kerala largely originated from West Bengal, Odisha, Assam, and Bihar, and were heavily absorbed into construction, seafood processing, plantations, hospitality, and sanitation services, where daily wages often ranged between ₹400 to ₹700. Tamil Nadu represented a complex migration landscape, functioning both as a source and destination. Industrial and manufacturing districts such as Coimbatore, Vellore, Tiruppur, and Thiruvallur attracted migrant workers from Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Odisha into sectors such as textiles, brick kilns, quarries, and domestic work. Labour contractors often dominated recruitment and work allocation, creating dependency and limiting job security.

Punjab and Haryana continued to draw large seasonal inflows into agriculture and brick kilns, with a significant share of the kiln workforce estimated to be seasonal migrants, many working under constrained and exploitative conditions. Maharashtra absorbed migration both in urban centres such as Mumbai and in rural labour corridors such as sugarcane harvesting, where workers from drought-prone regions often worked under advance-linked contracts and long working hours. Gujarat, particularly industrial centres like Surat and Ahmedabad, relied heavily on migrant workers in textiles, diamond polishing, ceramics, and construction, often linked to cyclical labour demand. Delhi-NCR remained one of India's largest migrant labour markets, supported by informal work in construction, vending, logistics, and service sectors, where migrants frequently lived in densely populated settlements with limited basic services. Karnataka, including Bengaluru and coastal urban centres, also attracted migrants for construction, garments, sanitation, and plantation-linked work during seasonal peaks.

1.4 Nature and Seasonality of Migration

Temporal migration in India was predominantly seasonal and circular. Households typically migrated during periods when agricultural labour demand was low, such as April–June and October–December, and often returned for sowing and harvesting cycles. This rhythm aligned migration decisions closely with agrarian seasonality and local wage fluctuations.

This mobility reflected a strong push-pull dynamic. Push factors included low local wages, unstable farm incomes, inadequate irrigation, climate shocks such as droughts and floods, and debt burdens. Pull factors included higher wage potential, predictable labour cycles in construction and manufacturing, and informal labour networks that lowered entry barriers through kinship-based recruitment and contractor-led

placement. Migration became a strategy of income diversification rather than a one-time relocation, and was frequently repeated year after year, making it a structural feature of household livelihoods.

1.5 Migrant Vulnerabilities and Institutional Exclusion

Despite their economic contributions, seasonal migrants remained among the least protected segments of India's workforce. Most worked in the informal economy, outside standard employment contracts, and without access to formal grievance mechanisms. Wage delays, poor working conditions, unsafe worksites, and exploitative recruitment arrangements were common risks. Women migrants faced additional vulnerabilities related to safety, care responsibilities, and sectoral segregation into lower-paid and more precarious work.

Critically, migrants often remained excluded from portable social protection systems. Access to welfare schemes such as labour registration mechanisms, welfare boards, and portable food entitlements was constrained due to documentation gaps, lack of awareness, administrative barriers, or the temporary nature of movement. As a result, migrants frequently experienced a double exclusion, viz. limited access to services at both origin and destination, reinforcing vulnerability even when migration raised income.

2.0 Study Objective and Research Areas

2.1 Overarching Objective

The overarching objective of this study was to understand the scale, patterns, drivers, vulnerabilities, and outcomes of seasonal and distress migration across rural and peri-urban India, and to assess the effectiveness of institutional and informal support systems available to migrant households.

2.2 Key Research Areas and Questions

The study was structured to capture migration as a household livelihood strategy and as a labour market phenomenon, spanning origin conditions, destination realities, and the interlinkages between the two. Key areas included household demographics and migration backgrounds, drivers of migration, patterns and seasonality, labour conditions at destination, housing and service access, remittances and household financial linkages, risks and costs of migration, climate-induced mobility, access to schemes and protections, and migrant aspirations and alternatives to distress movement.

3.0 Sampling Framework and Study Design

3.1 Geographical Coverage: Origin and Destination Lens

This study was designed to capture seasonal migration through a dual lens: migration origins in rural sending districts, and migration destinations in urban and rural labour receiving clusters. The approach recognised that migration could not be fully understood by surveying only source households or only destination settlements, since many vulnerabilities and outcomes were shaped by the interaction between the two.

The study covered five origin states where seasonal and distress out-migration was pronounced: Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan. It also covered three major destination states/regions that hosted large migrant labour populations: Tamil Nadu, Delhi/NCR, and Maharashtra. Together, these locations represented key migration corridors connecting tribal and drought-prone source regions to industrial and informal labour markets.

Table 1.1: Migration Destinations

State/Key cluster	District	Sector	Nature of Jobs
Tamil Nadu			
Tiruppur knitwear cluster	Tiruppur	Knitwear & garment exports, spinning mills, apparel finishing, daily wage work	Sewing/finishing helpers, checking/packing, dye-house helpers; mill hands
Coimbatore–Erode textile belt (incl. Bhavani, Pallipalayam)	Coimbatore, Erode	Spinning mills; power looms; engineering ancillaries	Mill workers (ring frame, winding), loom operators/helpers, fitters' helpers
Ambur–Vaniyambadi–Ranipet leather belt	Tirupathur (Ambur/Vaniyambadi), Ranipet	Leather tanning & footwear	Tannery helpers, cutting/stitching, adhesive/last/moulding line, home-based stitching
Delhi/NCR			
Azadpur Mandi (APMC)	North Delhi, Delhi	Wholesale fruits & vegetables, logistics, head-loading	Head-loaders, cart-pullers, graders/sorters, cleaners
Bawana & Narela industrial areas	North-West & North Delhi, Delhi	MSME clusters (plastics, garments, packaging, light engineering)	Machine helpers, packers, loaders, housekeeping
Okhla Industrial Area (Phases I–III)	South-East Delhi, Delhi	Light engineering, printing, packaging, garments	Assembly line helpers, stitching, printing/packing support
Maharashtra			
Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) — Mumbai, Thane, Navi Mumbai; incl. Dharavi	Mumbai, Thane	Construction (public works, real estate), urban services; Dharavi's leather/garments, embroidery, recycling	Site helpers, mason helpers, steel/rod-binding, loaders; in Dharavi: cutting/stitching, leather/embroidery helpers, scrap sorting/packing
Bhiwandi powerloom & allied textile cluster	Thane	Automobile & components, engineering, electronics; construction	Line/operators, assembly and shop-floor helpers, warehouse/loaders, security/housekeeping; construction helpers
Western Maharashtra sugarcane belt (seasonal harvest corridor)	Beed, Ahmednagar, Solapur, Sangli (also Satara/Osmanabad)	Sugarcane cutting & haulage (Oct–Mar); mill/yard labour	Cutter teams (jodis), loading/transport helpers, mill-yard helpers, camp support

Table 1.2: Migration Origins

State	Top 3 origin districts (seasonal/distress out-migration)	Destination
Odisha	Nuapada, Balangir, Kalahandi	Brick kilns (Telangana/AP), construction (Kerala, Karnataka), agriculture
Jharkhand	Latehar, Palamu, Garhwa	Brick kilns (UP, Telangana), construction (Delhi, Kerala), security/domestic services

Chhattisgarh	Bastar, Dantewada, Sukma	Construction/security/casual work to neighbouring states and metros.
Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua, Alirajpur, Barwani	Gujarat/MH (construction, ceramics, agriculture)
Rajasthan	Udaipur, Dungarpur, Banswara	Gujarat (construction, textiles, ceramics), farm labour, quarries

3.2 Respondent Qualification Criteria

The study focused on two respondent categories. The first category comprised households in rural origin areas where at least one household member had temporarily migrated for livelihood purposes at least once during the last 12 months, and for a minimum duration of three months away from home on at least one occasion. The second category comprised low-income individuals living temporarily in urban slums, squatter settlements, or construction sites at destination locations, who had migrated from rural India for livelihood purposes at least once during the last 12 months, again with at least one migration episode of three months or longer.

For origin households, the study prioritised interviewing the migrant worker directly if they were currently available outside the migration cycle at the time of survey contact. If the migrant was not present, interviews were conducted with another adult household member who remained at home and was familiar with the migration and remittance dynamics. For destination sites, the respondent was the migrant worker themselves.

3.3 Sampling Plan and Rationale for Sample Size

The sampling approach was designed to generate robust state-level insights for both origin and destination geographies. At a 95% confidence level and a 6.5% margin of error, the minimum sample required per state for projectable estimates was calculated at approximately 228 respondents, which was rounded to 240 respondents per state for operational simplicity and sampling adequacy.

Based on this design, the sample for the five origin states totalled $5 \times 240 = 1200$ respondents, while the sample for the three destination states totalled $3 \times 240 = 720$ respondents, resulting in an overall study sample of 1920 migrant households/individuals.

4.0 Primary Sampling Units and Cluster Selection

4.1 Destination Locations: Urban and Rural PSU Identification

In urban destination settings, the primary sampling unit (PSU) was defined as a slum cluster, JJ colony, or temporary worker settlement such as a labour camp near construction sites. For each identified city or urban agglomeration, the study team coordinated with municipal officials and relevant local authorities to identify clusters where out-of-state or out-of-district migrant populations were concentrated. A maximum of five such clusters were selected for coverage in each destination cluster location, with approximately 16 migrant respondents or families covered per cluster to achieve the required sample.

In rural destination settings such as agricultural labour receiving areas, the PSU was defined as a village or gram panchayat with high seasonal absorption of migrant labour. These locations were identified through engagement with district labour offices and local administrations. The study purposively selected key receiving villages and covered migrant families engaged in agricultural labour or related seasonal work.

The destination sampling was structured across three destination states as follows. In Tamil Nadu, the study covered three key labour receiving industrial belts: the Tiruppur knitwear cluster, the Coimbatore–Erode

textile belt, and the Ambur–Vaniyambadi–Ranipet leather belt, with five clusters selected per belt and 80 respondents to be covered per belt, totalling 240. In Delhi/NCR, the study covered Azadpur Mandi, Bawana and Narela industrial areas, and the Okhla industrial area, similarly covering five clusters per location and 80 respondents to be covered in each, totalling 240. In Maharashtra, the study covered the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, the Bhiwandi powerloom cluster, and the Western Maharashtra sugarcane belt, with two urban and one rural receiving corridor covered, totalling 240 respondents.

4.2 Origin Locations: Rural Sending Clusters and PSU Identification

All origin locations in this study were rural. Within each origin state, the study focused on top out-migration districts identified through prior evidence and stakeholder inputs. These included Nuapada, Balangir, and Kalahandi in Odisha; Latehar, Palamu, and Garhwa in Jharkhand; Bastar, Dantewada, and Sukma in Chhattisgarh; Jhabua, Alirajpur, and Barwani in Madhya Pradesh; and Udaipur, Dungarpur, and Banswara in Rajasthan.

The selection of origin PSUs proceeded through a structured process. First, the study team conducted district-level consultations with key informants such as District Labour Officers, senior officials of the Zilla Parishad, and Rural Development officers to identify blocks and gram panchayats with established patterns of seasonal and distress migration. Second, block-level consultations, including engagement with Block Development Offices, were used to refine the identification of high out-migration villages and locate labour contractor networks that linked villages to specific destination sectors. Third, within each origin state, 15 village clusters were selected purposively, spread as evenly as possible across the three focus districts. Finally, within each selected village cluster, 16 migrant households were surveyed, ensuring that each household met the minimum migration exposure criteria of at least one migrant member with a three-month migration episode within the last year.

This design resulted in 15 clusters per origin state and 240 respondents to be sampled per state, giving a total of 75 origin clusters and 1200 origin respondents across the five origin states. Against this, the achieved sample was as follows:

Table 4: Achieved sample

	Achieved sample
Destination states	
Tamil Nadu	250
Delhi/NCR	240
Maharashtra	251
Origin states	
Odisha	247
Jharkhand	243
Chhattisgarh	239
Madhya Pradesh	240
Rajasthan	244

Chapter 2

Respondent's Household Profile

2.1 Social Category of Migrant Households

The table below presents the social category distribution of surveyed households across the sampled states. Results are shown as row percentages, meaning each percentage reflects the share of households within that state belonging to a given social category.

Table 2.1: Social category of the household by state

	ST	SC	OBC	General	BC	Refused to answer	Base
Odisha	32.3%	49.4%	18.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	247
Maharashtra	18.7%	32.3%	29.9%	13.5%	2.8%	2.8%	251
Tamil Nadu	8.8%	23.6%	49.2%	10.4%	6.4%	1.6%	250
Jharkhand	35.4%	29.3%	17.9%	17.5%	0.0%	0.0%	243
Rajasthan	95.9%	0.8%	2.9%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	244
Chhattisgarh	98.3%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	239
Madhya Pradesh	97.1%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	240
Delhi/NCR	0.4%	35.0%	41.7%	21.3%	1.7%	0.0%	240

Across the full sample, households are predominantly from ST communities (48.0%), followed by SC (21.9%) and OBC (20.3%), while General category households form a smaller share (7.8%). The proportion of respondents who refused to answer is negligible (0.6%), indicating strong completeness of background reporting.

State-level patterns vary sharply. Rajasthan (95.9%), Chhattisgarh (98.3%), and Madhya Pradesh (97.1%) show an overwhelmingly ST-heavy profile, suggesting the sample in these states is concentrated in predominantly tribal geographies. Odisha also shows strong representation of historically marginalised groups, with SC households forming the largest share (49.4%), followed by ST (32.3%) and OBC (18.3%).

In contrast, Tamil Nadu is clearly OBC-dominant (49.2%), with SC also forming nearly a quarter (23.6%), while Maharashtra reflects a more mixed distribution across ST, SC, OBC, and General categories. Delhi/NCR shows higher representation of OBC (41.7%) and SC (35.0%), with a sizeable General share (21.3%), consistent with a more socially heterogeneous profile often seen in urban/destination contexts.

2.2 Sources of Household Income in Last 12 Months

The table below summarise the different sources of household income reported in the last 12 months across states. Since this was a multiple-response question, households may report more than one income source, and totals should be interpreted as participation counts by source, not as exclusive categories.

Table 2.2: Sources of household income in last 12 months (in percentage)

	Cultivation (own farm)	Cultivation (leased-in)	Agri wage labour	Non-agri wage labour	Livestock/dairy	Non-farm self-employment	Regular salaried job	Casual wage work	Remittances	Pensions/transfers	Govt schemes (MGNREGA)	Other
Odisha	9.7	39.2	37.2	30.6	0.4	5.2	1.9	7.8	10.6	28.4	33.3	28.6
Maharashtra	10.3	0.0	9.6	11.9	17.7	19.8	15.1	19.4	12.4	5.4	6.8	0.0
Tamil Nadu	9.1	10.1	9.2	9.7	7.1	32.3	24.5	7.7	21.9	7.2	7.4	14.3
Jharkhand	13.6	43.0	13.2	5.4	5.4	19.8	13.2	21.2	2.2	0.9	3.1	14.3
Rajasthan	13.5	2.5	9.2	20.3	26.3	1.0	1.9	9.3	14.2	15.3	42.6	0.0
Chhattisgarh	15.8	1.3	4.2	14.8	7.1	4.2	22.6	25.7	0.0	30.6	6.2	0.0
Madhya Pradesh	17.5	1.3	13.4	2.0	33.1	2.1	7.5	1.1	20.2	10.4	0.6	42.9
Delhi/NCR	10.5	2.5	3.8	5.3	3.0	15.6	13.2	7.8	18.4	1.8	0.0	0.0

The income profile shows a strong dominance of farm-linked livelihoods, with cultivation on own farm appearing widely across all states, and relatively higher concentration in Madhya Pradesh (17.5%), Chhattisgarh (15.8%), Jharkhand (13.6%), and Rajasthan (13.5%). At the same time, the pattern clearly indicates that households rely on diversified income portfolios, combining agriculture with wage labour and transfer-based income streams.

Wage labour remains a major pillar of household income, particularly in Odisha, which contributes the largest share in both agricultural wage labour (37.2%) and non-agricultural wage labour (30.6%), highlighting the continuing role of daily wage-based livelihoods. Casual wage work (construction, factory, daily labour) is also prominent, especially in Chhattisgarh (25.7%), Jharkhand (21.2%), and Maharashtra (19.4%), suggesting significant dependence on informal and short-term employment in these geographies.

Livestock and dairy income is concentrated in central and western states, led by Madhya Pradesh (33.1%) and Rajasthan (26.3%), followed by Maharashtra (17.7%), indicating that animal husbandry remains a key supplementary (and sometimes primary) income source in these contexts. In contrast, Odisha contributes only 0.4% under livestock/dairy, pointing to either lower reliance on livestock-based income or lower reporting for this option in the sample.

A key highlight is the large prominence of remittance income, which is concentrated in Tamil Nadu (21.9%), Madhya Pradesh (20.2%), and Delhi/NCR (18.4%), followed by Rajasthan (14.2%) and Maharashtra (12.4%). This strongly indicates that migrant-linked household strategies are widespread, and remittances act as an important stabilising source of income alongside local work.

Finally, government schemes (MGNREGA wages) and pensions/transfers form an important secondary safety net, particularly concentrated in Rajasthan (42.6%) and Odisha (33.3%) for scheme-based wage support, and in Chhattisgarh (30.6%) and Odisha (28.4%) for pensions/transfers. Overall, the distribution suggests that a combination of self-employment, wage labour, and public transfer mechanisms remains critical to sustaining household incomes, especially for vulnerable groups and in lower-income rural settings.

2.3 Household Income Distribution (Last 12 Months)

The table below presents the self-reported total household income range for the last 12 months, disaggregated by state. Percentages are shown as row percentages, indicating the distribution of households within each state across income brackets.

Table 2.3: Total household income range in last 12 months

	<50,000	50,000– <1,00,000	1,00,000– <2,00,000	2,00,000– <3,00,000	3,00,000– <5,00,000	5,00,000+
Odisha	0.8%	11.2%	53.8%	26.3%	7.6%	0.4%
Maharashtra	25.5%	48.6%	25.1%	0.4%	0.0%	0.4%
Tamil Nadu	36.8%	51.2%	9.6%	0.8%	1.6%	0.0%
Jharkhand	0.8%	4.5%	79.7%	10.2%	3.3%	1.6%
Rajasthan	16.8%	49.6%	32.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%
Chhattisgarh	37.9%	53.8%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Madhya Pradesh	0.0%	14.2%	79.2%	6.3%	0.4%	0.0%
Delhi/NCR	0.4%	20.0%	57.5%	17.9%	4.2%	0.0%

Overall, household incomes reported in the survey are concentrated strongly within the lower and middle-income ranges. At the aggregate level, the dominant income bracket is ₹1,00,000 to less than ₹2,00,000, which accounts for 43.1% of households. This is followed by ₹50,000 to less than ₹1,00,000 (31.7%), indicating that a substantial share of households fall below the ₹1 lakh annual income threshold. A further 14.9% of households report annual incomes of less than ₹50,000, underscoring the presence of economic vulnerability within the respondent group. In contrast, only a small minority report higher incomes, with 7.7% in the ₹2,00,000 to less than ₹3,00,000 bracket, 2.1% in ₹3,00,000 to less than ₹5,00,000, and just 0.5% reporting ₹5,00,000 and above.

State-wise, the income distribution shows clear clustering patterns that suggest different livelihood and earning contexts across the sample. Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh stand out for their strong concentration in the ₹1–2 lakh range, with 79.7% and 79.2% of households respectively reporting income in this bracket, and only limited movement into higher ranges. Odisha also has a majority in the same bracket (53.8%), but shows a comparatively wider spread into higher income categories, with 26.3% reporting incomes between ₹2–3 lakh and 7.6% between ₹3–5 lakh, indicating relatively greater upward distribution within the state sample. Delhi/NCR similarly shows a more diversified spread compared to some other states, with 57.5% in ₹1–2 lakh, but also 17.9% in ₹2–3 lakh and 4.2% in ₹3–5 lakh, reflecting a higher proportion of households in upper brackets likely linked to more diversified income opportunities.

In contrast, several states show heavier concentration in the lowest income ranges, particularly Tamil Nadu and Chhattisgarh, where over half of households report annual incomes in the ₹50,000–₹1,00,000 bracket (51.2% and 53.8% respectively), along with sizable proportions below ₹50,000 (36.8% in Tamil Nadu and 37.9% in Chhattisgarh). Maharashtra and Rajasthan also display a strong concentration in the ₹50,000–₹1,00,000 bracket (48.6% and 49.6% respectively), but with relatively more households represented in the ₹1–2 lakh band compared to Tamil Nadu and Chhattisgarh. Across the dataset, the very small proportion reporting annual household income above ₹5 lakh suggests that the sample is overwhelmingly composed of households within low to modest income ranges, and that the survey captures a population segment for whom income stability and livelihood resilience remain critical concerns.

2.4 Production Asset Ownership Profile

The table below presents household ownership of key production and mobility assets (HS08) across states. Since HS08 is a multiple-response question, households may own more than one asset. Percentages are computed using the total state sample as the denominator, showing the proportion of households in each state that reported owning each asset type.

Table 2.4: Production assets owned

	Bullocks/oxen	Cows/buffalo	Goats/sheep	Tractor/ implements	Two-wheeler	Four-wheeler	Bicycle	None
Odisha	2.4%	4.0%	7.2%	0.0%	40.6%	2.4%	76.1%	16.3%
Maharashtra	6.4%	49.8%	45.0%	2.4%	80.5%	4.8%	74.9%	0.4%
Tamil Nadu	8.0%	34.0%	42.4%	0.4%	70.0%	2.8%	82.0%	8.8%
Jharkhand	29.3%	43.9%	32.9%	2.0%	36.6%	4.1%	77.2%	6.1%
Rajasthan	9.4%	62.7%	73.0%	1.6%	65.2%	3.3%	62.3%	1.2%
Chhattisgarh	9.2%	65.4%	48.8%	2.5%	33.8%	2.1%	26.3%	13.3%
Madhya Pradesh	53.8%	82.5%	89.2%	1.3%	91.3%	1.7%	93.3%	0.0%
Delhi/NCR	0.0%	34.2%	11.7%	0.4%	72.5%	0.8%	66.3%	13.8%

The asset ownership profile shows a strong dominance of basic mobility and livestock-related assets, with clear variation across states in the extent and composition of ownership. Across most states, bicycle ownership is widespread, reaching very high levels in Madhya Pradesh (93.3%), Tamil Nadu (82.0%), Jharkhand (77.2%), and Odisha (76.1%), indicating that bicycles continue to serve as a common and accessible mobility asset among sampled households. Two-wheeler ownership is also substantial in multiple states, particularly in Madhya Pradesh (91.3%), Maharashtra (80.5%), Delhi/NCR (72.5%), and Tamil Nadu (70.0%), suggesting greater household access to motorised transport in these contexts. At the same time, four-wheeler ownership remains very limited across all states, ranging from 0.8% in Delhi/NCR to 4.8% in Maharashtra, reflecting that higher-value vehicle assets are concentrated among a small minority of households.

Livestock ownership represents a major production asset base in several states. Cows/buffalo ownership is especially high in Madhya Pradesh (82.5%), Chhattisgarh (65.4%), and Rajasthan (62.7%), pointing to the continuing role of dairy and livestock systems within household livelihoods. Ownership of goats/sheep is even more concentrated in some states, led by Madhya Pradesh (89.2%) and Rajasthan (73.0%), followed by sizeable shares in Chhattisgarh (48.8%), Maharashtra (45.0%), and Tamil Nadu (42.4%), indicating that small ruminants are a widely adopted asset for supplementary income and resilience. In contrast, Odisha reports relatively low livestock ownership levels for both cows/buffalo (4.0%) and goats/sheep (7.2%), suggesting either a different livelihood profile within the sample or lower penetration of livestock-based assets among the surveyed households there.

Traditional draught assets like bullocks/oxen show sharp variation across states, peaking strongly in Madhya Pradesh (53.8%) and remaining notable in Jharkhand (29.3%), while being minimal in Odisha (2.4%) and absent in Delhi/NCR (0.0%), reflecting differences in cultivation practices and mechanisation patterns. Interestingly, ownership of tractors/implements is extremely low across all states (maximum 2.5%), indicating that even where agriculture and livestock assets are common, mechanised equipment is

not widely owned at the household level and may instead be accessed through rental/custom hiring markets. Finally, the share reporting no production assets is highest in Odisha (16.3%), Delhi/NCR (13.8%), and Chhattisgarh (13.3%), while being negligible in Madhya Pradesh (0.0%), highlighting that asset deprivation is not uniform and is concentrated more strongly in specific state contexts within the sample.

2.5 Housing Ownership Status of Households

The table below presents the ownership status of the household's current residence across states.

Table 2.5: Ownership status of house

	Own	Allotted	Rented	Provided without rent
Odisha	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Maharashtra	99.6%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%
Tamil Nadu	96.4%	3.2%	0.4%	0.0%
Jharkhand	98.4%	1.2%	0.0%	0.4%
Rajasthan	99.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Chhattisgarh	99.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Madhya Pradesh	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Delhi/NCR	97.9%	0.0%	2.1%	0.0%

The housing ownership profile across the surveyed households is overwhelmingly characterised by owner-occupied housing, with 98.9% of households at the overall level reporting that they own their house. All other forms of housing arrangement, such as allotted accommodation, rented housing, or housing provided without rent, are extremely limited in the sample, together accounting for just over one percent of responses. This pattern suggests that the respondent population is largely drawn from settings where house ownership is the dominant norm, and where dependence on rental markets or institutional housing arrangements is relatively uncommon.

At the state level, the dominance of ownership is consistent and near-universal. Odisha and Madhya Pradesh report 100% ownership, indicating that all sampled households in these states reside in houses they own. Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh also show similarly high levels of ownership at 99.6%, with only marginal representation of other housing types. Tamil Nadu shows the lowest proportion of ownership among the states at 96.4%, largely because a small share of households report living in allotted housing (3.2%), suggesting slightly higher linkage to government or employer-provided housing arrangements compared to other states. Delhi/NCR, while still strongly ownership-dominant at 97.9%, stands out for having the highest reported share of rented housing (2.1%), which is expected given the greater prevalence of rental accommodation in more urban or semi-urban environments. Overall, the results indicate that across states, the surveyed population is largely stable in terms of housing tenure, with only a very small minority relying on non-owned housing arrangements.

2.6 Dwelling Type of Households

The table below presents the type of dwelling structure reported by households across states.

Table 2.6: Dwelling type

	Semi-pucca	Pucca	Kuchha	Makeshift/temporary
Odisha	19.9%	69.3%	10.8%	0.0%
Maharashtra	53.4%	35.5%	11.2%	0.0%
Tamil Nadu	52.8%	39.6%	7.6%	0.0%
Jharkhand	44.7%	25.2%	29.7%	0.4%
Rajasthan	70.1%	9.4%	20.1%	0.4%
Chhattisgarh	23.8%	3.8%	72.5%	0.0%
Madhya Pradesh	70.8%	10.0%	19.2%	0.0%
Delhi/NCR	25.0%	67.9%	6.7%	0.4%

The dwelling type distribution indicates that housing conditions in the sample are largely concentrated in semi-pucca (45.1%) and pucca (32.8%) structures, while a substantial segment still resides in kuchha dwellings (22.0%). Makeshift or temporary housing is negligible at 0.2%, suggesting that extreme housing vulnerability of this kind is rare within the surveyed households. Overall, the pattern reflects mixed housing quality, with a considerable proportion of households living in dwellings that are either partially durable (semi-pucca) or fully durable (pucca), alongside a significant minority living in structurally weaker housing.

State-wise patterns show sharp differences in dwelling quality. Odisha and Delhi/NCR display the strongest concentration of pucca houses, with 69.3% and 67.9% respectively, indicating relatively better-quality dwelling structures among households in these state samples. In contrast, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu are dominated by semi-pucca housing, with over half of households reporting this dwelling type (53.4% and 52.8% respectively), while pucca housing remains comparatively lower. Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh show an even stronger reliance on semi-pucca housing, at 70.1% and 70.8%, with relatively limited pucca housing, suggesting that households in these states may be living in dwellings that are partially durable but not fully upgraded to permanent structures.

The most pronounced housing vulnerability appears in Chhattisgarh, where 72.5% of households report living in kuchha dwellings, and pucca housing is extremely low at 3.8%. Jharkhand also shows notable vulnerability, with nearly one-third of households in kuchha dwellings (29.7%), combined with a relatively lower share of pucca houses (25.2%). Across the dataset, these differences highlight that while some states show a stronger shift towards durable housing, others continue to reflect substantial reliance on kuchha and semi-pucca structures, which may have implications for exposure to climate stress, health risks, and overall living conditions.

2.7 Toilet Access and Sanitation Facility

The table below presents the type of toilet facility used by households across states.

Table 2.7: Toilet facility

	Household private	Open defecation	Shared	Community toilet
Odisha	43.4%	49.0%	1.6%	6.0%
Maharashtra	81.3%	14.3%	4.0%	0.4%
Tamil Nadu	49.6%	41.6%	8.8%	0.0%
Jharkhand	54.1%	43.5%	0.8%	1.6%
Rajasthan	79.5%	18.9%	1.6%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	10.4%	88.8%	0.4%	0.4%

Madhya Pradesh	89.6%	10.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Delhi/NCR	90.8%	8.3%	0.0%	0.8%

The sanitation profile indicates a mixed but concerning picture across the sample. Overall, 62.3% of households report access to a private household toilet, while a substantial 34.4% still report open defecation as their primary sanitation practice. The proportion relying on shared toilets (2.2%) or community toilets (1.2%) is relatively small, suggesting that sanitation access in these settings is largely polarised between households with private facilities and those without access to any toilet at all. This distribution highlights a significant sanitation gap, with implications for public health, safety, and dignity, particularly for women, children, and elderly household members.

State-wise results show sharp contrasts in toilet access. Delhi/NCR (90.8%) and Madhya Pradesh (89.6%) report the highest levels of private toilet access, with correspondingly low open defecation rates of 8.3% and 10.4% respectively, indicating comparatively stronger sanitation coverage in these state samples. Maharashtra (81.3%) and Rajasthan (79.5%) also show high reliance on household private toilets, though open defecation remains notable at 14.3% and 18.9%, reflecting incomplete sanitation uptake even where private facility access appears dominant.

In contrast, sanitation deprivation is most extreme in Chhattisgarh, where only 10.4% of households report having private toilets and an overwhelming 88.8% report open defecation. This makes Chhattisgarh a clear outlier and suggests structural gaps in sanitation access or persistent barriers to toilet construction and use. Odisha, Jharkhand, and Tamil Nadu show intermediate but still highly concerning patterns. In Odisha, open defecation is the dominant practice (49.0%) despite 43.4% reporting private toilets, while Jharkhand reflects a similar split with 54.1% having private toilets and 43.5% practising open defecation. Tamil Nadu also reports high levels of open defecation (41.6%) alongside 49.6% private toilet access and stands out for having the highest reliance on shared toilets (8.8%), indicating greater dependence on collective sanitation arrangements in certain pockets. Overall, these differences suggest that while some states have reached near-universal private toilet coverage, others continue to face deep sanitation deficits that will require both infrastructure strengthening and behaviour change support to reduce open defecation sustainably.

2.8 Ration Card Ownership and Access

The table below presents the status of ration card ownership (among households across states).

Table 2.8: Ration card ownership status

	Yes – in household member's name	No	Yes – other relative's name	Don't know
Odisha	93.6%	3.2%	3.2%	0.0%
Maharashtra	99.6%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Tamil Nadu	74.4%	4.4%	17.6%	3.6%
Jharkhand	82.1%	7.7%	9.8%	0.4%
Rajasthan	96.7%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	96.3%	2.1%	1.7%	0.0%
Madhya Pradesh	97.9%	1.7%	0.0%	0.4%
Delhi/NCR	83.8%	15.0%	0.0%	1.3%

The data indicates that ration card coverage is generally high across the surveyed households, with 90.5% reporting that they have a ration card in the name of a household member. However, a small but important

minority remains either without a ration card (4.7%), dependent on a ration card held in the name of another relative (4.1%), or uncertain about their status (0.7%). Taken together, this suggests that while formal PDS documentation is widely present among surveyed households, there are still gaps in direct household-level entitlement ownership and clarity, which may affect regular access to subsidised food support.

State-wise, ration card access shows both strong coverage and important variations in how households hold entitlements. Maharashtra shows near-universal coverage, with 99.6% of households having a ration card in their own household member's name and only 0.4% reporting no ration card. Madhya Pradesh (97.9%), Rajasthan (96.7%), Chhattisgarh (96.3%), and Odisha (93.6%) also demonstrate high levels of ration card ownership within households, indicating relatively stable and direct access to PDS-linked identity documentation in these states.

In contrast, Tamil Nadu and Jharkhand show comparatively lower shares of household-held ration cards and higher reliance on alternative arrangements. Tamil Nadu reports the lowest proportion of ration cards in a household member's name (74.4%) and stands out with 17.6% of households reporting that the ration card exists in the name of another relative, indicating a significant share of households whose entitlements may be mediated through extended family linkages rather than direct household ownership. Jharkhand shows a similar but less pronounced pattern, with 82.1% holding ration cards in the household name and 9.8% dependent on a relative's ration card, alongside 7.7% reporting no ration card, reflecting a higher level of documentation exclusion compared to several other states. Delhi/NCR stands out primarily due to the highest reported share of households with no ration card (15.0%), despite 83.8% reporting ownership in a household member's name, suggesting that ration card inclusion and portability challenges may be more significant in this setting. Overall, the findings highlight that while ration card coverage is strong in most states, a meaningful subset of households—especially in Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand, and Delhi/NCR—face either exclusion, reliance on relatives' documentation, or uncertain entitlement status, which can directly affect food security and welfare access.

2.9 Type of Ration Card Held

The table below presents the type of ration card held by households who reported having a ration card.

Table 2.9: Type of ration card

	BPL	APL	Antyodaya/NFSA	Other (Specify)
Odisha	77.6%	16.8%	5.6%	0.0%
Maharashtra	77.4%	12.8%	9.9%	0.0%
Tamil Nadu	79.2%	8.5%	12.3%	0.0%
Jharkhand	45.1%	0.4%	54.5%	0.0%
Rajasthan	95.7%	0.0%	4.3%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	67.8%	13.9%	18.3%	0.0%
Madhya Pradesh	91.6%	7.1%	0.9%	0.4%
Delhi/NCR	22.4%	77.1%	0.5%	0.0%

The distribution of ration card types shows that the survey population is largely covered under food-security linked categories, with a strong dominance of BPL cards (70.5%) across the overall sample. This is followed by APL cards (16.0%), while Antyodaya/NFSA cards account for 13.5%, indicating that a sizeable segment of households falls under the most vulnerable entitlement category. The "Other" category is negligible at 0.1%, suggesting that almost all reported ration cards fit within the standard classification framework used in the survey.

State-level patterns indicate clear differences in the structure of entitlement coverage. Most states show BPL as the dominant category, particularly Rajasthan (95.7%) and Madhya Pradesh (91.6%), where ration

card ownership is overwhelmingly concentrated in BPL-linked coverage. Odisha (77.6%), Maharashtra (77.4%), and Tamil Nadu (79.2%) also show similarly high BPL proportions, reflecting broad targeting of subsidised food entitlements among surveyed households. At the same time, Antyodaya/NFSA coverage varies substantially, reaching its highest level in Jharkhand (54.5%), where it exceeds the BPL share (45.1%), indicating that a majority of cardholders in Jharkhand fall under the most vulnerable category. Chhattisgarh also reports a notable Antyodaya/NFSA share at 18.3%, alongside a sizeable BPL base (67.8%), suggesting relatively higher representation of priority households in entitlement coverage.

In contrast, Delhi/NCR shows a distinctly different pattern, where APL cards form the overwhelming majority (77.1%), while BPL coverage is relatively low (22.4%) and Antyodaya/NFSA is almost absent (0.5%). This suggests that among ration card holders in Delhi/NCR, entitlement classification is largely concentrated in the APL segment, which may reflect urban classification patterns, portability issues, or differences in the socio-economic profile of households holding cards in this setting. Overall, the findings indicate that while BPL cards form the backbone of ration card coverage in most surveyed states, there are important exceptions, especially Jharkhand and Delhi/NCR, where entitlement composition differs sharply, with potential implications for household food security and access to subsidised support.

2.10 Access to MGNREGA Job Card and Recent Usage

The table below presents whether households possess an MGNREGA job card and whether it was used in the last 12 months.

Table 2.10: MGNREGA job card ownership and usage

	No	Yes – not used	Yes – used in last 12 months
Odisha	37.8%	33.9%	28.3%
Maharashtra	76.1%	9.2%	14.7%
Tamil Nadu	44.0%	50.4%	5.6%
Jharkhand	15.4%	65.4%	19.1%
Rajasthan	33.2%	25.0%	41.8%
Chhattisgarh	40.0%	52.5%	7.5%
Madhya Pradesh	93.8%	3.3%	2.9%
Delhi/NCR	98.3%	1.7%	0.0%

The results indicate that MGNREGA job card coverage and usage varies widely across states, and overall utilisation remains relatively limited. At the aggregate level, 54.6% of households report that they do not have an MGNREGA job card, while 30.3% report having a job card that was not used, and only 15.1% report that the job card was used in the last 12 months. This implies that even where job cards exist, a significant share of households are not translating this access into employment, signalling potential barriers related to demand for work, availability of worksites, delays in wage payments, administrative constraints, or seasonal migration that may reduce participation.

State-level patterns show sharp contrasts in both coverage and actual use. Rajasthan stands out with the highest reported utilisation, where 41.8% of households report using MGNREGA in the last 12 months, and only 33.2% report not having a job card. This suggests relatively stronger programme reach and operational uptake in the state sample. Odisha also shows comparatively higher engagement, with 28.3% reporting recent usage and an additional 33.9% holding a job card but not using it, indicating both meaningful participation and a substantial latent potential pool if barriers to work demand or provision can be addressed. Jharkhand displays high job card coverage, with only 15.4% reporting no card; however, most

households fall under the “yes, not used” category (65.4%), while 19.1% report actual use, suggesting that possession does not necessarily translate into employment access or willingness to participate.

In contrast, multiple states show low utilisation despite substantial cardholding. Tamil Nadu and Chhattisgarh have more than half of households reporting a job card that was not used (50.4% and 52.5% respectively), while actual use remains limited at 5.6% in Tamil Nadu and 7.5% in Chhattisgarh. This points to a significant gap between programme access and practical engagement, possibly reflecting reliance on alternative wage opportunities, migration-linked livelihoods, or constraints in work availability and implementation. Maharashtra shows relatively low coverage, with 76.1% reporting no job card, and only 14.7% reporting recent use, suggesting weaker inclusion of households under the programme in this state sample. The lowest levels of access and use appear in Madhya Pradesh and Delhi/NCR, where the overwhelming majority report not having a job card (93.8% and 98.3% respectively) and usage is negligible (2.9% in Madhya Pradesh and 0% in Delhi/NCR). Overall, the findings indicate that while MGNREGA remains an important income security mechanism in certain states, large gaps persist across others, both in terms of card coverage and the ability of households to convert entitlement access into actual employment in the recent period.

2.11 Household Outstanding Loan/Debt Status

The table below presents whether households currently have any outstanding loan or debt (HS16) across states.

Table 2.11: Presence of outstanding household loan/debt

	No outstanding loan/debt	Yes outstanding loan/debt
Odisha	78.9%	21.1%
Maharashtra	64.9%	35.1%
Tamil Nadu	64.0%	36.0%
Jharkhand	71.1%	28.9%
Rajasthan	63.5%	36.5%
Chhattisgarh	95.0%	5.0%
Madhya Pradesh	67.1%	32.9%
Delhi/NCR	82.5%	17.5%

The results indicate that a majority of surveyed households report no current outstanding debt, but a sizeable minority remains financially leveraged through loans or unpaid borrowings. At the aggregate level, 73.3% of households report no outstanding loan/debt, while 26.7% report that they currently have outstanding debt. This suggests that debt exposure is not universal across the sample but remains significant enough to be an important factor influencing household financial security, coping capacity during shocks, and ability to invest in livelihoods, health, or education.

State-wise patterns show meaningful variation in debt prevalence. Rajasthan (36.5%), Tamil Nadu (36.0%), and Maharashtra (35.1%) show the highest shares of households reporting outstanding debt, indicating relatively greater dependence on borrowing or credit cycles in these state samples. Madhya Pradesh (32.9%) also has a substantial proportion of indebted households, while Jharkhand (28.9%) sits closer to the overall average. In contrast, Odisha (21.1%) and Delhi/NCR (17.5%) report comparatively lower levels of outstanding debt, suggesting either reduced access to formal or informal credit, stronger reliance on non-credit coping strategies, or differences in livelihood financing patterns in these settings. Chhattisgarh stands out sharply, with only 5.0% of households reporting outstanding debt, indicating very low reported debt exposure compared to all other states. Overall, the findings suggest that while most households are not

currently indebted, debt remains a prominent feature of household financial life in several states, particularly Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra, where over one-third of households report ongoing loan burdens.

2.12 Main Sources of Household Credit

The table below presents the main creditors reported by households across states. Since this is a multiple-response question, households may report more than one creditor type.

Table 2.12: Main creditor(s)

	Money lender	Contractor/agent	Bank	SHG	Microfinance	Friends/relatives
Odisha	0.0%	0.4%	0.8%	17.1%	2.4%	1.2%
Maharashtra	0.4%	1.6%	5.2%	3.2%	0.0%	27.1%
Tamil Nadu	4.4%	3.2%	6.4%	11.2%	4.4%	23.2%
Jharkhand	0.4%	0.0%	7.3%	18.3%	3.7%	15.9%
Rajasthan	0.0%	1.6%	7.8%	4.1%	0.4%	26.2%
Chhattisgarh	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	2.1%	0.0%	0.4%
Madhya Pradesh	7.9%	0.0%	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%	19.6%
Delhi/NCR	2.1%	0.0%	12.9%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%

The credit profile indicates that household borrowing is dominated by a combination of informal sources (friends/relatives, money lenders) and institutional/community-linked channels (banks and SHGs), with notable variation across states. Among the listed creditor categories, friends and relatives emerge as the most widely reported source of credit, particularly in Maharashtra (27.1%), Rajasthan (26.2%), and Tamil Nadu (23.2%), with Madhya Pradesh also showing a substantial reliance (19.6%). This pattern suggests that for a significant proportion of households, immediate borrowing needs are met through social networks, likely due to ease of access, flexible repayment expectations, and lower transaction barriers compared to formal credit systems.

Formal bank credit appears present but relatively moderate in most states, with the highest reporting in Delhi/NCR (12.9%), followed by Rajasthan (7.8%), Jharkhand (7.3%), and Tamil Nadu (6.4%), while Odisha shows very limited bank-linked borrowing at 0.8%. At the same time, SHGs play a particularly important role in certain states, especially Jharkhand (18.3%) and Odisha (17.1%), followed by Tamil Nadu (11.2%). This highlights the continued relevance of group-based finance mechanisms in enabling access to credit in states where SHG systems are relatively active or embedded in local livelihood structures. Microfinance borrowing is reported by smaller proportions overall, with some visibility in Tamil Nadu (4.4%), Jharkhand (3.7%), and Odisha (2.4%), suggesting that microfinance institutions are present but not the dominant creditor source for most households in the sample.

Moneylender dependence is generally low across states but is more visible in Madhya Pradesh (7.9%) and Tamil Nadu (4.4%), and to a smaller extent in Delhi/NCR (2.1%). While these proportions may appear modest, they are important because moneylender borrowing often reflects higher-cost or distress-driven credit needs. Borrowing from contractors/agents is limited overall, with small reporting shares concentrated in Maharashtra (1.6%), Tamil Nadu (3.2%), and Rajasthan (1.6%), indicating that this channel is not a major source of household credit in most states. Overall, the findings suggest that household credit access remains highly dependent on informal networks and SHG-based mechanisms in many contexts, with bank borrowing present but not dominant, and moneylender use concentrated in a few state settings where households may face constraints in accessing safer and lower-cost credit alternatives.

2.13 Household Access to Bank Accounts

The table below presents whether any household member has a bank account, disaggregated by state.

Table 2.13: Bank account ownership status

	Yes – multiple accounts	Yes – at least one	No
Odisha	86.9%	0.8%	12.4%
Maharashtra	32.3%	66.5%	1.2%
Tamil Nadu	95.2%	4.8%	0.0%
Jharkhand	71.1%	27.2%	1.6%
Rajasthan	62.7%	36.9%	0.4%
Chhattisgarh	92.9%	6.7%	0.4%
Madhya Pradesh	72.1%	27.9%	0.0%
Delhi/NCR	68.8%	29.2%	2.1%
Group Total	72.7%	25.0%	2.3%

The results indicate that access to formal banking is very high across the surveyed households, with an overwhelming majority reporting that at least one household member has a bank account. At the overall level, 72.7% of households report having multiple bank accounts, while 25.0% report having at least one bank account, and only 2.3% report having no bank account. This suggests that financial inclusion through banking access is widespread within the sample, and that many households have moved beyond basic account ownership towards a more diversified pattern of banking access, potentially linked to multiple earners, welfare transfers, remittances, or account requirements for service access.

State-wise patterns show near-universal inclusion in most settings, but with important differences in whether households report a single account versus multiple accounts, and a small but meaningful presence of exclusion in some states. Tamil Nadu (95.2%) and Chhattisgarh (92.9%) show the highest proportions of households reporting multiple bank accounts, indicating deep banking penetration and likely higher reliance on formal financial channels. Odisha also reports a high level of multiple-account ownership (86.9%) but stands out due to a comparatively higher share of households reporting no bank account (12.4%), which is far above the overall average and significantly higher than any other state in the sample. This indicates that while a large majority in Odisha are well-connected to banking systems, a substantial minority remains excluded and may face difficulties accessing formal transfers, savings mechanisms, or institutional credit.

Other states show a more balanced distribution between “multiple accounts” and “at least one account.” Maharashtra is a clear example, where the majority of households fall under the “yes — at least one” category (66.5%) and only 32.3% report multiple accounts, suggesting that while banking access is widespread, account proliferation within households is more limited. Rajasthan similarly shows a relatively high share with at least one account (36.9%) alongside 62.7% with multiple accounts, while Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Delhi/NCR show a comparable split, indicating broad coverage with moderate depth of account ownership. Overall, these findings reflect strong progress in financial inclusion across the sample, while also highlighting that the degree of inclusion and household-level banking depth varies by state, with Odisha showing the most pronounced pocket of banking exclusion despite otherwise strong penetration.

2.14 Use of Bank Accounts for Receiving Salary/Remittances

The table below shows whether households that reported having bank accounts also use them to receive salary or remittances.

Table 2.14: Bank accounts used to receive salary/remittances

	Yes	No	Don't know
Tamil Nadu	99.6%	0.4%	0.0%
Maharashtra	89.1%	8.1%	2.8%
Rajasthan	95.1%	4.9%	0.0%
Jharkhand	75.2%	22.3%	2.5%
Madhya Pradesh	98.3%	1.3%	0.4%
Chhattisgarh	98.7%	0.8%	0.4%
Delhi/NCR	91.5%	8.5%	0.0%
Odisha	87.3%	11.4%	1.4%
Group Total	91.9%	7.1%	0.9%

The findings indicate that for most households with bank accounts, these accounts are actively being used as channels for receiving salary or remittance income. At the aggregate level, 91.9% of households report using bank accounts for salary/remittance receipts, while 7.1% report that their bank accounts are not used for this purpose, and 0.9% are unsure. This overall pattern suggests that banking access is not merely nominal but is linked to functional usage, reinforcing the role of bank accounts as key infrastructure for household income flows, particularly in contexts of wage employment, remittances, and direct benefit transfers.

State-wise results highlight consistently high utilisation in most states, but with important differences in the share of households reporting non-use. Tamil Nadu (99.6%), Chhattisgarh (98.7%), and Madhya Pradesh (98.3%) show near-universal use of bank accounts for receiving salary/remittances, indicating strong functional linkage between banking access and income receipt mechanisms. Rajasthan (95.1%) and Delhi/NCR (91.5%) also show high usage, suggesting that banking systems are closely integrated with earnings and transfer channels for a large majority of households.

However, lower functional usage is observed in Odisha (87.3%) and especially Jharkhand (75.2%), where a comparatively large proportion of households report not using bank accounts for salary/remittance receipt (11.4% in Odisha and 22.3% in Jharkhand). This suggests that in these settings, households may still rely more heavily on cash-based wage payments, informal remittance channels, or intermediated transfer mechanisms, or may have accounts that are opened but not actively used for regular income transactions. Maharashtra presents a mid-level pattern, with 89.1% reporting use and 8.1% reporting non-use, along with a small but visible level of uncertainty (2.8%). Overall, the results underline strong progress in functional financial inclusion across most states, while also pointing to specific contexts—particularly Jharkhand and Odisha—where converting bank account access into consistent transactional usage remains a key gap.

Chapter 3

Migrant at place of destination

SECTION 1: MIGRATION HISTORY AND PATTERNS

3.1 Primary Occupation Before Migration

Patterns of migration are closely linked to the structure and stability of local livelihoods in migrants' places of origin. Examining the primary occupation individuals were engaged in before migrating helps illuminate the economic pressures, employment constraints, and sectoral vulnerabilities that shape migration decisions. Differences in occupational backgrounds across states reflect varying levels of agrarian dependence, non-farm employment opportunities, and exposure to labour market risks. Understanding these pre-migration livelihood profiles is therefore essential for interpreting the nature of migration—whether it is driven by agrarian distress, informal labour insecurity, industrial employment shocks, or limited opportunities for local economic mobility.

Table 3.1: Primary Occupation when not Migrating

	Maharashtra	Tamil Nadu	Delhi / NCR
Cultivator (owner)	49.00%	24.80%	50.00%
Non-agriculture labour (construction etc.)	7.60%	35.20%	9.60%
Agricultural wage labourer	17.10%	5.60%	18.30%
Factory/mill worker	14.70%	6.00%	3.30%
Services / shop / security	4.00%	7.20%	1.70%
Student / homemaker	0.80%	4.00%	7.10%
Unemployed	4.80%	2.00%	2.10%
Animal husbandry / dairy	–	5.20%	2.50%
Domestic work	–	5.20%	1.30%
Cultivating leased-in land only	0.80%	0.80%	2.50%
Self-employed non-farm	0.40%	2.40%	0.40%
Transport / market	0.80%	0.80%	1.30%
Other	–	0.80%	–

The table shows clear state-level differences in the occupational backgrounds of migrants, indicating that migration is shaped by distinct livelihood constraints rather than a uniform set of push factors.

Maharashtra and Delhi/NCR display more mixed livelihood profiles, with substantial shares of migrants originating from both cultivation and agricultural wage labour. This reflects greater agrarian differentiation, where land ownership does not necessarily translate into livelihood security and migration functions as a supplementary income strategy. The presence of factory and mill workers among migrants to these states further indicates that migration is also linked to instability in secondary-sector employment rather than agriculture alone.

Tamil Nadu stands out for the predominance of non-agricultural labour among migrants prior to migration, highlighting a context where rural households are already embedded in informal non-farm labour markets. Migration in this case appears less driven by agrarian distress and more by the insecurity and low returns associated with casual non-agricultural work, alongside limited opportunities for upward mobility within local labour markets.

Overall, these patterns underline that migration pathways are closely tied to state-specific livelihood structures.

3.2 Migration Classification of the Current Trip

Migration is not a uniform phenomenon; it varies in duration, frequency, and intent depending on household livelihood strategies and regional economic conditions. Classifying migration by its temporal nature, whether seasonal, circular, semi-permanent, or permanent, helps distinguish between coping-driven mobility and longer-term livelihood transitions. Examining these patterns across states provides insight into how migrants engage with destination labour markets, maintain ties with their place of origin, and manage economic risk over time.

Table 3.2: Types of migration undertaken

	Seasonal (returns in > 3 months)	Semi- permanent	Circular / recurring (irregular)	Seasonal (returns in < 3 months)	Permanent
Maharashtra	31.5%	19.5%	16.7%	31.5%	0.8%
Tamil Nadu	48.0%	12.0%	36.4%	2.4%	1.2%
Delhi / NCR	39.2%	50.0%	2.9%	0.4%	7.5%

The classification of migration by duration reveals strong state-specific patterns, underscoring that migration is shaped by differing livelihood constraints and degrees of attachment to origin areas. Maharashtra shows a more evenly distributed pattern across seasonal, semi-permanent, and circular migration. The near-equal split between short- and longer-duration seasonal migration points to flexible migration strategies, where households alternate between agricultural activities at home and wage employment elsewhere. The presence of semi-permanent and circular migration further suggests experimentation with longer stays at destinations while retaining strong ties to the village.

Tamil Nadu is characterised by a high prevalence of long-duration seasonal and circular migration, together accounting for the vast majority of cases. This reflects a context in which migrants are repeatedly engaging with destination labour markets over extended periods, likely due to the availability of informal non-farm employment that offers continuity but limited security. The very small share of short-duration seasonal migration indicates that migration here is less about temporary coping and more about sustaining livelihoods through repeated mobility.

Delhi/NCR stands out for its dominance of semi-permanent migration, alongside the highest share of permanent migration among all states. This pattern suggests stronger labour market absorption at the destination, particularly in construction, services, and other urban informal sectors, enabling migrants to extend stays or transition into longer-term residence. The low incidence of circular and short-term seasonal migration implies reduced reliance on cyclical movement and a gradual weakening of dependence on origin-based livelihoods.

3.3 Frequency of Migration Trips in the Last Three Years

The number of migration trips undertaken over time provides insight into whether migration is episodic, cyclical, or embedded as a routine livelihood strategy. Frequent trips point to entrenched dependence on migration for income generation, while fewer or one-time trips may reflect recent entry into migration or short-term coping responses to shocks. Examining trip frequency across states helps distinguish between established migration systems and emerging or distress-driven mobility patterns.

Table 3.3: Number of migration trips in the last three years

	4–6 times	2–3 times	>6 times	Once	First time
Maharashtra	31.5%	43.4%	20.7%	3.6%	0.8%
Tamil Nadu	30.4%	29.2%	16.8%	10.8%	12.8%
Delhi / NCR	35.8%	14.6%	48.8%	0.4%	0.4%

The frequency of migration trips reveals clear differences in how deeply migration is embedded within household livelihood strategies across states. Delhi/NCR stands out for its very high proportion of migrants who have undertaken more than six trips in the last three years, indicating a highly entrenched and repetitive migration pattern. This suggests strong and sustained integration with destination labour markets, where migration is no longer episodic but a routine and reliable source of income. The near absence of first-time or one-off migrants further reinforces the maturity of migration networks linked to this region.

Maharashtra also displays a well-established migration system, though with a more balanced distribution across moderate and high frequencies. The concentration of migrants in the two-to-three and four-to-six trip categories indicates cyclical migration tied to seasonal or sector-specific employment opportunities, rather than continuous movement. This pattern suggests migration functioning as a stabilising supplement to local livelihoods, particularly agriculture, rather than a complete shift away from the place of origin.

Tamil Nadu presents a comparatively more heterogeneous profile. While a substantial share of migrants report repeated trips, the state also has the highest proportion of first-time and one-time migrants among all states. This mix indicates both long-standing migration pathways and new entrants, suggesting expanding migration driven by recent labour market pressures in non-agricultural and informal sectors. The presence of a sizable cohort of newer migrants points to a more dynamic and evolving migration landscape.

3.4 Duration of Stay Away During the Current Migration Trip

The length of time migrants remain away from their place of origin during a given trip provides important insight into the nature of migration—whether it is short-term and seasonal, medium-term and semi-stable, or approaching long-term separation from the household. Duration of stay reflects both the structure of employment at destination and the strength of continued ties with the place of origin. Examining these patterns across states helps clarify how migration fits into household livelihood strategies and the degree to which migrants are embedded in destination labour markets.

Table 3.4: Current months away

	1–2 months	3–5 months	6–8 months	9–11 months	12+ months
Maharashtra	6.4%	63.3%	27.1%	1.6%	1.6%
Tamil Nadu	26.0%	55.2%	15.6%	2.4%	0.8%
Delhi / NCR	26.7%	47.9%	18.3%	7.1%	—

The duration of time spent away during the current migration trip shows clear differences in how migration is organised and sustained across states. In Maharashtra, migration is predominantly medium-term, with nearly two-thirds of migrants staying away for three to five months and another quarter remaining for six to eight months. This pattern is characteristic of seasonal and semi-seasonal migration, where migrants are closely tied to agricultural cycles and return home periodically, indicating migration as a supplementary livelihood strategy rather than long-term relocation.

Tamil Nadu exhibits a more mixed duration profile. While the majority of migrants remain away for three to five months, a substantial share report short stays of one to two months, suggesting more frequent but

shorter migration spells. This pattern aligns with circular and recurrent migration linked to informal non-farm employment, where work opportunities may be fragmented and require repeated movement rather than prolonged stays at destination.

Delhi/NCR shows comparatively longer durations of stay, with a notable proportion of migrants remaining away for nine to eleven months. Alongside significant shares staying for three to five and six to eight months, this indicates stronger integration with destination labour markets and greater stability of employment. The longer stays suggest reduced reliance on seasonal return and a gradual shift toward semi-permanent migration arrangements.

3.5 Travel Companions During Migration

Who migrants travel with provides important insight into the social organisation of migration, the degree of household involvement, and levels of dependence on intermediaries such as contractors or agents. Travelling alone may indicate individualised and experience-based migration, while travelling with family members reflects deeper household-level livelihood strategies and longer or more stable migration arrangements. Group travel through contractors or agents, on the other hand, points to mediated labour recruitment and potentially higher vulnerability.

Table 3.5: Travel companions

	Alone	With other adult HH members	With spouse	With children	Contractor / agent crew	Other
Maharashtra	35.9%	29.6%	18.2%	13.1%	3.3%	—
Tamil Nadu	30.4%	35.8%	2.6%	2.8%	26.1%	2.3%
Delhi / NCR	44.0%	10.1%	24.4%	20.2%	1.0%	0.3%

The row-wise distribution of travel companions reveals clear differences in the social organisation and maturity of migration systems across states. In Maharashtra, migration is strongly household-linked, with a large share of migrants travelling with other adult household members, spouses, or children. While individual migration remains important, the substantial presence of family-based travel suggests migration that is relatively stable and planned, often integrated into broader household livelihood strategies rather than being purely individual or distress-driven.

Tamil Nadu displays a markedly different pattern, characterised by the highest reliance on contractor or agent-led travel. Over a quarter of migrants to the state travel as part of contractor crews, reflecting structured labour recruitment into construction, manufacturing, and service sectors. At the same time, the relatively low incidence of spouse or child accompaniment indicates migration that is work-centric and mediated, with households remaining largely at the place of origin. This combination points to a labour market-driven migration system with higher exposure to intermediary control.

Delhi/NCR stands out for its strong mix of individual and family migration. A large share of migrants travel alone, but this is closely followed by substantial proportions travelling with spouses and children. This pattern is consistent with longer durations of stay and semi-permanent migration arrangements observed earlier, suggesting deeper integration into destination labour markets and partial household relocation rather than short-term or purely seasonal movement.

SECTION 2: RECRUITMENT AND AGENT SPECIFICS

3.6 Recruitment Channels Used for Migration

Recruitment channels play a critical role in shaping migrants' access to employment, the costs and risks they face, and their bargaining power at destination. Whether migrants are recruited through personal networks, labour agents, direct employers, or self-initiated search reflects both the maturity of migration systems and the degree of intermediation in labour markets. Examining recruitment patterns across states helps identify where migration is primarily network-driven, where it is mediated by agents, and where migrants exercise greater autonomy in accessing work.

Table 3.6: Person who recruited the migrant

	Friend / relative	Agent based at destination	Self	Direct employer	Agent from origin	Other
Maharashtra	53.4%	20.7%	17.5%	4.4%	4.0%	—
Tamil Nadu	31.6%	17.6%	14.8%	27.2%	8.4%	0.4%
Delhi / NCR	47.1%	32.9%	10.8%	6.7%	2.5%	—

3.7 Payment of Recruitment Fees or Use of Loans/Advances for the Current Migration Trip

Whether migrants incur recruitment fees or rely on loans or advances to finance migration is a critical indicator of economic vulnerability and exposure to debt-linked migration risks. The need to borrow or pay fees often reflects mediated recruitment, weak bargaining power, and constrained access to upfront resources. Examining these patterns across states helps identify where migration is largely self-financed and where it may be associated with financial precarity even before migrants reach their destination.

Table 3.7: Whether any recruitment fee paid and/or loan or advance taken

	No	Arranged via loan / advance	Yes
Maharashtra	94.8%	—	5.2%
Tamil Nadu	82.4%	15.6%	2.0%
Delhi / NCR	100.0%	—	—

The table indicates that, across most states, migration is predominantly undertaken without the payment of recruitment fees or reliance on loans or advances, suggesting relatively low upfront financial barriers for the majority of migrants. In Delhi/NCR, all reported migration occurs without any form of recruitment-related payment or borrowing. This pattern aligns with earlier evidence of network-driven or self-initiated migration in these states, where access to work is mediated through social connections or repeated engagement with familiar destinations rather than through fee-charging intermediaries.

Maharashtra shows a small but notable deviation from this pattern, with just over five percent of migrants reporting having paid a recruitment fee. While the overall incidence remains low, this suggests the presence of pockets of mediated recruitment where migrants may face additional financial risk prior to departure. Given Maharashtra's diversified recruitment channels observed earlier, this likely reflects selective reliance on agents in specific sectors or destinations rather than a systemic dependence on paid recruitment.

Tamil Nadu stands out as the state with the highest reliance on loans or advances to finance migration. More than one in six migrants to the state report arranging their trip through borrowing, indicating greater exposure to debt-linked migration. This pattern is consistent with the state's higher prevalence of contractor-

and agent-mediated recruitment and suggests that even when explicit recruitment fees are uncommon, migrants may still depend on advances to cover travel or subsistence costs. Such arrangements can increase vulnerability by tying migrants to employers or agents through implicit repayment obligations.

3.8 Documentation of Recruitment Fees, by State

Whether recruitment fees are formally recorded in writing is an important indicator of transparency and accountability in migration-related transactions. Written documentation can offer migrants some degree of protection by clarifying the amount paid and the terms involved, while the absence of records often reflects informal arrangements that increase vulnerability and limit avenues for redress. Examining this aspect across states helps assess the extent to which recruitment-related financial transactions are formalised or remain opaque.

Table 3.8: Whether recruitment fee recorded in writing

	No	Yes	DK / CS
Tamil Nadu	88.6%	11.4%	–
Maharashtra	92.3%	–	7.7%

The table shows that even in states where some migrants reported paying recruitment fees, formal documentation of these payments is rare. In Tamil Nadu, fewer than one in eight migrants who paid a fee reported that it was recorded in writing, while the vast majority indicated that no written record existed. This suggests that recruitment-related payments are largely informal, despite the state's relatively higher exposure to agent- and contractor-mediated recruitment observed earlier.

Maharashtra exhibits an even lower level of formalisation, with no migrants reporting written documentation of fees and a small proportion unable to confirm whether any record existed. This ambiguity itself points to weak transparency in recruitment practices and limited awareness or clarity around the terms of payment.

3.9 Sources of Recruitment Fees or Advances, by State

The source from which migrants obtain recruitment fees or advances provides important insight into the nature of financial dependence embedded in migration processes. Borrowing from family members, moneylenders, employers, or agents carries very different implications for indebtedness, bargaining power, and vulnerability at destination. Analysing these sources across states helps distinguish between socially buffered migration, market-based borrowing, and forms of labour recruitment that may bind migrants to employers or intermediaries.

Table 3.9: From whom was the recruitment fee or advance collected

	Family / relative	Local moneylender	Agent from destination	Employer	Agent from origin	Other
Tamil Nadu	38.6%	20.5%	13.6%	13.6%	11.4%	2.3%
Maharashtra	84.6%	15.4%	–	–	–	–

The sources of recruitment-related financing reveal clear differences in the degree and nature of financial vulnerability faced by migrants across states. In Maharashtra, borrowing is overwhelmingly confined to family or relatives, with a small share relying on local moneylenders. This pattern suggests that even when migrants require financial support to undertake migration, they largely depend on socially embedded sources rather than labour market intermediaries. Such arrangements, while not without risk, tend to carry lower levels of coercion and are less likely to bind migrants to specific employers or agents.

Tamil Nadu presents a far more diversified and potentially riskier financing profile. While family and relatives remain the single largest source of funds, a substantial proportion of migrants rely on local moneylenders, employers, and both origin- and destination-based agents. The involvement of employers and agents as sources of advances indicates tighter coupling between recruitment, financing, and employment, which can increase migrants' dependency and weaken their bargaining position at destination. Reliance on moneylenders further signals exposure to high-interest debt, particularly in contexts where migration is undertaken repeatedly or for longer durations.

3.10 Retention of Identity Documents or Valuables by Recruiter or Employer

The holding of identity documents or valuables by recruiters or employers is a critical indicator of labour control and migrant vulnerability. Such practices can restrict workers' freedom of movement, reduce their ability to exit exploitative work situations, and increase dependency on employers or intermediaries. Examining the prevalence and forms of document or asset retention across states helps assess the degree of coercion embedded within different migration systems.

Table 3.10: Whether any identity documents or valuables held by recruiter/employer

	No	Yes — documents	Yes — both	Yes — valuables	DK / CS
Maharashtra	99.6%	—	—	—	0.4%
Tamil Nadu	45.6%	52.4%	1.2%	0.8%	—
Delhi / NCR	25.4%	74.6%	—	—	—

The findings reveal stark inter-state differences in the extent to which recruiters or employers retain migrants' identity documents or valuables, reflecting varying levels of labour control and vulnerability. Maharashtra shows almost universal absence of document or asset retention, suggesting migration systems that are largely network-based or self-initiated, with limited coercive oversight by employers or intermediaries.

In contrast, Tamil Nadu and Delhi/NCR display significantly higher levels of document retention, pointing to more coercive or regulated labour arrangements. In Tamil Nadu, over half of migrants report that identity documents were held by recruiters or employers, with a small additional share reporting retention of valuables or both documents and valuables. This pattern is consistent with the state's higher reliance on agent- and contractor-mediated recruitment and advance-based financing, suggesting tighter coupling between recruitment, debt, and labour control. Document retention in such contexts can function as an enforcement mechanism for repayment or continued work.

Delhi/NCR stands out most sharply, with nearly three-quarters of migrants reporting that their documents were held. This high prevalence indicates strong employer or intermediary control within destination labour markets, likely linked to longer durations of stay and semi-permanent migration arrangements. While such practices may be framed as administrative or security-related, they substantially weaken migrants' autonomy and increase barriers to exit.

3.11 Types of Identity Documents or Valuables Retained, by State

Understanding which specific items are retained by recruiters or employers provides deeper insight into the nature and severity of control exercised over migrant workers. The retention of formal identity documents such as Aadhaar or voter IDs can directly restrict mobility and access to services, while the holding of bank cards, mobile phones, or valuables can further constrain financial autonomy and communication.

Examining the composition of retained items across states helps differentiate between administrative control, financial leverage, and more coercive forms of labour management.

Table 3.11: Items held back/deposited

	Aadhaar	Voter ID	Passport	Bank card / debit	Mobile phone / SIM	Jewellery	Other
Delhi / NCR	93.7%	0.5%	0.5%	3.7%	1.6%	–	–
Tamil Nadu	38.6%	33.0%	1.5%	12.0%	11.4%	0.6%	2.8%

The composition of retained items reveals stark differences in the intensity and nature of control exercised over migrants across states. In Delhi/NCR, document retention is overwhelmingly concentrated on Aadhaar cards, accounting for nearly all reported cases. This heavy reliance on a single, critical identity document suggests a standardised form of administrative control that can severely limit migrants' ability to move freely, access welfare entitlements, or seek alternative employment. The minimal retention of other items indicates that control is exercised primarily through formal identification rather than financial or personal assets.

Tamil Nadu presents a more fragmented and intrusive pattern of item retention. While Aadhaar remains the most commonly held document, a substantial share of migrants also report the retention of voter IDs, bank cards, and mobile phones. This diversification suggests multiple layers of control, restricting not only legal identity but also financial access and communication. The holding of bank cards and phones, in particular, points to practices that can directly impede wage access, savings, and contact with family, thereby deepening dependence on employers or intermediaries. The presence of jewellery and other valuables, though small in proportion, further signals the use of asset retention as a mechanism of leverage.

3.12 Return of Held Items at the Time of Exit

Whether identity documents or valuables are returned to migrants at the time of exit is a critical marker of labour control and post-employment vulnerability. Full and timely return suggests limited coercion and clearer exit pathways, while partial return, uncertainty, or non-return can signal ongoing dependence, weak enforcement of labour protections, or heightened risk of exploitation. Examining exit-stage outcomes across states helps assess how far employer or recruiter control extends beyond the period of active employment.

Table 3.12: Whether items returned on exit

	Yes, all returned	Not sure (will know at exit)	Partly returned	Not returned / still held
Delhi / NCR	64.2%	35.8%	–	–
Tamil Nadu	89.7%	–	9.6%	0.7%

The exit-stage outcomes show meaningful variation across states in the degree of certainty and completeness with which migrants recover their documents or valuables. Tamil Nadu presents a more mixed picture. While the majority of migrants report that all items were returned, nearly one in ten indicate only partial return, and a small share report that items were not returned at all. This pattern suggests that even when return is the norm, gaps persist that may leave some migrants exposed to continued vulnerability or unresolved disputes. Given the broader range of items held in Tamil Nadu, including bank cards and mobile phones, partial or delayed return can have tangible implications for financial access and communication at the point of exit.

Delhi/NCR stands out for the high level of uncertainty surrounding item return. Over one-third of migrants report that they are unsure whether their documents or valuables will be returned, indicating that exit

conditions are not clearly defined or communicated. This uncertainty itself reflects an imbalance of power, where migrants may not have full clarity or assurance about their ability to reclaim essential documents. Even though a majority expect full return, the absence of reported partial or non-return likely reflects timing rather than risk elimination.

SECTION 3: CLIMATE CHANGE AND SHOCKS

3.13 Climate Events Negatively Affecting Livelihoods in the Past Five Years

Climate-related shocks increasingly shape household livelihood vulnerability and migration decisions. Different types of climate events, ranging from droughts and floods to heatwaves and pest outbreaks, affect livelihoods through distinct pathways, influencing agricultural productivity, wage employment, and income stability. Examining the distribution of reported climate events across states helps identify dominant environmental stressors and contextualise migration within a broader climate–livelihood nexus rather than as a purely economic phenomenon.

Table 3.13: Climate events affecting livelihoods in the past five years

	Drought / water scarcity	Flooding / waterlogging	Erratic / delayed monsoon	Crop pest / disease	Heatwave	Storms / cyclones	None of the above	DK / Prefer not to say
Tamil Nadu	17.2%	14.5%	14.1%	12.8%	8.5%	5.4%	19.7%	7.8%
Maharashtra	13.7%	8.8%	19.3%	18.6%	1.0%	–	36.6%	2.1%
Delhi / NCR	1.6%	6.1%	1.2%	0.4%	–	0.8%	89.1%	0.8%

The combined distribution of climate events reveals sharp contrasts in nature and intensity of environmental stress experienced by households across states. In agrarian and forest-linked states such as Jharkhand, climate stress is both acute and multifaceted. Reports spread across drought, flooding, erratic monsoons, and pest outbreaks, indicating repeated and overlapping shocks rather than isolated events. This concentration across multiple stressors suggests deep livelihood fragility, where households face simultaneous risks to crop production, wage labour, and food security.

Tamil Nadu also exhibits a broad spread of climate impacts, with drought, flooding, erratic rainfall, pest outbreaks, heatwaves, and storms all featuring prominently. The relatively even distribution across multiple event types indicates chronic climate variability rather than dependence on a single dominant shock. This diversity of climate stressors aligns with the state’s varied agro-ecological zones and helps explain why climate pressure compounds existing livelihood insecurity, particularly in agriculture and allied activities.

Maharashtra’s profile is more concentrated around erratic monsoons and pest or disease outbreaks, together accounting for a substantial share of reported events. This pattern reflects the state’s strong dependence on monsoon-fed agriculture, where rainfall variability and crop health are closely linked. While drought and flooding are present, the high share reporting “none of the above” suggests uneven exposure, with some households relatively insulated and others experiencing repeated climate stress.

Delhi/NCR stands apart, with an overwhelming majority reporting no climate events affecting livelihoods. This reflects the largely non-agricultural nature of livelihoods among surveyed households and the buffering effect of urban or peri-urban economies. However, the small presence of flooding, storms, and drought-related stress indicates that climate impacts are not entirely absent, particularly for households linked to peri-urban agriculture or informal outdoor work.

3.14 Severity of Impact of the Most Serious Climate Event on Household Livelihoods

Beyond exposure to climate events, the severity of their impact on household livelihoods determines whether shocks can be absorbed locally or trigger longer-term coping strategies such as distress borrowing or migration. Assessing how households perceive the severity of the most serious climate event they experienced helps distinguish between manageable disruptions and livelihood-threatening crises. Examining these perceptions across states provides insight into how climate stress translates into economic vulnerability.

Table 3.14: Severity of impact of the most serious climate event

	Moderate impact	Minor impact	Severe impact	Catastrophic impact	Don't know
Tamil Nadu	36.2%	42.5%	2.4%	–	18.9%
Maharashtra	90.1%	7.9%	1.0%	1.0%	–
Delhi / NCR	16.7%	50.0%	16.7%	11.1%	5.6%

The perceived severity of climate impacts varies substantially across states, reflecting differences in livelihood structures, adaptive capacity, and exposure to compounding risks. In Maharashtra, climate events are overwhelmingly reported as having a moderate impact, suggesting widespread but manageable income losses rather than acute crises. This pattern indicates that while climate variability is a persistent stressor, households may possess some capacity to cope through diversification, savings, or short-term migration, with only a very small share experiencing severe or catastrophic consequences.

Tamil Nadu presents a more mixed severity profile. While a plurality of households report minor or moderate impacts, nearly one-fifth express uncertainty about the severity, and a small but notable share report severe effects. This distribution suggests uneven vulnerability, where some households are able to recover relatively quickly, while others face more disruptive losses that may require external coping mechanisms. The presence of uncertainty may also reflect difficulty in isolating climate impacts from broader economic stress.

Delhi/NCR stands out for the polarisation of impacts. While half of households report only minor effects, a significant proportion experience severe or catastrophic impacts. This contrast suggests that climate shocks in largely non-agricultural contexts can still be highly disruptive for specific livelihood segments, such as informal workers, peri-urban cultivators, or those dependent on climate-sensitive wage labour, leading to sharp livelihood losses when shocks occur.

3.15 Role of Climate-Related Shocks in Migration Decisions in the Last 12 Months

Understanding whether climate-related shocks directly influence migration decisions helps distinguish between migration driven primarily by environmental stress and migration shaped by economic or social factors. Climate shocks may act as the main trigger for migration, reinforce existing livelihood pressures, or have no discernible influence at all. Examining these dynamics across states provides insight into the extent to which recent climate variability is translating into longer-term or sustained migration responses.

Table 3.15: Whether a climate-related shock contributed to the decision to migrate for 3 months or more

	Yes — main reason	Yes — contributed alongside other reasons	No — climate did not influence	Don't know / Prefer not to say
Tamil Nadu	31.5%	26.8%	34.6%	7.1%
Maharashtra	68.3%	24.8%	–	6.9%
Delhi / NCR	16.7%	22.2%	50.0%	11.1%

The findings highlight substantial state-level variation in the role of climate shocks in shaping recent migration decisions. Maharashtra shows a strong climate–migration linkage, with nearly seven in ten households reporting climate shocks as the primary trigger for migration and a further quarter indicating that climate compounded other pressures such as wages or employment instability. This indicates that while economic factors remain relevant, climate stress has become a central driver in recent migration decisions, pushing households beyond routine seasonal mobility into longer-duration migration.

Tamil Nadu presents a more balanced picture. While a majority of households acknowledge that climate shocks played either a primary or contributing role, over one-third report that climate did not influence migration decisions. This suggests that migration in the state is shaped by a combination of structural labour market factors and environmental stress, rather than being predominantly climate-driven. The presence of a notable “don’t know” share further points to the difficulty households may face in disentangling climate impacts from broader economic pressures.

Delhi/NCR stands apart, with half of households reporting that climate shocks did not influence migration decisions. This reflects the relatively lower dependence on climate-sensitive livelihoods among surveyed households linked to urban and peri-urban economies. However, the fact that nearly two-fifths still acknowledge some climate contribution indicates that environmental stress is not entirely absent, particularly for households engaged in informal or climate-exposed work.

3.16 Livelihood Impacts of Climate Variability That Pushed or Pulled Households Toward Migration

Climate variability influences migration decisions not only through the occurrence of shocks, but through the specific livelihood pathways by which these shocks translate into income loss, employment disruption, and financial stress. Understanding which climate-linked livelihood effects such as crop loss, reduced wage work, livestock impacts, or rising recovery costs, push households toward migration helps identify the mechanisms through which environmental stress becomes a migration driver. Examining these effects across states highlights differences in agrarian structure, labour dependence, and vulnerability profiles.

Table 3.16: Livelihood effects from climate variability driving migration

	Crop yield loss	Reduced local wage work	Livestock loss / reduced dairy	Increased recovery costs / borrowing	Seasonal cropping window changes	Market disruption	Other	DK
Maharashtra	33.7%	28.7%	13.8%	16.9%	5.0%	0.8%	–	1.1%
Tamil Nadu	24.6%	20.4%	8.8%	18.5%	10.3%	9.7%	0.3%	7.3%
Delhi / NCR	40.5%	19.0%	11.9%	19.0%	2.4%	7.1%	–	–

The distribution of climate-linked livelihood effects highlights clear state-specific pathways through which environmental stress translates into migration pressure. In Maharashtra, migration is driven primarily by

direct agricultural impacts – loss of crop yields and reduced availability of local wage work together account for over 60 percent of reported effects. This reflects the state’s strong dependence on rain-fed agriculture and agricultural labour, where climate variability simultaneously undermines farm output and on-farm employment. Increased recovery costs also feature prominently, indicating that climate shocks often lead to borrowing or asset strain that further pushes households toward migration.

Tamil Nadu presents a more diversified pattern of climate impacts. While crop losses and reduced wage work remain important, a substantial share of households also cite increased recovery costs, seasonal shifts in cropping calendars, and market disruptions. This spread suggests that climate stress in Tamil Nadu affects livelihoods through multiple channels—production, labour timing, prices, and household finances—rather than a single dominant shock. The relatively higher share of responses linked to market disruption and cropping-window mismatch points to climate variability interacting with commercialised and time-sensitive agricultural systems.

In Delhi/NCR-linked households, crop loss emerges as the single largest reported factor, despite the predominantly non-agricultural character of the region. This indicates that migrants connected to Delhi/NCR often originate from agrarian or peri-urban contexts where climate impacts on crops remain central. At the same time, reduced wage work and increased recovery costs are equally important, suggesting that climate shocks affect both farm and informal non-farm livelihoods, particularly among households dependent on casual labour.

3.17 Potential of Local Work, Social Protection, and Climate-Resilient Measures to Reduce Climate-Triggered Migration

Assessing whether improved local employment opportunities, social protection, or climate-resilient interventions could reduce climate-induced migration provides critical insight into the preventability of migration. Such responses help distinguish between migration that is structurally unavoidable and migration that could be mitigated through policy interventions. Understanding these perceptions across states sheds light on the scope for place-based solutions to climate-linked livelihood stress.

Table 3.17: Perceptions regarding whether secure local work, social protection, or climate-resilient measures reduce climate-triggered migration

	Yes — definitely	Maybe — depends on pay/timing /security	No — would still migrate	Don't know / Prefer not to say
Tamil Nadu	22.8%	44.9%	17.3%	15.0%
Maharashtra	58.4%	30.7%	6.9%	4.0%
Delhi / NCR	72.2%	22.2%	5.6%	—

The responses indicate strong inter-state variation in how amenable climate-triggered migration is to policy intervention. Delhi/NCR-linked households also show a high level of confidence in local solutions, with nearly three-quarters indicating that migration would be avoided if secure alternatives were available. This reflects the fact that even in urban-linked contexts, climate-related migration is often contingent rather than inevitable, particularly among households dependent on informal or climate-sensitive livelihoods.

Maharashtra presents a more mixed but still optimistic picture. While a majority indicate that improved local conditions would definitively reduce migration, nearly one-third suggest that the decision would depend on the quality, timing, and security of work. This underscores that job design and reliability, not just availability, are critical in influencing migration outcomes. The small share stating that they would migrate regardless suggests that climate-driven migration in Maharashtra is largely responsive to improved local resilience.

Tamil Nadu stands apart, with the lowest proportion stating that migration would definitely be avoided and the highest share expressing conditional responses or uncertainty. The predominance of “maybe” responses indicates that migration in the state is shaped by a complex interplay of climate stress and labour market dynamics, where local interventions would need to be sufficiently remunerative and reliable to compete with migration. The relatively higher share stating that migration would continue regardless points to structural labour mobility that extends beyond climate drivers alone.

Overall, the findings suggest that climate-linked migration is highly policy-responsive in more agrarian and vulnerable states, while in more diversified labour markets, interventions must meet higher thresholds of security and income adequacy. These insights reinforce the importance of combining climate resilience with robust local employment guarantees and social protection to reduce distress-driven migration, particularly in states where households clearly signal willingness to remain if viable alternatives exist.

3.18 Household Adaptations or Support Most Likely to Prevent Climate-Driven Migration

Households experience climate stress through multiple livelihood channels, and their ability to remain in place depends on whether effective adaptation or support mechanisms are available locally. Identifying which forms of support households perceive as most effective in preventing climate-driven migration provides insight into where policy interventions can meaningfully reduce distress mobility. These preferences reflect underlying livelihood structures, exposure to climate risks, and gaps in existing safety nets.

Table 3.18: Household adaptations or support that would most help prevent climate-driven migration

	Reliable irrigation / water storage	Crop insurance / compensation	Diversified local employment	Affordable credit / debt relief	Climate-smart agri inputs	Social protection / public works	Other
Tamil Nadu	25.5%	26.5%	16.4%	15.3%	7.3%	0.7%	8.4%
Maharashtra	31.5%	31.1%	31.9%	4.4%	0.4%	—	0.8%
Delhi / NCR	42.5%	25.0%	20.0%	5.0%	7.5%	—	—

The distribution of preferred adaptations reveals clear state-specific priorities in preventing climate-driven migration, closely aligned with livelihood structures and exposure to climate risk. In Maharashtra, preferences are strikingly concentrated around three options, viz. reliable irrigation, crop insurance, and diversified local employment, with each accounting for roughly one-third of responses. This indicates that households view migration as preventable if agricultural risk is reduced and non-farm income opportunities are stabilised locally. The minimal emphasis on credit or climate-smart inputs suggests that households prioritise structural income security over post-shock coping.

Tamil Nadu presents a more diversified preference profile. While irrigation and crop insurance remain important, substantial shares also point to diversified employment and affordable credit. This reflects a context where climate stress affects both agricultural and non-agricultural livelihoods, requiring a combination of production-side protection and financial buffering. The relatively higher importance given to climate-smart inputs and “other” measures further indicates openness to adaptive changes in farming practices alongside income diversification.

Delhi/NCR-linked households place the strongest emphasis on reliable irrigation, followed by crop insurance and diversified employment. Despite the urban-linked nature of these households, the prominence of agriculture-related interventions suggests that climate-driven migration decisions remain closely tied to conditions in peri-urban or rural origin areas. The limited role of credit and absence of social

protection preferences imply that prevention is perceived primarily through livelihood stabilisation rather than welfare transfers.

3.19 Relative Priority of Adaptation Measures to Prevent Climate-Driven Migration

Households experiencing climate stress often face multiple, competing adaptation options, but not all are perceived as equally effective in preventing migration. By combining the top two ranked responses (Rank 1 and Rank 2), this table highlights the adaptation measures that households consider most immediately relevant and impactful in reducing climate-driven migration. Focusing on these combined priorities allows for a clearer understanding of which interventions are seen as foundational, rather than marginal or supplementary, and how these preferences vary across states with different livelihood structures and levels of climate vulnerability.

Table 3.19: Combined priority of adaptation measures (combined rank 1 + rank 2)

	Reliable irrigation / water storage	Crop insurance / compensation	Diversified local employment	Affordable credit / debt relief	Climate-smart agri inputs	Social protection / public works
Tamil Nadu	93.3%	74.3%	52.1%	62.2%	61.9%	35.0%
Maharashtra	85.4%	69.6%	73.0%	46.3%	72.7%	0.0%
Delhi / NCR	100.0%	88.2%	50.0%	12.5%	0.0%	33.3%

The combined Rank 1 and Rank 2 responses reveal a strong and consistent emphasis on ex-ante livelihood stabilisation measures across states, particularly those that reduce production risk and income volatility. Reliable irrigation or water storage emerges as the most uniformly prioritised intervention, featuring in the top two ranks for nearly all respondents across states. This reflects the centrality of water security in buffering households against climate variability and preventing the cascading livelihood losses that often precipitate migration.

Crop insurance and compensation mechanisms also command high combined priority. This underscores the limited capacity of households in these states to absorb crop losses and the perceived importance of formal risk-sharing mechanisms in preventing distress migration. Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu show strong support for insurance, though with slightly greater diversification across other options, indicating more heterogeneous livelihood strategies.

Diversified local employment stands out most clearly in Maharashtra, suggesting that where agricultural viability is already under strain, households see stable non-farm work as a critical pathway to remain locally rooted. In Tamil Nadu, employment diversification features as an important but secondary priority, reflecting a context where climate stress interacts with already mobile labour markets and where multiple interventions may be required to offset migration incentives.

In contrast, post-shock coping mechanisms—notably affordable credit, debt relief, and social protection—consistently attract lower combined priority across states. This pattern indicates that households view borrowing and welfare transfers as reactive and insufficient to prevent migration once climate stress has disrupted livelihoods. Climate-smart agricultural inputs and training occupy a middle position, valued in some contexts but rarely perceived as standalone solutions capable of offsetting migration pressures.

3.20 Main Reasons for Migration, by State

Migration decisions are rarely driven by a single factor; rather, they reflect the interaction of local employment conditions, income prospects, livelihood risks, and access to opportunities at destination.

Examining the main reasons for migration helps distinguish between structural push factors at origin, such as lack of work or low returns, and pull factors linked to wages, services, and perceived opportunity elsewhere. A state-wise comparison of these reasons provides insight into how different economic and social contexts shape migration pathways, and the extent to which migration reflects distress, opportunity-seeking, or a combination of both.

Table 3.20: Main reasons for migration

Reason for migration	Maharashtra	Tamil Nadu	Delhi / NCR
Lack of local employment	32.9%	20.7%	32.6%
Better employment opportunities	27.9%	16.9%	13.8%
Higher wages at destination	17.7%	24.1%	15.7%
Seasonal labour demand in destination	6.0%	9.5%	5.3%
Debt / loan pressure	7.7%	6.1%	4.0%
Low agricultural returns / crop failure	5.6%	2.4%	15.1%
Family tradition / peer influence	0.4%	6.4%	0.8%
Better education opportunities	0.7%	2.0%	5.4%
Better healthcare access	–	1.2%	2.4%
Better social mobility / lifestyle	0.9%	4.5%	4.3%
Contractor / agent recruitment with advance	0.1%		

The distribution of migration reasons highlights the predominance of structural employment constraints across all states. Lack of local employment consistently emerges as the most frequently cited reason, accounting for roughly one-third of responses in every state. This points to the absence of stable, year-round work at origin as the fundamental condition underpinning migration, regardless of regional context.

Economic pull factors, particularly better employment opportunities and higher wages, together constitute a substantial share of motivations, especially in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. In Tamil Nadu, the prominence of higher wages reflects a migration pattern driven more by income maximisation than acute distress, while Maharashtra shows a stronger emphasis on employment availability itself, consistent with more diversified migration streams.

Delhi/NCR-linked migration reflects a more mixed profile. Alongside employment scarcity, low agricultural returns feature prominently, indicating that many migrants originate from agrarian or peri-urban contexts where farming incomes have become insufficient. The relatively higher visibility of education, healthcare, and lifestyle-related reasons further suggests the role of urban aspiration and service access in shaping migration decisions.

Across states, climate shocks, debt pressure, contractor-led recruitment, and social exclusion appear less frequently as primary reasons. Their lower visibility suggests that these factors often act as triggers or accelerants, intensifying existing livelihood pressures rather than independently driving migration.

3.21 Relative Priority of Migration Drivers

While multiple factors may influence migration decisions, their relative importance becomes clearer when households are asked to prioritise them. Combining Rank 1 and Rank 2 responses highlights the reasons that migrants consider most decisive, as opposed to peripheral or secondary influences. This approach allows for a sharper distinction between structural drivers of migration, such as employment scarcity and income insecurity, and factors that operate more as background conditions or enabling contexts. Examining these combined priorities across states provides insight into how migration motivations differ by livelihood structure, labour market integration, and exposure to economic and climatic stress.

Table 3.21: Main reasons for migration — combined rank 1 + rank 2

Reason for migration	Maharashtra	Tamil Nadu	Delhi / NCR
Lack of local employment	98.8%	83.2%	99.6%
Low agricultural returns / crop failure	50.0%	83.3%	100.0%
Seasonal labour demand in destination	88.9%	83.1%	65.8%
Debt / loan pressure	63.8%	60.9%	44.8%
Better employment opportunities	66.6%	48.0%	56.5%
Higher wages at destination	11.3%	73.4%	26.6%
Better education opportunities	20.0%	46.7%	20.5%
Better healthcare access	0.0%	44.4%	11.8%
Better social mobility / lifestyle	28.6%	67.6%	0.0%
Family tradition / peer influence	0.0%	47.9%	33.3%
Contractor / agent recruitment with advance	0.0%	33.3%	—
Climate shocks (drought / flood / heat)	100.0%	46.7%	50.0%
Social exclusion / caste pressure	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%

The combined priority rankings confirm that migration across all states is overwhelmingly driven by structural deficits in local employment. Lack of local employment appears as a near-universal top-tier driver, ranking within the top two reasons for virtually all respondents in every state. This underscores that migration is fundamentally a response to the absence of stable, reliable livelihoods at origin rather than a marginal or opportunistic choice.

Agrarian stress, captured through low agricultural returns and crop failure, emerges as a second order but highly salient driver, particularly in Tamil Nadu and Delhi/NCR, where it is consistently prioritised among the top two reasons. This suggests that declining farm viability remains a critical push factor, even in contexts where migrants eventually enter non-agricultural labour markets. In Maharashtra, the lower combined ranking of agricultural returns relative to employment scarcity indicates a more diversified migration base, where non-farm employment dynamics play a stronger role.

Seasonal labour demand at destination features prominently in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, reflecting well-established migration corridors tied to cyclical labour markets. In contrast, its absence in Odisha and Jharkhand indicates migration that is less seasonal and more necessity-driven, shaped by deeper livelihood constraints rather than predictable labour cycles.

Debt and loan pressure occupies a middle position across states, suggesting that indebtedness often reinforces migration decisions rather than independently driving them. Its prominence in Maharashtra points to the compounding role of financial stress following livelihood shocks, while its weaker ranking in Delhi/NCR indicates relatively lower reliance on distress borrowing among surveyed households.

Wage-related incentives show sharp state contrasts. Higher wages at destination are a dominant top-tier factor in Tamil Nadu, indicating migration driven strongly by wage differentials and income optimisation. In Maharashtra and Delhi/NCR, wages rank much lower, suggesting that access to work itself, rather than wage levels, is the binding constraint.

Social, aspirational, and network-based factors, such as education, healthcare, social mobility, family tradition, and contractor recruitment, rarely rank among the top two reasons, except in Tamil Nadu. This points to a more embedded and normalised migration culture in the state, where social networks and expectations increasingly shape mobility decisions alongside economic drivers.

3.22 Willingness to Stay at Origin if Secure Local Employment Is Available

This table examines whether migration is fundamentally reversible if core economic constraints at origin are addressed. Respondents were asked whether they would prefer to remain in their place of origin if secure local employment were available with comparable wages and social protections. The question is designed to distinguish between distress-led migration, where movement is driven by lack of viable local livelihoods, and aspirational or opportunity-led migration, where migration would continue even under improved local conditions. State-wise patterns provide insight into how responsive migration flows may be to employment-centric policy interventions.

Table 3.22: Whether migrant would prefer to stay at the place of origin if offered secure local employment with comparable pay and social protections

	Yes — definitely	Maybe — depends on pay/conditions	No — would still prefer to migrate	Don't know
Maharashtra	90.0%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Tamil Nadu	33.6%	38.4%	22.8%	5.2%
Delhi/NCR	97.5%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%

The findings show a strong and consistent preference to stay at origin across most states, indicating that migration is largely compelled rather than voluntary. In Maharashtra and Delhi/NCR, around nine out of ten migrants (90–97.5%) report that they would *definitely* stay if secure, comparably paid local employment were available. This underscores that migration from these states is primarily a response to local labour market deficits rather than an inherent preference for mobility.

In Tamil Nadu, migration appears more structurally embedded and partially aspirational, rather than purely distress-led.

Overall, the table provides strong evidence that employment-centred interventions at origin could substantially reduce migration in most states. However, the Tamil Nadu pattern indicates that in long-established migration corridors, policy responses must go beyond job creation to address wage parity, progression pathways, and local economic diversification if staying is to become a genuinely competitive option.

3.23 Changes at Origin That Would Most Reduce Future Distress/Seasonal Migration

This section presents respondents' views on what changes at the place of origin would most reduce future distress or seasonal migration, reported as row percentages by state. Percentages indicate the share of respondents within each state who selected a given intervention (multiple responses permitted). This helps compare priority patterns across states and identify which policy levers, viz. jobs, agriculture, credit, services, or social protection, are most emphasised in different contexts.

Table 3.23: Changes at origin that would most reduce future distress/seasonal migration

Change at origin	Maharashtra (%)	Tamil Nadu (%)	Delhi/NCR (%)
Regular local employment	100.0	100.0	100.0
Local industry / processing jobs	82.1	75.4	88.6
Skills training & entrepreneurship support	52.2	45.1	29.1
Affordable credit / debt relief	32.3	52.8	13.2
Improved health & education services	18.3	15.5	52.7
Reliable irrigation & higher farm returns	11.2	23.2	34.5
Increased MGNREGA availability	4.0	28.2	7.3

Social protection (pensions, cash transfers)	–	39.4	1.8
Other	–	0.7	–

Viewed through row percentages, the results show that regular local employment is a universal priority across all states, with 100% of respondents everywhere selecting it. This reinforces that distress/seasonal migration is fundamentally rooted in structural gaps in stable local livelihoods, not simply individual choice.

Beyond this shared baseline, the secondary priorities differ sharply by state. Local industry and processing jobs emerge as the strongest additional lever in Maharashtra (82.1%), Delhi/NCR (88.6%) and Tamil Nadu (75.4%), suggesting that migrants expect migration reduction to come from non-farm job ecosystems rather than agriculture alone. Delhi/NCR also stands out for its unusually high emphasis on health and education services (52.7%) and meaningful attention to farm returns/irrigation (34.5%), indicating that service deficits and agrarian stress jointly shape migration pressures in its source areas.

Tamil Nadu shows the most diversified set of complementary needs: along with industry/jobs, respondents place strong weight on credit and debt relief (52.8%) and social protection (39.4%), with a sizeable share also pointing to MGNREGA (28.2%) and irrigation (23.2%). This suggests that employment interventions here need to be paired with financial risk buffering and welfare support to be credible alternatives to migration.

3.24 Prioritisation of Origin-Side Interventions to Reduce Distress/Seasonal Migration (Ranked)

This section analyses how respondents prioritise different changes at the place of origin that could reduce future distress or seasonal migration. Unlike simple selection, respondents were asked to rank each intervention (Rank 1 = highest priority, Rank 2 = second priority, Rank 3 = third priority). The table reports row percentages by state, showing how respondents within each state distribute their preferences across ranks for each intervention.

To aid interpretation, emphasis is placed on combined Rank 1 + Rank 2 shares, which together capture the proportion of respondents who consider an intervention a high or medium priority, rather than a residual or tertiary concern.

Table 3.24: Share of respondents ranking each intervention as high priority

Origin-side intervention	Maharashtra	Tamil Nadu	Delhi/NCR
Regular local employment	98.4%	74.6%	99.6%
Reliable irrigation & higher farm returns	67.8%	87.9%	97.3%
Affordable credit / debt relief	59.3%	62.7%	51.7%
Local industry / processing jobs	82.5%	74.8%	73.3%
Skills training & entrepreneurship	7.6%	54.7%	25.0%
Improved health & education services	13.0%	59.1%	10.4%
Increased MGNREGA availability	20.0%	65.0%	0.0%
Social protection (pensions, cash transfers)	–	42.9%	25.0%

The table clearly shows that regular local employment is the most decisive intervention across all states. In Maharashtra and Delhi/NCR, nearly the entire respondent base places it within their top two priorities, indicating that migration is fundamentally perceived as a response to labour-market failure at origin rather than preference for mobility. Tamil Nadu, while still showing a strong majority (74.6%), exhibits a comparatively more diversified priority structure.

Agricultural resilience, captured through reliable irrigation and higher farm returns, emerges as the second dominant pillar, particularly in agrarian states. Tamil Nadu (87.9%) shows very high combined priority shares, underscoring that climatic and production risks remain central to migration decisions. Even in Delhi/NCR, where migrants are largely non-farm, irrigation ranks high, reflecting continued rural linkages of origin households.

Credit and debt relief occupies an intermediate position. In Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, roughly six in ten respondents prioritise it, suggesting that indebtedness acts as a stress multiplier rather than a primary trigger. Lower prioritisation in Delhi/NCR indicates weaker salience of agrarian debt among those migrants.

The importance of local industry and processing jobs is pronounced in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Delhi/NCR, where over 70% place it within their top two priorities. This suggests strong demand for non-farm employment pathways at origin, especially where agriculture alone is insufficient but full urban migration is not preferred.

By contrast, skills training and entrepreneurship are sharply polarised. Maharashtra respondents overwhelmingly rank it low, indicating scepticism about skills without assured demand. Tamil Nadu stands out, with over half ranking it as a high or moderate priority, pointing to a more enabling local ecosystem where skills may plausibly translate into livelihoods.

Health, education, MGNREGA, and social protection consistently appear as secondary priorities. Their higher salience in Tamil Nadu indicates that where service delivery is more reliable or visible, these measures are seen as meaningful complements, but they are rarely viewed as substitutes for employment or income security.

SECTION 4: WORK, WAGES AND PAYMENT PRACTICES

3.25 Main Sector of Work at Destination (Current Migration Spell)

This section analyses the primary sector of employment at destination for migrant workers, based on their current or most recent migration episode. Respondents were asked to identify one main sector of work, and the results are presented as row percentages by state, showing how migrant workers from each origin state are distributed across destination labour markets.

Understanding sectoral concentration is critical for interpreting exposure to labour precarity, wage volatility, occupational risk, and climate sensitivity, as well as for designing sector-specific protections, skilling pathways, and portability of social security benefits.

Table 3.25: Main sector of work at destination

Sector	Maharashtra	Tamil Nadu	Delhi/NCR
Factory / mill	51.4%	12.4%	70.4%
Construction	14.3%	52.8%	8.3%
Services (general)	2.4%	14.8%	3.8%
Security / housekeeping	3.6%	1.2%	8.8%
Textiles / garments / carpet	8.8%	2.4%	0.8%
Domestic work	0.8%	10.4%	–
Mandi / logistics	3.6%	0.4%	7.5%
Plantation / sugarcane	8.8%	0.4%	–
Leather / tannery	4.4%	1.6%	–
Agriculture / farm labour	1.2%	2.0%	–
Brick kiln	–	0.4%	0.4%

Waste / recycling	–	0.4%	–
Other	0.8%	0.8%	–

The sectoral distribution reveals strong state-specific migration corridors and labour-market segmentation. Migrants to Delhi/NCR are overwhelmingly concentrated in factory and mill work, with over 70% and nearly 90% respectively employed in this sector. This reflects proximity to industrial clusters, established contractor networks, and demand for semi-skilled shop-floor labour. Jharkhand migrants also show a similar pattern, though with a meaningful secondary dependence on construction.

Tamil Nadu stands out sharply for its dominance in construction work (52.8%), indicating a migration profile driven by infrastructure expansion, urban real estate, and public works-related demand. Tamil Nadu is also the only state with a substantial presence in domestic work (10.4%) and services, suggesting greater diversification into urban informal service roles, particularly for women and older migrants.

Maharashtra displays the most diversified sectoral spread. While factory/mill work remains dominant (51.4%), notable shares are also engaged in construction, textiles, plantation/sugarcane work, logistics, and leather-related activities. This diversification points to Maharashtra's role as a multi-sector destination economy but also implies fragmented labour regulation and uneven access to protections.

Employment in brick kilns and waste/recycling remains marginal overall, but their presence in Tamil Nadu is significant from a vulnerability perspective, as these sectors are typically associated with bonded labour risks, harsh working conditions, and limited mobility.

Agricultural and plantation-linked migration appears secondary, reinforcing that most migration in this sample is non-farm and urban/industrial in nature, even when climate stress originates in agrarian livelihoods.

3.26 Nature of Engagement at Destination

This section examines the nature of employment engagement under which migrant workers are currently employed at destination. Respondents were asked to identify the primary form of engagement governing their work arrangement, ranging from monthly informal wages and daily casual labour to contractor-mediated hiring and formal contracts.

Presenting the data as row percentages by state highlights how migrants to different origin states experience varying degrees of job security, contractual protection, income stability, and employer dependence. These distinctions are critical for understanding labour vulnerability, bargaining power, and exposure to exploitation across destination labour markets.

Table 3.26: Nature of engagement at destination

Nature of engagement	Maharashtra	Tamil Nadu	Delhi/NCR
Monthly informal wage	51.4%	49.6%	61.7%
Daily casual (no contract)	21.9%	20.8%	17.9%
Piece-rate / task-based	25.1%	5.2%	5.4%
Hired via contractor/agent	–	15.6%	4.2%
Formal contract	0.4%	7.2%	10.0%
Self-employed	1.2%	0.8%	0.8%
Paid in cash and kind	–	0.4%	–
Other	–	0.4%	–

Across all states, informal wage arrangements dominate migrant employment, with monthly informal wages emerging as the most common engagement type. This is particularly pronounced among migrants to Delhi/NCR where over 60% of workers report being paid monthly without formal contracts, indicating stable but unprotected employment relationships.

Maharashtra stands out for its high reliance on piece-rate and task-based work (25.1%), pointing to employment structures common in factories, textiles, plantations, and informal manufacturing, where earnings fluctuate with output and workers bear production risk.

Tamil Nadu exhibits a distinct pattern with a sizeable share of migrants hired through contractors or agents (15.6%). This suggests stronger intermediation in labour recruitment, which may facilitate job access but also increases vulnerability to wage deductions, delayed payments, and dependence on labour contractors.

Formal employment remains limited across all states, reaching only 10% even in Delhi/NCR—the highest among the sample. This underscores the structural exclusion of migrant workers from written contracts, social security benefits, and enforceable labour rights, even in relatively regulated urban labour markets.

3.27 Payment Unit and Wage Periodicity at Destination

This section examines the unit of wage payment under which migrant workers are compensated at destination worksites. The payment unit – monthly, daily, weekly, piece-rate, or irregular, has important implications for income stability, predictability of cash flows, ability to remit, and exposure to wage manipulation or delays.

By presenting the results as row percentages by state, the table highlights how migrants to different origin states are embedded in distinct wage payment regimes, reflecting sectoral composition, degree of informality, and the role of intermediaries in destination labour markets.

Table 3.27: Payment Unit at Destination

Payment unit	Maharashtra	Tamil Nadu	Delhi/NCR
Monthly	65.7%	62.4%	75.0%
Daily	16.3%	9.2%	20.8%
Weekly	10.8%	23.6%	3.8%
Piece-rate	6.0%	2.4%	0.4%
No definite payment pattern	1.2%	2.4%	–

Across all origin states, monthly payment emerges as the dominant wage unit, indicating that most migrants are engaged in relatively stable, ongoing work arrangements rather than purely casual or day-to-day employment. This is most pronounced among migrants to Delhi/NCR, where three-quarters or more report monthly wage payments, suggesting concentration in factories, services, and longer-term construction or facility management roles.

However, significant secondary payment regimes coexist alongside monthly wages, pointing to layered forms of precarity. Daily payment remains substantial in Delhi/NCR (20.8%) and Maharashtra (16.3%), reflecting the persistence of casual labour markets, particularly in construction, logistics, and short-term service work. These arrangements expose workers to higher income volatility and weaker bargaining power.

Tamil Nadu stands out for its relatively high reliance on weekly payments (23.6%), a pattern less common in other states. Weekly payment systems are often associated with contractor-mediated work, plantations,

textiles, and domestic or service employment, where wages are regular but still lack formalisation and statutory protection.

Piece-rate payment, while a minority arrangement overall, is most visible in Maharashtra (6.0%), consistent with the presence of output-linked work in manufacturing, textiles, and agro-processing. Such payment units shift productivity risk onto workers and can mask long working hours behind nominal earnings.

The presence of irregular or undefined payment patterns, though limited in scale, is concentrated in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, signalling pockets of extreme vulnerability where workers lack clarity on wage cycles altogether, conditions often linked to informal subcontracting or highly precarious domestic and service work.

3.28 Typical Daily Wage Levels at Destination

This section examines the typical daily wage earned by migrants at destination worksites, providing insight into the economic returns to migration across origin states. Daily wage levels are a critical determinant of whether migration improves household welfare, offsets migration-related risks, and justifies periods of separation from home. Analysing wages using row percentages by state allows for comparison of the relative positioning of migrants within low, middle, and higher-wage segments of destination labour markets.

Table 3.28: Typical daily wage earned at destination

Daily wage range (INR)	Tamil Nadu	Maharashtra	Delhi/NCR
<500	1.2%	35.3%	1.7%
500–999	46.3%	60.3%	93.2%
1000–1499	43.9%	2.9%	3.4%
1500+	8.5%	1.5%	1.7%

Clear inter-state differences emerge in the wage outcomes experienced by migrants. Migrants to Delhi/NCR are overwhelmingly concentrated in the ₹500–999 range, with more than nine out of ten respondents falling within this bracket. This suggests a relatively compressed wage structure, consistent with large-scale absorption into construction, factory, security, and service roles where wages are standardised but offer limited upward mobility.

Tamil Nadu displays the most diversified wage distribution, with nearly equal proportions of migrants earning ₹500–999 (46.3%) and ₹1000–1499 (43.9%), alongside a small but notable share earning ₹1500 or more (8.5%). This indicates that migrants to Tamil Nadu are more likely to access moderate to higher-paying roles, potentially reflecting skill differentiation, sectoral diversity, or stronger labour market networks at destination.

In contrast, Maharashtra shows a bifurcated pattern. While a majority earn ₹500–999 (60.3%), a substantial share, over one-third report earning less than ₹500 per day. This points to significant downward wage vulnerability, likely linked to casual, piece-rate, or highly informal employment segments where bargaining power is weak and earnings are inconsistent.

3.29 Typical Monthly Wage Levels at Destination

This section analyses the typical monthly wages earned by migrants at destination, capturing the longer-term earning potential of migration for workers engaged in monthly or relatively stable employment arrangements. Monthly wage levels are particularly important for understanding household income security, remittance capacity, debt repayment, and savings, especially for migrants who remain away for extended

periods. Presenting the data as row percentages by state allows comparison of how migrants to different origins are positioned across low-, middle-, and higher-income segments of destination labour markets.

Table 3.29: Typical monthly wage earned at destination

Monthly wage range (INR)	Delhi/NCR	Maharashtra	Tamil Nadu
<5,000	–	0.6%	0.6%
5,000–9,999	3.9%	6.1%	5.1%
10,000–19,999	86.1%	88.5%	33.3%
20,000+	10.0%	4.8%	60.9%

The distribution of monthly wages reveals distinct and systematic differences across origin states, reflecting variation in sectoral placement, skill levels, and labour market integration at destination.

Migrants to Delhi/NCR and Maharashtra are overwhelmingly concentrated in the ₹10,000–19,999 bracket, with nearly nine out of ten respondents in each state reporting earnings within this range. This suggests that while employment may be relatively stable, upward wage mobility remains limited, with only a small minority accessing monthly wages above ₹20,000. These patterns are consistent with employment in manufacturing, construction, security, and services where wages are standardised and progression is gradual.

In contrast, Tamil Nadu stands out sharply, with a majority of migrants (60.9%) earning ₹20,000 or more per month. This indicates comparatively better wage outcomes, likely linked to higher representation in skilled construction, textiles, services, or factory-based roles that offer overtime, incentives, or skill premiums. The relatively smaller share in the ₹10,000–19,999 range further suggests a polarised but upward-shifted wage distribution among Tamil Nadu migrants.

Across all states, very low monthly wages (<₹5,000) are rare, indicating that monthly-paid migration generally offers earnings above extreme subsistence levels. However, the dominance of the ₹10,000–19,999 bracket for most states highlights that migration often delivers moderate income security rather than transformative economic gains, with Tamil Nadu representing the key exception where higher-wage outcomes are more common.

3.30 Access to Written Payslips / Wage Statements

This section examines whether migrant workers receive written payslips or wage statements at their place of work. Access to written wage documentation is a key indicator of employment formalisation, transparency, and enforceability of labour rights, affecting workers' ability to verify payments, claim entitlements, resolve disputes, and access formal financial services. The table presents row percentages by state, enabling comparison of how migrants to different origins experience wage documentation practices at destination.

Table 3.30: Receipt of written payslips or wage statements

Payslip receipt status	Maharashtra	Tamil Nadu	Delhi/NCR
Never	90.8%	78.0%	86.7%
Yes, every pay	6.4%	6.0%	10.4%
Sometimes	2.8%	16.0%	2.9%

The findings reveal very limited access to written payslips across most origin states, highlighting the predominantly informal nature of migrant employment even in sectors that offer monthly or relatively stable wages.

In Maharashtra and Delhi/NCR, an overwhelming majority of migrants report never receiving written wage statements, with proportions ranging from 86% to 100%. This indicates that wage payments in these contexts are largely verbal, cash-based, or undocumented, increasing vulnerability to underpayment, delayed wages, and arbitrary deductions.

Tamil Nadu presents a comparatively better, though still inadequate situation, with 16% of migrants reporting that they receive payslips sometimes, alongside 6% who receive them consistently. While most workers still lack formal documentation, this higher share suggests greater partial formalisation, possibly linked to factory-based employment, organised construction, or textile units where informal record-keeping may exist even if full compliance is absent.

3.31 Regular Deductions from Wages

This section examines whether regular deductions are made from migrants' wages, including deductions for food, rent, tools, advances, or fines. The nature of such deductions, whether explained and documented, verbal and undocumented, or not clearly understood by workers, is a critical indicator of wage transparency and labour protection. The table below presents row percentages by state, allowing comparison of how migrants to different origin states experience wage deductions at destination.

Table 3.31: Whether regular deductions are made from wages

Deduction status	Maharashtra	Tamil Nadu	Delhi/NCR
No deductions	85.3%	89.6%	100.0%
Yes — explained / documented	6.0%	3.2%	—
Don't know / can't say (DK/CS)	8.8%	2.4%	—
Yes — verbal / undocumented	—	4.8%	—

Across most states, migrants report no regular wage deductions, suggesting that explicit, routine deductions are not widespread in the dominant forms of employment captured by the survey. This pattern is particularly strong in Delhi/NCR, where all respondents report no deductions, indicating either relatively clean wage payments or limited awareness of indirect or embedded deductions.

However, the presence of non-trivial minority shares in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu reporting uncertainty or undocumented deductions points to important vulnerabilities. In Maharashtra, nearly 9% of migrants are unsure whether deductions are being made, implying low transparency and weak communication around wage components. This aligns with earlier findings on the absence of written payslips, where most workers lack formal wage documentation.

Tamil Nadu shows the clearest evidence of undocumented practices, with nearly 5% reporting verbal or undocumented deductions. Although this is a minority, it is analytically significant because it suggests that even in contexts with relatively higher wage levels or more structured employment, informality persists within wage-setting mechanisms.

3.32 Advance Payments for Employment

This section examines whether migrants or their households received advance payments for the current job. Advances are a critical labour-market feature in migrant employment, often used to meet immediate consumption needs, finance travel, or secure work through contractors. However, advances can also

increase dependency and vulnerability, especially when linked to wage deductions, tied employment, or restrictions on mobility. The table below presents row percentages by state, showing the proportion of migrants who did and did not receive an advance.

Table 3.32: Whether any advance was given for the job

Advance received	Maharashtra	Tamil Nadu	Delhi/NCR
No	86.5%	81.2%	99.6%
Yes	13.5%	18.8%	0.4%

Across most origin states, the majority of migrants report not receiving any advance, indicating that advance-linked recruitment is not the dominant mode of labour engagement in this sample. This pattern is especially pronounced in Delhi/NCR, where virtually all migrants report no advance, suggesting direct hiring or short-term employment without financial pre-commitments.

However, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra show meaningful minorities receiving advances, at 18.8% and 13.5% respectively. These proportions are analytically significant because they point to continued use of advance-based labour arrangements, which are often associated with contractor-mediated recruitment, wage dependency, and reduced bargaining power. When read alongside earlier findings on verbal or undocumented deductions and lack of written payslips, this raises concerns about the transparency and enforceability of wage agreements for a subset of workers.

3.33 Advance Amount Received (INR)

This section examines the magnitude of advance payments received by migrants who reported being given an advance for their current job. While the previous question (B32) established whether an advance was received, this table disaggregates the amount of advance to understand the depth of financial dependence created at the point of recruitment. Higher advance amounts can signal stronger forms of labour attachment, greater repayment pressure, and increased vulnerability to wage deductions or restricted mobility. All figures are presented as row percentages by state, reflecting how advance recipients within each state are distributed across amount categories.

Table 3.33: Advance amount received

Advance amount (INR)	Tamil Nadu	Maharashtra	Delhi/NCR
< 1,000	4.3%	—	—
1,000–4,999	40.4%	88.2%	100.0%
5,000–9,999	10.6%	8.8%	—
10,000+	44.7%	2.9%	—

The distribution of advance amounts shows clear state-level variation in the scale of financial exposure among migrants who received advances.

In Tamil Nadu, advance payments are substantially larger, with nearly half (44.7%) of recipients receiving INR 10,000 or more. This suggests a recruitment environment where advances are used not merely as small incentives, but as significant upfront payments, potentially covering migration costs, household needs, or debt repayment. Such high-value advances can create strong repayment obligations, increasing the risk of wage withholding, extended work duration, or reduced ability to exit employment.

In contrast, Maharashtra exhibits a predominance of smaller advances, with 88.2% of advance recipients receiving INR 1,000–4,999. This pattern indicates more limited advance-based dependency, where

advances may function as short-term facilitation rather than deep financial binding. The very small proportion receiving INR 10,000+ further reinforces this interpretation.

In Delhi/NCR, the lone advance reported falls entirely in the INR 1,000–4,999 category, reinforcing earlier findings that advance-based recruitment is rare and limited in scale in this destination context.

3.34 Source of Advance Provided

This section examines who provided the advance to migrants who reported receiving one. Identifying the source of advances, whether from employers, labour agents/contractors, or family and friends, is critical for understanding the power dynamics and potential vulnerability embedded in recruitment processes. Advances provided directly by employers or agents are often associated with stronger forms of labour control, repayment obligations, and risks of tied or semi-bonded work, whereas family-based advances typically reflect social support rather than labour dependency. All figures are presented as row percentages within each state.

Table 3.34: Advance provider

	Employer	Agent / Contractor	Family / Friend
Tamil Nadu	44.7%	46.8%	8.5%
Maharashtra	52.9%	44.1%	2.9%
Jharkhand	100.0%	–	–
Delhi/NCR	–	100.0%	–

The table shows that most advances are sourced directly from the labour market, rather than from migrants' personal networks, underscoring the structural role of advances in recruitment.

In Tamil Nadu, advances are almost evenly split between employers (44.7%) and agents/contractors (46.8%), indicating a recruitment system where intermediaries play a role nearly as significant as direct employers. The presence of family- or friend-based advances (8.5%) is limited, suggesting that most financial facilitation is tied to the job itself rather than informal support systems.

In Maharashtra, employers emerge as the dominant source (52.9%), though agents and contractors also account for a substantial share (44.1%). This dual structure suggests that while direct hiring with advances is common, contractor-mediated recruitment remains deeply embedded, potentially exposing workers to layered accountability and opaque repayment terms.

In Delhi/NCR, the single reported advance was provided entirely through an agent or contractor (100%), reinforcing earlier findings that advances are rare but tightly linked to intermediary-based hiring rather than employer-led arrangements.

3.35 Method of Repayment of Advance

This section examines how advances received by migrants are repaid. The repayment mechanism is a critical indicator of labour vulnerability, as certain methods, particularly wage deductions, open-ended repayment, or interest-bearing/bonded terms can restrict workers' mobility and bargaining power. Repayment through wage deductions may reduce take-home earnings and transparency, while lump-sum repayment can create exit barriers at the end of the migration cycle. All figures below are expressed as row percentages within each state, reflecting the dominant repayment practice among those who reported receiving an advance.

Table 3.35: Repayment method

	Deducted from wages	Ongoing / not repaid	Lump sum on return	Charged interest / bonded terms
Tamil Nadu	83.0%	10.6%	4.3%	2.1%
Maharashtra	94.1%	2.9%	2.9%	–
Delhi/NCR	100.0%	–	–	–

Across states, wage deduction emerges as the dominant mode of repayment, indicating that advances are most commonly recovered directly through earnings at destination, rather than through flexible or post-return arrangements.

In Maharashtra, an overwhelming 94.1% of advances are repaid through wage deductions, suggesting a highly standardised repayment system embedded within employment arrangements. While this may ensure recovery for employers or agents, it also implies limited wage transparency and reduced control for workers over the pace and verification of repayment.

Tamil Nadu shows a similar but slightly more varied pattern. A large majority (83.0%) repay advances through wage deductions, but a notable minority report ongoing or incomplete repayment (10.6%), indicating extended indebtedness beyond a single work cycle. Small proportions repaying through lump-sum payments (4.3%) or under interest-bearing/bonded terms (2.1%) point to the presence, albeit limited, of more coercive repayment arrangements.

In Delhi/NCR, the single reported case shows 100% repayment through wage deduction, reinforcing the broader pattern of advances being tightly linked to employer or contractor-controlled wage systems.

SECTION 5: SUPERVISION, SUBCONTRACTING AND WORKPLACE ORGANIZATION

3.36 Supervision of Daily Work at Destination

This section examines who directly supervises migrants' day-to-day work at destination. The nature of supervision is a key indicator of employment formality, control over labour, and workers' autonomy. Supervision through foremen, contractors, or gang leaders often reflects layered labour arrangements and reduced direct accountability, whereas employer/manager supervision may indicate relatively more formal workplace structures. Self-managed work suggests greater autonomy but can also imply informal or precarious arrangements without institutional protection. All figures are presented as row percentages within each state.

Table 3.36: Supervision of daily work

State	Foreman / Contractor	Employer / Manager	Self-managed	Gang leader / Sub-contractor	Other
Maharashtra	49.4%	23.5%	21.9%	5.2%	–
Tamil Nadu	24.0%	50.8%	10.8%	14.4%	–
Delhi/NCR	80.0%	15.0%	2.5%	2.5%	–

Across states, intermediary-led supervision dominates migrant work arrangements, particularly through foremen, contractors, and gang leaders, underscoring the prevalence of multi-layered labour systems.

In Delhi/NCR, supervision is overwhelmingly contractor-driven, with 80.0% of workers reporting oversight by a foreman or contractor. Only 15.0% report direct supervision by an employer or manager, highlighting a strong reliance on labour intermediaries and limited direct employer–worker engagement.

Maharashtra presents a more diversified supervision structure. While foremen/contractors remain the largest category (49.4%), a substantial share of workers are either employer-managed (23.5%) or self-managed (21.9%), suggesting mixed labour arrangements ranging from contractor-led worksites to more autonomous or task-based engagements.

In Tamil Nadu, supervision is most commonly exercised by employers or managers (50.8%), indicating relatively more direct workplace oversight compared to other states. However, the presence of gang leaders or sub-contractors (14.4%) and foremen (24.0%) shows that intermediary-based systems remain significant.

3.37 Hiring Through Multi-Layer Subcontracting

This section analyses whether migrants were hired directly by employers or through intermediary arrangements, including single agents and multi-layer subcontracting chains. Multi-layer subcontracting is a critical indicator of labour informality and risk, as each additional layer can weaken transparency around wages, contracts, working conditions, and accountability. Direct hiring generally implies clearer employer–worker relationships, while recruitment through agents—especially multiple layers—often corresponds to greater precarity and limited bargaining power. All figures below are presented as row percentages within each state.

Table 3.37: Whether migrants were hired through multi-layer subcontracting

	DK / CS	Single Agent	Yes – Multiple Layers	Direct Hire
Maharashtra	39.4%	28.7%	9.2%	22.7%
Tamil Nadu	4.8%	27.6%	23.6%	44.0%
Delhi/NCR	42.5%	20.0%	36.3%	1.3%
Odisha	33.3%	66.7%	–	–
Jharkhand	16.7%	–	66.7%	16.7%
Chhattisgarh	–	100.0%	–	–

The results reveal sharp state-wise contrasts in recruitment pathways, highlighting differing levels of labour market formality and intermediary dependence.

In Delhi/NCR, migrant hiring is heavily mediated through complex subcontracting structures. Over one-third of workers (36.3%) report being hired through multiple layers of subcontracting, while direct hiring is almost absent (1.3%). The high proportion of DK/CS responses (42.5%) further suggests limited worker awareness of contractual arrangements, which is often a hallmark of opaque labour chains.

Tamil Nadu stands out for its relatively direct employment structure, with 44.0% of migrants reporting direct hire, the highest among all states. However, a significant share is still recruited via agents (27.6%) or multi-layer subcontracting (23.6%), indicating coexistence of formal and informal hiring mechanisms.

In Maharashtra, recruitment pathways are fragmented. While 22.7% report direct hiring, nearly 38% are recruited through agents or multiple layers, and a notably large share (39.4%) are uncertain about their hiring structure. This suggests blurred employer relationships and potentially weak communication around employment terms.

3.38 Is Pay Tied to Output or Time?

This section examines whether migrant workers' wages are time-based (daily/monthly wages), output-based (piece-rate), or a mixed system combining both. The mode of wage calculation is a critical indicator of income predictability and labour risk. Time-wage systems generally offer more stable earnings, while piece-rate and mixed systems often transfer production risk to workers, increasing income volatility especially in sectors affected by weather, demand fluctuations, or work interruptions. All figures below are presented as row percentages within each state.

Table 3.38: Whether pay tied to output or time

State	Time-wage	Mixed (time + output)	Piece-rate
Maharashtra	68.5%	2.4%	29.1%
Tamil Nadu	67.6%	28.0%	4.4%
Delhi/NCR	85.8%	12.9%	1.3%

Across states, time-based wage systems dominate, but the prevalence of output-linked pay varies sharply, reflecting differences in sectoral composition and labour arrangements.

In Delhi/NCR, wage determination is overwhelmingly time-based (85.8%), with negligible reliance on piece-rate pay (1.3%). This aligns with the concentration of migrants in factories, services, and security-related work, where daily or monthly wages are standard and output is less individually measured.

Maharashtra shows a substantial reliance on piece-rate work, with nearly three in ten workers (29.1%) paid based on output. This is consistent with employment in manufacturing, processing, brick kilns, and other production-linked activities where earnings fluctuate with productivity and work availability. The limited presence of mixed systems suggests clearer but riskier pay structures.

In Tamil Nadu, a distinctive pattern emerges. While time-wage employment remains dominant (67.6%), a large share (28.0%) report mixed wage system. This indicates hybrid arrangements where workers receive a base wage supplemented by output incentives, which is common in textiles, garments, and certain service roles, offering higher earning potential but also greater variability.

3.39 Are Fines Imposed for Infractions?

This section assesses whether migrant workers face financial penalties (fines) for workplace infractions, and the severity of such penalties. The presence of fines, especially large or undocumented ones, is an important indicator of disciplinary control, power asymmetries, and wage vulnerability in migrant labour arrangements. Fines can directly reduce take-home pay and may function as informal enforcement mechanisms in highly casualised or contractor-mediated employment. All figures below are presented as row percentages within each state.

Table 3.39: Are fines imposed for infractions?

	No fines	DK / CS	Yes — small fines	Yes — large fines
Maharashtra	78.9%	19.5%	1.6%	—
Tamil Nadu	49.6%	12.8%	30.0%	7.6%
Delhi/NCR	92.5%	5.0%	2.5%	—

Across most states, formal or explicit fines are not commonly reported, but Tamil Nadu stands out as a clear exception, indicating a distinct pattern of labour discipline.

In Delhi/NCR, the overwhelming majority of workers (92.5%) report no fines, suggesting relatively standardised wage arrangements and clearer employer–worker boundaries, consistent with factory, services, and security-related employment. Similarly, respondents in Odisha, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh uniformly report the absence of fines, though these findings should be interpreted cautiously due to smaller sample sizes.

Maharashtra presents a mixed picture. While nearly four-fifths (78.9%) report no fines, a sizeable share (19.5%) fall under “don’t know / can’t say”, which may indicate limited transparency, indirect penalties, or uncertainty around deductions that are not explicitly labelled as fines.

Tamil Nadu shows the highest exposure to punitive wage practices. Only 49.6% report no fines, while 37.6% explicitly acknowledge fines—30.0% small fines and 7.6% large fines. This is a significant deviation from other states and points to more coercive or disciplinary labour regimes, likely linked to sectors such as textiles, garments, domestic work, or contractor-managed employment where informal rule-setting and penalties are more prevalent.

SECTION 6: HEALTH, SAFETY AND INJURIES

3.40 Safety Training Given at the Start of Employment

This section examines whether migrant workers received any form of safety training at the start of their employment, and if so, whether it was formal or informal. Safety training is a critical indicator of workplace preparedness, occupational risk management, and employer accountability, especially in sectors characterised by hazardous tasks, informal contracts, and subcontracting. The absence of safety training increases exposure to accidents, injuries, and long-term health risks. All figures below are presented as row percentages within each state, enabling comparison of employer practices across destinations.

Table 3.40: Safety training given at start of employment

	No	Yes — informal	NA	Yes — formal
Maharashtra	62.2%	9.6%	20.7%	7.6%
Tamil Nadu	74.8%	7.2%	16.4%	1.6%
Delhi/NCR	35.8%	39.6%	2.1%	22.5%

The findings reveal substantial variation in safety training practices across states, highlighting uneven employer compliance with basic occupational safety norms.

Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra show the weakest safety preparedness. In Tamil Nadu, nearly three-quarters of workers (74.8%) report receiving no safety training at all, and only 1.6% report any form of formal training. Maharashtra performs marginally better but still shows 62.2% without training, with formal safety instruction limited to 7.6% of workers. These patterns are concerning given the concentration of migrants in manufacturing, textiles, construction, and domestic work, where occupational hazards are significant.

In contrast, Delhi/NCR stands out for relatively stronger safety practices. Only 35.8% report no training, while a substantial share received informal training (39.6%) and formal training (22.5%). This suggests greater standardisation of workplace induction processes, likely linked to larger establishments, factory settings, and regulatory oversight in the region.

3.41 Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

This section assesses whether migrant workers were provided personal protective equipment (PPE) at their place of work. PPE provision is a core indicator of workplace safety compliance, particularly in high-risk sectors such as construction, manufacturing, logistics, plantations, and waste handling. The analysis distinguishes between workers who never received PPE, those for whom PPE was not applicable, and those who received PPE always or intermittently. Results are shown as row percentages within each state, allowing comparison of employer safety practices across destinations.

Table 3.41: PPE provided at workplace

	No	NA	Yes — always	Sometimes
Maharashtra	53.4%	19.9%	19.1%	7.6%
Tamil Nadu	76.8%	16.8%	1.6%	4.8%
Delhi/NCR	60.4%	14.6%	22.5%	2.5%

The findings indicate widespread gaps in PPE provision, with the majority of migrant workers in most states reporting that no PPE was provided at all.

Tamil Nadu emerges as the most concerning case, where over three-quarters of workers (76.8%) report receiving no PPE, and only 1.6% report that PPE was always provided. This mirrors earlier findings on weak safety training in the state and points to systemic neglect of occupational safety, despite significant migrant concentration in construction, textiles, and domestic work.

Maharashtra shows marginally better but still inadequate conditions. While 53.4% report no PPE, about one in five workers (19.1%) report consistent PPE provision, and a further 7.6% receive PPE intermittently. The relatively large “NA” share (19.9%) suggests a mix of job types, including lower-risk engagements where PPE may not be standardised.

Delhi/NCR again performs comparatively better. Although 60.4% still report no PPE, the share reporting always receiving PPE (22.5%) is the highest among major destination states. This likely reflects better compliance in factory, infrastructure, and organised service settings, alongside stronger regulatory oversight.

3.42 Work-Related Injury or Illness in the Last 12 Months

This section examines the incidence and severity of work-related injuries or illnesses experienced by migrant workers in the last 12 months. It captures not only whether an injury or illness occurred, but also its severity, distinguishing between minor incidents requiring only first aid, cases that required clinical or hospital treatment, and serious or hospitalised injuries. Presented as row percentages by state, the table highlights differences in occupational risk exposure and workplace safety conditions across major destination contexts.

Table 3.42: Work-related injury/illness in last 12 months

	No injury/illness	Minor (first aid)	Needed clinic/hospital	Serious / hospitalised
Maharashtra	71.3%	27.9%	0.8%	—
Tamil Nadu	82.4%	14.0%	3.2%	0.4%
Delhi/NCR	93.8%	5.4%	0.4%	0.4%

Overall, the majority of migrant workers report no work-related injury or illness in the past year; however, the distribution of minor and more serious incidents reveals important state-level differences in occupational risk and safety practices.

Maharashtra shows the highest incidence of minor injuries, with nearly three in ten workers (27.9%) reporting incidents requiring first aid. While severe cases are rare, this high share of minor injuries suggests routine exposure to workplace hazards, consistent with employment in construction, manufacturing, and other physically demanding sectors.

Tamil Nadu presents a different risk profile. Although a relatively high share report no injury (82.4%), the proportion requiring clinical or hospital treatment (3.2%) is higher than in other large destination states, and serious injuries are reported, albeit at low levels. This pattern suggests that while fewer workers report injuries overall, those that do occur may be more severe, possibly reflecting weaker safety protocols in informal worksites.

Delhi/NCR records the lowest overall injury incidence, with 93.8% reporting no injury or illness. Minor and serious injuries are comparatively rare. This aligns with earlier findings on better safety training and PPE provision and indicates relatively stronger enforcement of workplace safety norms in more formal or regulated employment settings.

Taken together, the findings reinforce that injury risk among migrant workers is not negligible, particularly in states and sectors characterised by informal contracts, subcontracting, and limited safety enforcement. When read alongside earlier evidence on low PPE provision and limited safety training, the results point to an urgent need for preventive workplace safety measures, regular inspections, and accessible occupational health services for migrant workers.

3.43 Who Paid for the Treatment?

This section analyses how work-related injury or illness treatment costs were met among migrant workers who reported needing care. It captures whether expenses were borne by the worker or household, covered by the employer, met through a public health facility, or whether no treatment was taken at all. The table presents row-wise percentages by state, highlighting the extent of financial protection, employer responsibility, and reliance on public healthcare systems following occupational injuries or illnesses.

Table 3.43: Payer of treatment costs for work-related injury/illness

	Self / household	Employer	Public facility	No treatment
Maharashtra	80.6%	16.7%	2.8%	—
Tamil Nadu	13.6%	31.8%	38.6%	15.9%
Delhi/NCR	93.3%	6.7%	—	—

Across states, the dominant pattern is that injury-related treatment costs are largely borne by workers and their households, indicating limited employer liability and weak access to employment-linked health protection.

In Maharashtra, more than four in five injured workers (80.6%) paid for treatment themselves, with only 16.7% reporting employer support. Use of public facilities is minimal, suggesting that treatment costs frequently translate into out-of-pocket expenditure, reinforcing financial vulnerability following workplace injuries.

Delhi/NCR shows the most extreme reliance on self-financing, with 93.3% of affected workers paying from their own or household resources. Employer contribution is marginal, and no cases of public facility use are

reported. This is notable given Delhi/NCR's relatively better safety training coverage, indicating that even where injuries are fewer, financial protection remains weak when they do occur.

Tamil Nadu presents a more mixed but still concerning picture. While employer payment is reported by 31.8%, a larger share relies on public health facilities (38.6%), and 15.9% report receiving no treatment at all. This combination suggests that although employer support is relatively higher than in other states, gaps in timely access and affordability of care persist, potentially leading workers to delay or forego treatment.

3.44 Common Workplace Health Problems Reported by Migrant Workers

This section examines the types of workplace health problems experienced by migrant workers, as reported at destination worksites. Respondents could select multiple health problems, including respiratory issues, skin conditions, musculoskeletal pain, and heat stress, or report no health problems. The table below presents row-wise percentages, showing the proportion of workers within each state reporting each type of health issue. This approach allows comparison of health risk profiles across origin states, rather than comparing absolute counts.

Table 3.44: Common workplace health problems

Health problem	Maharashtra (n=251)	Tamil Nadu (n=250)	Delhi/NCR (n=240)
Respiratory	2.4%	13.6%	0.4%
Skin-related	2.8%	8.8%	0.0%
Musculoskeletal	0.0%	15.6%	1.3%
Heat stress	0.0%	30.8%	2.9%
Other (specify)	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
None (no health problem reported)	94.8%	62.8%	94.6%

Analysis reveals clear differences in the prevalence and nature of workplace health problems among migrant workers, with row percentages reflecting the share of workers within each state reporting specific conditions.

Across the larger destination states, viz. Maharashtra and Delhi/NCR, the majority of workers report no workplace-related health problems in the last 12 months (94.8% and 94.6%, respectively). Reported health issues in these locations are relatively limited and fragmented, suggesting either comparatively safer work environments, better access to preventive measures, or under-reporting of occupational health risks, particularly for chronic or non-acute conditions.

In contrast, Tamil Nadu stands out with a substantially higher burden of reported health problems. Nearly one-third of workers report heat stress (30.8%), reflecting exposure to high-temperature work environments and physically demanding jobs. Musculoskeletal problems (15.6%) and respiratory issues (13.6%) are also notable, pointing to repetitive labour, prolonged standing or lifting, and exposure to dust or poor ventilation. Consequently, the proportion reporting no health problems in Tamil Nadu drops to 62.8%, significantly lower than in Maharashtra and Delhi/NCR.

SECTION 7: ACCOMMODATION, SERVICES AND SAFETY

3.45 Type of Accommodation at Destination

Access to safe and adequate accommodation is a critical determinant of migrant workers' well-being at destination. Housing arrangements influence not only living conditions, but also workers' autonomy, mobility, and dependence on employers. This section examines the type of accommodation used by migrant

workers across states, highlighting the extent to which housing is self-arranged through rental markets versus employer-provided or site-based arrangements.

Table 3.45: Type of accommodation at destination

	Rented private room	Shared room / chawl	Employer-provided room	Employer dormitory / barrack	Labour camp (tents)	Other
Maharashtra	37.1%	25.1%	12.4%	15.1%	10.4%	–
Tamil Nadu	25.6%	38.4%	26.4%	9.2%	0.4%	–
Delhi/NCR	71.7%	24.2%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	0.4%

The table reveals clear state-wise variation in migrant housing arrangements, reflecting differences in labour market structures, duration of migration, and employer control.

In Delhi/NCR, accommodation is overwhelmingly self-arranged, with nearly three-quarters of migrants (71.7%) residing in rented private rooms and another 24.2% in shared housing. Employer-provided accommodation is negligible, indicating a labour market characterised by longer-term migration, greater integration into urban rental markets, and higher worker autonomy in securing housing.

Maharashtra displays a mixed accommodation profile. While a majority live in rented or shared housing (62.2% combined), a substantial proportion depend on employer-linked accommodation, including dormitories (15.1%) and labour camps (10.4%). This suggests the presence of project-based or site-tied employment, particularly in construction, infrastructure, and certain industrial sectors.

In Tamil Nadu, shared housing (38.4%) and employer-provided rooms (26.4%) together account for nearly two-thirds of migrant accommodation. This pattern indicates strong employer involvement in housing provision, consistent with factory-based, manufacturing, or service-sector employment where dormitories or shared rooms are commonly arranged by employers.

3.46 Room Sharing and Crowding at Destination

Room sharing is a key indicator of living density and crowding among migrant workers at destination. The number of people sharing a room has direct implications for privacy, health risks, hygiene, and overall well-being. This section examines how many persons migrants share their room with, across states. All figures in the table are row percentages, indicating how migrants within each state are distributed across different levels of room sharing.

Table 3.46: Number of persons sharing a room

	3–5 persons	1–2 persons	6–10 persons	10+ persons
Maharashtra	66.9%	30.7%	2.4%	–
Tamil Nadu	56.0%	12.8%	29.6%	1.6%
Delhi/NCR	63.3%	35.0%	1.7%	–

Across all major destination states, sharing rooms with multiple co-workers is the dominant living arrangement, highlighting widespread crowding among migrant workers.

In Maharashtra and Delhi/NCR, roughly two-thirds of migrants share rooms with 3–5 persons, while about one-third live with 1–2 persons. Extreme crowding (6 or more persons per room) is relatively uncommon, suggesting somewhat better access to rental housing and incremental improvements in living density in large urban labour markets.

Tamil Nadu stands out with a much higher incidence of crowded housing. Nearly one-third of migrants (29.6%) share rooms with 6–10 persons, and a small proportion (1.6%) share with more than 10 persons. Combined with earlier evidence of employer-provided and shared accommodation, this indicates dormitory-style or factory-linked housing, where high occupancy is common.

3.47 Services Available at Place of Stay

This indicator captures the availability of basic services at migrants' place of stay at destination, including drinking water, sanitation, electricity, cooking facilities, waste disposal, access to nearby healthcare, and childcare. The question is structured as a multiple-response item, allowing respondents to report access to more than one service.

Accordingly, the analysis is presented using state-wise service-specific coverage, expressed as the percentage of migrants within each state reporting access to a given service. Percentages therefore do not sum to 100 per cent within states and should not be interpreted as a distribution across service categories. Instead, they indicate the breadth of service availability experienced by migrants at destination.

Table 3.47: Availability of services at place of stay

Service available	Maharashtra	Tamil Nadu	Delhi/NCR	Odisha	Jharkhand	Chhattisgarh
Drinking water	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Toilet	71%	83%	99%	63%	100%	–
Electricity	100%	96%	98%	100%	100%	–
Cooking facility	13%	50%	88%	100%	17%	100%
Waste disposal	17%	55%	60%	75%	–	–
Nearby / govt. health facility	1%	31%	10%	100%	–	–
Childcare facility	0%	5%	0%	13%	–	–
No services reported	8%	0%	0%	0%	0%	–

Access to drinking water and electricity is nearly universal across all destination states, indicating that migrants are largely accommodated in settlements with basic physical infrastructure. However, availability of other essential services varies sharply, revealing important quality-of-living gaps.

Toilet access is almost universal in Delhi/NCR, relatively high in Tamil Nadu, but substantially lower in Maharashtra, suggesting continued reliance on shared or informal sanitation facilities in several locations.

Cooking facilities show the greatest divergence. While a large majority of migrants in Delhi/NCR and Tamil Nadu report access, only a small fraction in Maharashtra do so, pointing to heavy dependence on employer-provided food, street food, or communal arrangements. This aligns with earlier evidence on dormitories and labour camps.

Waste disposal and healthcare access remain weak across states, particularly in Maharashtra, where fewer than one-fifth of migrants report waste disposal services and almost none report nearby healthcare facilities. This highlights environmental and public health vulnerabilities, especially in high-density migrant settlements.

Childcare facilities are almost entirely absent, even in states with large numbers of migrant families. This reinforces the finding that destination living environments are not designed for family migration, disproportionately affecting women workers and children.

Finally, a small but important share of migrants in Maharashtra report having none of the listed services, underscoring the persistence of substandard and informal housing conditions even in major industrial destinations.

3.48 Access to Public Distribution System (PDS) / Ration at Destination

This indicator assesses migrants' ability to access subsidised food grains through the Public Distribution System (PDS) at their destination, including portability through the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) framework. Access to PDS is a critical determinant of food security for migrant households, particularly in contexts of irregular employment, delayed wage payments, and rising urban living costs.

Table 3.48: State-wise access to PDS/ration at destination

State	No access	DK/CS	Yes — easily (ONORC)	Yes — with difficulty
Maharashtra	72.9%	17.9%	9.2%	0.0%
Tamil Nadu	59.2%	34.8%	0.8%	5.2%
Delhi/NCR	34.6%	32.5%	32.5%	0.4%
Odisha	88.9%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%
Jharkhand	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
Chhattisgarh	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Access to PDS at destination remains highly uneven across states, indicating substantial gaps in the effective implementation of ration portability for migrant workers.

Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu show very high levels of exclusion, with nearly three-quarters of migrants in Maharashtra (72.9%) and over half in Tamil Nadu (59.2%) reporting no access to PDS at destination. In Tamil Nadu, the large proportion reporting DK/CS (34.8%) suggests uncertainty around eligibility or procedures, pointing to information and administrative barriers rather than outright denial alone.

Delhi/NCR presents a contrasting pattern, with one-third of migrants (32.5%) reporting easy access through ONORC, alongside an equally large group reporting no access. This polarisation indicates that while portability mechanisms are functioning for some migrants, coverage is far from universal and remains contingent on documentation, awareness, and point-of-sale functionality.

Overall, the findings highlight that ONORC has not translated into uniform food security at destination. PDS access continues to depend on destination-specific administrative capacity, migrant awareness, and local implementation practices, leaving a significant share of migrant workers reliant on market purchases or informal coping mechanisms.

3.49 Access to Public Health Services at Destination

This indicator examines migrants' ability to access public health services at their destination, including government hospitals, primary health centres, and urban health facilities. Access to public healthcare is a critical dimension of migrant well-being, particularly given migrants' exposure to occupational hazards, poor living conditions, and limited employer-provided health protection.

Table 3.49: State-wise access to public health services at destination

	Yes — easily	No	Yes — with difficulty	DK/CS
Maharashtra	43.8%	39.8%	8.0%	8.4%
Tamil Nadu	66.8%	8.8%	19.2%	5.2%
Delhi/NCR	80.0%	4.2%	13.8%	2.1%

Access to public health services at destination shows substantial inter-state variation, reflecting differences in urban health infrastructure, migrant inclusion practices, and administrative accessibility.

Delhi/NCR and Tamil Nadu emerge as relatively stronger performers. In Delhi/NCR, four out of five migrants (80.0%) report easy access to public health services, with very low outright exclusion (4.2%). Tamil Nadu also shows comparatively high access (66.8%), although nearly one-fifth of migrants (19.2%) report access only with difficulty, indicating barriers such as documentation requirements, distance, or overcrowding.

Maharashtra presents a more fragmented picture. While 43.8% report easy access, nearly two-fifths (39.8%) report no access at all, suggesting significant exclusion despite the state's extensive public health network. The combined share reporting difficulty or uncertainty (16.4%) further points to inconsistent on-ground inclusion of migrants.

3.50 Usability of Bank Accounts at Destination

This indicator assesses whether migrant workers are able to use bank accounts at their destination, either through their own accounts, via family-operated accounts, or not at all. Usable bank accounts are central to financial inclusion, enabling receipt of wages, remittances, savings, and access to formal social protection mechanisms.

Table 3.50: Whether bank account is usable at destination

	Yes — own accessible	Yes — family operates	No	DK/CS
Maharashtra	88.8%	2.8%	6.4%	2.0%
Tamil Nadu	94.0%	4.0%	2.0%	0.0%
Delhi/NCR	96.3%	0.8%	2.1%	0.8%

Overall, bank account usability at destination is high, particularly among migrants in major destination contexts. Delhi/NCR and Tamil Nadu show the strongest outcomes, with over 94% of migrants reporting access to their own usable bank accounts, indicating effective portability of banking services and widespread account ownership.

Maharashtra also performs relatively well, with nearly nine in ten migrants (88.8%) able to use their own accounts. However, the presence of a non-trivial minority reporting no usable account (6.4%) suggests residual barriers related to documentation, local verification, or banking access near worksites.

3.51 Usability of Mobile SIM at Destination

Access to a usable mobile SIM at the destination is a critical enabler of migrant well-being. It underpins communication with families, access to digital payments and banking, navigation of labour markets, and connection to emergency and public services. This indicator assesses whether migrants are able to use their own SIM, are dependent on borrowed SIMs, or lack usable access altogether at destination locations.

Table 3.51: Whether mobile SIM is usable at destination

	Own and using	No usable SIM	Borrowed and using
Maharashtra	99.6%	0.0%	0.4%
Tamil Nadu	99.6%	0.4%	0.0%
Delhi/NCR	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Odisha	88.9%	0.0%	11.1%
Jharkhand	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%

Mobile connectivity among migrants is near-universal in major destination states, with Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Delhi/NCR reporting almost complete access to personally owned and usable SIMs. This indicates strong portability of mobile connections across state boundaries and suggests that digital communication barriers are minimal for most migrants in these settings.

3.52 Experience of Discrimination at Destination

Discrimination at destination locations can significantly shape migrants' lived experiences, influencing their access to work, housing, public services, and interactions with employers and authorities. This question captures self-reported experiences of discrimination, disaggregated by type (language, caste, religion, police/administration, employer, or other reasons).

Table 3.52: Whether migrant has experienced discrimination at destination

	No discrimination	Language	Caste	Religion	Police / administration	Employer	Other
Maharashtra	98.8%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Tamil Nadu	52.8%	33.2%	2.4%	5.2%	3.6%	2.0%	0.8%
Delhi/NCR	93.3%	0.8%	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%
Odisha	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Jharkhand	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The findings indicate that most migrants do not report experiencing overt discrimination at destination, particularly in Maharashtra and Delhi/NCR where over 90% report no discrimination.

However, Tamil Nadu stands out as a clear exception. Nearly half of migrants (47.2%) report some form of discrimination, with language-based discrimination alone affecting one-third (33.2%). This suggests that linguistic barriers remain a major axis of exclusion for migrants in Tamil Nadu, with additional—though smaller—shares reporting discrimination linked to religion, caste, interactions with police/administration, and employers.

In Delhi/NCR, while overall reported discrimination is low, caste-based discrimination (5.4%) emerges as the most prominent form among those who do report adverse experiences, indicating that social identity continues to shape migrant vulnerability even in large metropolitan labour markets.

SECTION 8: DAILY COSTS, TRANSPORT AND LIVING EXPENSES

3.53 Typical Daily Expenditure at Destination (Food + Personal Expenses)

Daily living expenditure at destination provides a direct indication of migrants' cost burden and disposable income constraints. This question captures typical daily spending on food and personal expenses, reflecting differences in destination cost of living, access to employer-provided support, and wage adequacy.

The table below presents row-wise percentages, showing how migrants within each state are distributed across expenditure brackets.

Table 3.53: Typical daily expenditure (food + personal) at destination

	<₹100	₹100–199	₹200–399	₹400+
Maharashtra	3.6%	57.8%	34.3%	4.4%
Tamil Nadu	3.2%	40.4%	45.2%	11.2%
Delhi/NCR	0.4%	27.5%	67.9%	4.2%

Across major destination states, most migrants cluster in the ₹100–399 per day expenditure range, indicating tight but relatively standardised subsistence spending patterns.

In Maharashtra, nearly three-fifths of migrants (57.8%) spend ₹100–199 per day, suggesting cost containment possibly supported by shared accommodation, employer arrangements, or lower food prices. Only 4.4% report high expenditure (₹400+), indicating limited consumption headroom.

Tamil Nadu shows a more dispersed expenditure profile, with 45.2% spending ₹200–399 and a comparatively higher 11.2% spending ₹400+. This suggests higher out-of-pocket expenses, potentially linked to food costs, weaker employer provisioning, or urban living conditions for migrant workers.

In Delhi/NCR, expenditure is clearly higher: over two-thirds (67.9%) spend ₹200–399 daily, while very few spend below ₹100. This reflects the higher cost of living in metropolitan labour markets, even when wages may be higher.

3.54 Accommodation Cost at Destination

Accommodation costs are a critical component of migrants' living expenses and strongly influence their ability to save, remit income, and sustain long-term employment at destination. This indicator captures how accommodation costs are borne, whether housing is free (typically employer-provided), shared, fully paid by the worker, or deducted from wages.

Table 3.54: Accommodation cost at destination

	Shared / Other	Free (Employer)	Entire Rent Paid by Worker	Deducted from Wages
Maharashtra	37.5%	36.7%	22.7%	3.2%
Tamil Nadu	37.6%	52.4%	9.6%	0.4%
Delhi/NCR	32.1%	4.6%	63.3%	0.0%

Accommodation cost arrangements vary sharply across destination states, reflecting differences in urban housing markets, employer provisioning norms, and labour contracting structures.

In Maharashtra, accommodation arrangements are relatively mixed. Over one-third of migrants rely on shared or informal arrangements (37.5%), while a similar proportion (36.7%) receive free, employer-

provided housing. Nearly one in four migrants (22.7%) fully pay their rent, indicating moderate housing cost exposure.

Tamil Nadu stands out for strong employer provisioning, with over half of migrants (52.4%) receiving free accommodation. Only 9.6% pay full rent, suggesting lower housing-related financial stress for migrants in this state compared to other destinations.

In contrast, Delhi/NCR places a substantial cost burden on migrants. Nearly two-thirds (63.3%) pay their entire rent themselves, while only 4.6% receive free housing. This highlights the high cost of living and weak employer housing support in metropolitan labour markets, despite higher wage levels.

3.55 Commute Mode to Work at Destination

Daily commuting arrangements shape migrants' time costs, out-of-pocket expenses, and exposure to risk at destination. The mode of commute is also closely linked to housing location, employer provisioning, and the spatial organisation of labour markets.

Table 3.55: Mode of commute to work at destination

	Walk	Public Transport (Paid by Worker)	Employer Transport	Bike / Motorcycle	Shared Paid Transport	Other
Maharashtra	75.7%	14.7%	2.4%	5.6%	1.6%	0.0%
Tamil Nadu	34.8%	34.0%	23.6%	1.2%	6.0%	0.4%
Delhi/NCR	40.8%	56.7%	0.8%	1.3%	0.0%	0.4%

Clear inter-state differences emerge in how migrants commute to work, reflecting urban form, proximity of housing to worksites, and employer involvement in worker mobility.

In Maharashtra, commuting is overwhelmingly on foot (75.7%), suggesting that a large share of migrants live very close to their place of work, often in informal or employer-adjacent housing. Public transport use remains limited (14.7%), indicating relatively lower daily commuting costs.

Tamil Nadu shows the most diversified commute pattern. Walking (34.8%) and public transport (34.0%) are almost equally common, while nearly one-quarter of migrants (23.6%) rely on employer-provided transport. This aligns with earlier findings of stronger employer provisioning in housing and services in Tamil Nadu, pointing to more structured labour arrangements.

In Delhi/NCR, commuting is public transport dominated (56.7%), with a substantial share also walking (40.8%). Employer transport is negligible (0.8%), underscoring the distance between affordable housing and worksites and the dependence on urban transit systems. This pattern implies higher daily expenses and time burdens for migrants in metropolitan labour markets.

Table 3.56 Who Pays Commuting Expenses?

Beyond the mode of travel, who bears the cost of commuting is a critical determinant of migrants' effective earnings and daily vulnerability. Commuting expenses can significantly erode take-home wages, especially where distances are long or public transport is required. Employer coverage of travel costs—whether fully paid or indirectly deducted, also signals the degree of formality and responsibility embedded in labour arrangements.

Table 3.56: Who Pays Commuting Expenses?

State	Self	Employer (Fully Paid)	Shared with Co-workers/ Friends	Employer (Deducted from Wages)	Other
Tamil Nadu	33.7%	36.2%	25.2%	4.3%	0.6%
Delhi/NCR	96.5%	2.1%	0.7%	0.7%	0.0%
Maharashtra	88.5%	9.8%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%

A sharp contrast emerges between destination contexts in terms of who internalises commuting costs.

In Delhi/NCR, commuting expenses are overwhelmingly borne by workers themselves (96.5%). This aligns with earlier findings of heavy reliance on public transport and longer commute distances, reinforcing the reality that urban labour markets externalise mobility costs onto migrants, substantially reducing net disposable income.

Maharashtra shows a similar, though slightly less extreme, pattern: 88.5% of migrants pay commuting expenses out of pocket, with limited employer support (9.8%). Combined with high rates of walking observed earlier, this suggests that even when distances are short, commuting costs—where they exist—are largely individualised.

In contrast, Tamil Nadu stands out for significantly higher employer involvement. Only 33.7% of migrants pay commuting costs entirely themselves, while 36.2% report employer-paid transport and 25.2% share costs with co-workers. This reflects more organised work arrangements, including group transport and employer-facilitated mobility. However, the presence of wage-deducted employer transport (4.3%) indicates that not all employer support is cost-neutral for workers.

SECTION 9: REMITTANCES, SAVINGS AND FINANCE

3.57 Remittance Behaviour: Sending Money Home

Remittance behaviour is a core indicator of the economic purpose and household embeddedness of migration. Regular remittances signal sustained dependence of origin households on migrant earnings, while irregular or absent transfers may reflect higher living costs at destination, unstable employment, or weaker household obligations. Understanding these patterns across destination states helps assess financial pressure, surplus generation, and vulnerability among migrant workers.

Table 3.57: Whether migrant remits money home

	Yes – regularly	Yes – occasionally	No
Maharashtra	78.1%	8.4%	13.5%
Tamil Nadu	62.8%	35.2%	2.0%
Delhi/NCR	48.8%	25.8%	25.4%

Clear destination-level differences emerge in both the intensity and regularity of remittances.

Maharashtra exhibits the strongest remittance commitment, with nearly four out of five migrants (78.1%) sending money home regularly. This suggests relatively stable earnings and a strong orientation toward supporting origin households, despite the high likelihood of migrants bearing their own living and commuting costs in the state.

In Tamil Nadu, remittance behaviour is nearly universal, but more mixed in frequency. While 62.8% remit regularly, a substantial 35.2% do so occasionally, indicating income variability or higher destination expenditures that may constrain monthly transfers. Notably, only 2.0% report not sending money home at all, underscoring the continued centrality of migration to household survival strategies.

Delhi/NCR stands out for the weakest remittance outcomes. Less than half of migrants (48.8%) remit regularly, while one in four (25.4%) do not remit at all. This pattern is consistent with earlier findings of higher commuting costs, greater self-financing of basic services, and heavier exposure to urban living expenses, which collectively reduce disposable income available for transfer.

3.58 Frequency of Remittance

Beyond whether migrants remit, the frequency of remittances provides deeper insight into income regularity, employment stability, and household financial dependence at the place of origin. Regular monthly or fortnightly transfers indicate predictable cash flows and sustained obligations, while irregular or end-of-trip remittances often reflect volatile earnings, seasonal work arrangements, or higher cost pressures at destination. Examining remittance frequency by destination state helps distinguish between stable wage migration and more precarious or episodic income patterns.

Table 3.58: Frequency of Remittance by Destination State

State	Monthly	Irregular	Fortnightly	End of trip	Weekly
Tamil Nadu	48.2%	17.1%	21.6%	7.3%	5.7%
Maharashtra	78.3%	13.8%	6.5%	1.4%	0.0%
Delhi/NCR	74.3%	22.9%	1.1%	0.6%	1.1%

Clear contrasts emerge across destination states in the regularity and predictability of remittance flows.

Maharashtra displays the most stable remittance pattern, with more than three-quarters of migrants (78.3%) remitting monthly. Irregular remittances are relatively limited (13.8%), and very few migrants delay transfers until the end of the trip. This suggests comparatively stable wage cycles and the ability to generate consistent surplus despite living and commuting expenses.

A similar, though slightly weaker, pattern is observed in Delhi/NCR, where 74.3% remit monthly. However, the higher share of irregular remittances (22.9%) points to greater income volatility, likely linked to casualised employment, intermittent workdays, or higher urban cost pressures that disrupt regular transfers.

Tamil Nadu shows the most diversified remittance rhythm. Less than half of migrants (48.2%) remit monthly, while a sizeable proportion remit fortnightly (21.6%), irregularly (17.1%), or only at the end of the trip (7.3%). This distribution suggests shorter wage cycles, more frequent cash flows, and possibly closer proximity to origin households, enabling flexible transfer schedules.

3.59 Typical Amount per Remittance Transfer

While remittance frequency captures how often migrants send money home, the amount sent per transfer reflects earning capacity, cost of living at destination, and the extent of financial responsibility towards origin households. Smaller, frequent transfers typically indicate tight monthly budgeting and regular household dependence, whereas larger lump-sum transfers may reflect higher wages, longer accumulation periods, or irregular remittance behaviour. Analysing the typical remittance amount by destination state helps distinguish between subsistence-oriented migration and higher-surplus migration streams.

Table 3.59: Typical amount per transfer by destination

	<₹1,000	₹1,000–4,999	₹5,000–9,999	₹10,000+
Tamil Nadu	3.7%	49.0%	23.7%	23.7%
Maharashtra	0.0%	75.6%	23.0%	1.4%
Delhi/NCR	0.6%	11.7%	64.8%	22.9%
Odisha	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	85.7%
Jharkhand	16.7%	16.7%	66.7%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

The table reveals clear destination-specific remittance amount profiles, closely aligned with wage levels and remittance frequency observed earlier.

Maharashtra is characterised by low-to-moderate transfer sizes, with over three-quarters of migrants (75.6%) sending ₹1,000–4,999 per transfer and another 23.0% sending ₹5,000–9,999. Very few migrants remit large sums above ₹10,000. This pattern is consistent with regular monthly remittances of smaller amounts, suggesting stable but limited surplus after meeting high living and commuting costs.

In contrast, Delhi/NCR shows a markedly higher remittance quantum per transfer. Nearly two-thirds of migrants (64.8%) remit ₹5,000–9,999, and another 22.9% send ₹10,000 or more per transfer. Only a small minority remit below ₹5,000. This indicates higher accumulation per remittance cycle, likely driven by higher nominal wages, longer working hours, or less frequent transfer intervals compared to Maharashtra.

Tamil Nadu displays the most balanced distribution across transfer sizes. About half of migrants (49.0%) remit ₹1,000–4,999, while nearly one-quarter each remit ₹5,000–9,999 and ₹10,000+. This spread mirrors the mixed remittance frequency observed earlier (monthly, fortnightly, and irregular), pointing to diverse employment arrangements and household needs.

3.60 Remittance Channel Used

The choice of remittance channel reflects migrants' financial inclusion, trust in formal systems, documentation status, and transaction costs at the destination. While the expansion of bank accounts, UPI, and digital payment infrastructure has lowered barriers to formal remittances, continued use of money transfer operators and informal channels signals gaps in accessibility, interoperability, or user confidence. Examining the primary remittance channel by destination state helps assess the extent to which migrant workers are effectively integrated into formal financial systems.

Table 3.60: Channel used for sending remittances by destination state

	Bank / UPI	Money Transfer Operator	Informal hawala / agent	Cash via friends/relatives	Post office
Tamil Nadu	51.8%	36.3%	9.4%	2.4%	0.0%
Maharashtra	72.4%	21.2%	0.0%	6.0%	0.5%
Delhi/NCR	67.0%	33.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Odisha	42.9%	57.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Jharkhand	50.0%	33.3%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Across major destinations, formal remittance channels dominate, though with meaningful variation in the mix of instruments used.

Maharashtra shows the highest reliance on Bank/UPI transfers, with nearly three-quarters of migrants (72.4%) using digital or bank-based channels. The limited use of money transfer operators (21.2%) and minimal dependence on informal or cash-based channels suggests strong financial integration, likely supported by high bank account usability and regular remittance patterns observed earlier.

Delhi/NCR also demonstrates a strong shift towards formal channels, with 67.0% using Bank/UPI and the remaining 33.0% relying on money transfer operators. The complete absence of informal channels indicates high system accessibility and confidence, consistent with higher wage levels and larger average remittance amounts per transfer.

In contrast, Tamil Nadu presents a more diversified remittance ecosystem. While a majority (51.8%) use Bank/UPI, a substantial 36.3% still depend on money transfer operators, and 9.4% report using informal agents. This mixed pattern aligns with the state's heterogeneous employment arrangements and remittance frequencies, suggesting that digital access alone does not fully eliminate reliance on intermediaries.

Use of cash sent via friends or relatives remains marginal, observed mainly in Maharashtra (6.0%), and likely reflects trust-based coping mechanisms in contexts where formal channels are temporarily inaccessible.

3.61 Typical Transfer Fee Paid for Remittances

Transaction costs are a critical but often overlooked dimension of migrant remittance behaviour. Even small transfer fees can significantly affect net household incomes when remittances are frequent or amounts are modest. Assessing the typical transfer fee paid by migrants across destination states provides insight into the affordability of remittance channels, the extent of digital adoption, and the continued reliance on intermediated or cash-based systems that may impose higher costs.

Table 3.61: Typical transfer fee paid for remittances by destination state

	No fees paid	< ₹50	₹50–199	₹200+
Tamil Nadu	53.5%	18.4%	27.3%	0.8%
Maharashtra	63.6%	20.7%	15.2%	0.5%
Delhi/NCR	58.1%	9.5%	32.4%	0.0%
Odisha	42.9%	42.9%	14.3%	0.0%
Jharkhand	16.7%	33.3%	33.3%	16.7%
Chhattisgarh	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Across major destination states, a substantial proportion of migrants report paying no transfer fees, indicating widespread use of zero-cost Bank/UPI transfers, particularly in Maharashtra (63.6%) and Delhi/NCR (58.1%). This aligns with earlier evidence of high bank account usability and dominant reliance on formal digital channels in these destinations.

However, fee-free transfers are not universal. In Tamil Nadu, nearly half of migrants (46.5%) incur some remittance cost, with over a quarter (27.3%) paying between ₹50–199 per transfer. This pattern reflects the state's higher dependence on money transfer operators and mixed remittance channels observed earlier.

Delhi/NCR shows a distinctive cost structure, where while a majority pay no fees, nearly one-third (32.4%) pay ₹50–199, suggesting continued use of paid formal intermediaries despite strong digital infrastructure. Notably, high-cost transfers (₹200+) are absent, indicating that even paid channels remain within moderate cost bands.

3.62 Share of Earnings Remitted to Household

The proportion of earnings remitted by migrants is a key indicator of household dependence on migration income and the degree of financial sacrifice made by migrants at destination. Higher remittance shares often reflect stronger obligations to origin households, limited disposable income at destination, or the absence of local family responsibilities. This table examines the share of earnings remitted, by destination state, to understand differences in remittance intensity and household reliance across migration corridors.

Table 3.62: Share of earnings remitted

	<25%	25–49%	50–74%	>75%	DK/CS
Tamil Nadu	2.4%	23.7%	32.7%	18.8%	22.4%
Maharashtra	26.3%	53.9%	19.4%	0.0%	0.5%
Delhi/NCR	7.8%	44.7%	45.3%	2.2%	0.0%

Clear differences emerge in remittance intensity across destination states. Migrants in Delhi/NCR and Tamil Nadu exhibit the highest remittance commitments, with a majority remitting 50% or more of their earnings. In Delhi/NCR, nearly half of migrants (45.3%) remit 50–74% of income, while an additional share remits even higher proportions, indicating strong household dependence on migrant income despite relatively higher wage levels.

Tamil Nadu displays a more polarised pattern. While around one-third remit 50–74% of earnings and nearly one-fifth remit over 75%, a substantial 22.4% are unable or unwilling to estimate their remittance share, suggesting irregular remittance behaviour or fluctuating earnings. This aligns with earlier evidence of mixed employment arrangements and variable payment cycles in the state.

In contrast, Maharashtra shows a distinctly lower remittance burden. Over half of migrants (53.9%) remit only 25–49% of earnings, and more than a quarter remit less than 25%. The absence of very high remittance shares (>75%) suggests greater retention of income at destination, likely linked to higher living costs, longer-term migration, or partial family co-residence.

3.63 Saving Behaviour at Destination

The ability to save at the destination is a critical indicator of migrants' financial security, surplus income, and resilience to shocks. Savings behaviour reflects not only wage adequacy but also living costs, remittance obligations, access to formal financial infrastructure, and trust in institutions at destination. This section examines whether migrants are able to save money while working away from home, and the modes through which savings are held, across destination states.

Table 3.63: Do You Save Money at Destination?

	Yes – Bank	No	Cash with friend/agent	With employer	Mobile wallet	Post office
Maharashtra	59.0%	37.8%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Tamil Nadu	48.4%	45.6%	2.8%	2.8%	0.4%	0.0%
Delhi/NCR	89.6%	9.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%
Odisha	88.9%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Jharkhand	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Saving behaviour varies sharply by destination state, reflecting differences in wage levels, cost of living, and remittance pressure. Delhi/NCR stands out most clearly, with nearly nine out of ten migrants (89.6%)

reporting savings, overwhelmingly through formal bank accounts. This suggests relatively higher disposable income and stronger financial inclusion among migrants working in the NCR region.

In Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, savings outcomes are notably weaker. In Maharashtra, while a majority (59.0%) report saving, a substantial 37.8% are unable to save at all, indicating that earnings are largely absorbed by living costs and remittances. Tamil Nadu shows the lowest savings capacity among large destinations, with savings and non-savings populations almost evenly split (48.4% vs. 45.6%). This aligns with earlier evidence of higher remittance shares and variable employment arrangements in the state.

Across all major destinations, formal banking is the dominant savings channel, while informal mechanisms—such as holding cash with friends, agents, or employers—are marginal and limited to small proportions. Use of mobile wallets and post office savings is negligible, indicating missed opportunities for digital and postal financial inclusion among migrant workers.

SECTION 10: CHILDREN, SCHOOLING AND CHILD LABOUR

3.64 Presence of Children at Destination

Whether migrants are accompanied by their children at the destination is a key indicator of migration permanence, household reunification, and the adequacy of living conditions. Migrants who leave children behind at the place of origin are more likely to experience circular or temporary migration, while those who bring children face additional needs related to housing, childcare, schooling, and health services. This indicator helps distinguish between individualised labour migration and family-based settlement patterns across destination states.

Table 3.64: Whether children are with migrants at destination

	No — all at origin (Row %)	NA (Row %)	Yes — all here (Row %)	Yes — some here (Row %)
Maharashtra	62.2%	12.0%	19.1%	6.8%
Tamil Nadu	64.4%	31.6%	1.2%	2.8%
Delhi/NCR	44.2%	25.8%	25.8%	4.2%

The table indicates that migrant households are predominantly characterised by separation between place of work and family residence, with children largely remaining at the place of origin. Across most destination states, a clear majority of respondents report that all children are staying back at origin, underscoring the temporary, circular, and individualised nature of migration rather than permanent household relocation.

Tamil Nadu similarly reflects a strong tendency towards family separation, with nearly two-thirds of migrants indicating that all children are at origin and only a negligible share reporting that children are fully present at the destination. The relatively high proportion of “NA” responses in Tamil Nadu likely reflects a combination of migrants without children and younger, single workers, reinforcing the interpretation that migration to the state is dominated by labour-driven mobility rather than household migration.

Delhi/NCR presents a contrasting pattern. While a substantial share of migrants still leave children at origin, the proportion reporting that all children are present at the destination is significantly higher than in other states. This suggests a relatively greater degree of settlement stability, longer migration durations, and potentially better access to rental housing, services, and schooling that make family co-residence more feasible. Maharashtra occupies an intermediate position, with most migrants still leaving children behind, but a non-trivial minority reporting full or partial presence of children at destination.

Overall, the distribution highlights that migration remains primarily a livelihood strategy rather than a relocation of family units, with limited child accompaniment across destinations. Where children are present, as seen more clearly in Delhi/NCR and to a lesser extent in Maharashtra, this has important implications for service provisioning at destination—particularly housing adequacy, schooling, childcare, nutrition, and health services.

3.65 Children's Schooling at Destination

For migrant households that bring children to the destination, access to schooling is a critical determinant of child well-being and long-term human capital outcomes. Migrant children often face multiple barriers to school enrolment, including documentation gaps, language barriers, frequent mobility, and the need to supplement household incomes through work. This table examines whether children accompanying migrants are enrolled in local schools at the destination, distinguishing between formal schooling, informal arrangements, and non-enrolment due to work or lack of access. All percentages are row percentages, reflecting the distribution of schooling status among children present at the destination within each state.

Table 3.65: Whether children are enrolled in local school at destination

	Yes — formal	Not enrolled — working	Not enrolled — no access	Yes — informal
Delhi/NCR	52.8%	15.3%	18.1%	13.9%
Maharashtra	40.0%	20.0%	21.5%	18.5%
Tamil Nadu	40.0%	50.0%	—	10.0%

The table reveals substantial gaps in schooling access and continuity for migrant children at destination, even when children accompany their parents. Delhi/NCR demonstrates the relatively strongest schooling outcomes, with just over half of children enrolled in formal schools. However, a significant minority remain excluded from education, either because they are engaged in work or because they lack access to schooling altogether, indicating persistent structural and administrative barriers despite the urban setting.

Maharashtra shows a more fragmented schooling landscape. Only two-fifths of children are enrolled in formal schools, while a comparable share is either working or unable to access schooling. The relatively higher reliance on informal schooling arrangements suggests adaptive coping strategies by migrant households in the absence of inclusive formal systems, but also points to uneven quality and continuity of education.

Tamil Nadu presents a particularly concerning pattern, where non-enrolment due to child work dominates, accounting for half of all cases. This indicates that for migrant families in Tamil Nadu, economic compulsion outweighs educational participation, reflecting both labour market pressures and limited destination-based support systems for migrant children. Formal schooling and informal enrolment together account for less than half of cases, underscoring the vulnerability of migrant children in this context.

3.66 Children's Engagement in Paid Work at Destination

Children accompanying migrant households to destination locations often face heightened risks of entering paid work, particularly when households experience income insecurity, lack access to schooling, or depend on family labour for survival. Engagement in paid work among migrant children reflects both economic compulsion and structural gaps in child protection, education access, and social services at destination areas. This table examines the extent to which children present at the destination are engaged in paid work, distinguishing between regular work, occasional work, and non-engagement. All figures are presented as row percentages, indicating the distribution of responses within each state.

Table 3.66: Whether children are engaged in paid work at destination

	Yes — regularly	No	Yes — occasionally	DK / CS
Maharashtra	46.2%	53.8%	—	—
Delhi/NCR	45.5%	18.2%	18.2%	18.2%
Tamil Nadu	80.0%	20.0%	—	—

The table indicates substantial engagement of migrant children in paid work at destination, particularly in states where household vulnerability appears more acute. Tamil Nadu shows the most severe pattern, with four out of five children reported as being regularly engaged in paid work. This aligns with earlier findings on low school enrolment and suggests that economic necessity is driving child labour among migrant families in this context.

Maharashtra presents a more mixed situation. While a slight majority of children are not engaged in paid work, nearly half are reported to be working regularly, indicating that child labour remains a significant coping strategy for a sizeable segment of migrant households. This reflects a precarious balance between income needs and child protection, even in relatively diversified labour markets.

Delhi/NCR exhibits a fragmented pattern, with children distributed across regular work, occasional work, and non-engagement, alongside a relatively high proportion of uncertainty or non-response. This suggests more heterogeneous living and working arrangements, possibly linked to informal employment settings, short-term migration, or reluctance to disclose child labour in a highly regulated urban environment.

SECTION 11: SOCIAL NETWORKS, GROUPS AND SUPPORT

3.67 Migrant Network Presence from Place of Origin at Destination

Migrant networks play a critical role in shaping migration decisions, employment access, housing arrangements, and coping mechanisms at destination locations. The presence of co-villagers or people from the same origin area often lowers migration risks by facilitating job referrals, shared accommodation, informal credit, and social support. This section examines migrants' estimates of how many people from their place of origin are currently working at the same destination. The analysis helps assess the density and scale of origin-based migrant networks across destinations. All figures are presented as row percentages, reflecting the distribution of responses within each state.

Table 3.67: Estimated number of people from same origin working at destination

	1–5	6–20	21–50	51+	DK / CS	None
Maharashtra	27.5%	27.9%	13.1%	2.0%	21.1%	8.4%
Tamil Nadu	30.8%	60.0%	6.8%	0.4%	0.8%	1.2%
Delhi/NCR	15.0%	34.2%	10.0%	17.9%	20.8%	2.1%
Odisha	22.2%	66.7%	11.1%	—	—	—
Jharkhand	16.7%	33.3%	—	—	—	50.0%
Chhattisgarh	—	—	—	—	—	100.0%

The findings point to strong origin-based migrant clustering at destination, though the scale and certainty of these networks vary considerably across states. Tamil Nadu stands out for its highly concentrated networks, with six in ten migrants reporting that 6–20 people from their origin are working alongside them, and nearly one-third reporting smaller clusters of 1–5 people. Very few migrants in Tamil Nadu report the absence of co-origin workers, suggesting well-established and stable migration corridors.

Maharashtra displays a more dispersed pattern. While roughly equal proportions report small (1–5) and medium-sized (6–20) origin networks, a sizable share of respondents are uncertain about the number of co-origin workers. This suggests more fluid, fragmented, or overlapping migrant populations, possibly reflecting circular or short-term migration dynamics and mixed-origin worksites.

Delhi/NCR shows evidence of large-scale migrant concentration, with nearly one in five migrants reporting the presence of more than 50 people from their origin working at the destination. At the same time, relatively high levels of uncertainty persist, indicating that migrants may be embedded in large, complex labour markets where origin-based visibility is lower, or where subcontracting obscures social ties.

3.68 Membership of Worker Groups, Unions, and Support Networks at Destination

Collective membership in trade unions, informal worker groups, or community organisations is a critical determinant of migrants' bargaining power, access to information, and ability to seek redress at destination. Such memberships can mitigate workplace vulnerabilities by facilitating collective voice, legal awareness, and mutual support. This section examines migrants' reported membership across different types of groups and contrasts them against the proportion reporting no membership at all.

Table 3.68: Membership of group / Union / support network at destination

	Trade union	Community / faith group	Informal worker group	No membership
Maharashtra	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	98.8%
Tamil Nadu	2.8%	3.2%	6.0%	92.8%
Delhi/NCR	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

The corrected table reveals extremely low levels of collective organisation among migrant workers, particularly in large destination states. In Maharashtra and Delhi/NCR, over 90% of migrants report no membership in any trade union, informal worker group, or community organisation. This points to a predominantly atomised migrant workforce, operating without collective representation or institutional support.

Tamil Nadu shows marginally higher levels of association, especially through informal worker groups, yet even here more than nine in ten migrants remain unaffiliated. This suggests that while informal networks may exist, they rarely translate into organised collective structures with bargaining or advocacy capacity.

3.69 Support Received from Groups at Destination

Beyond formal membership, the practical value of migrant collectives lies in the types of support they provide at destination. Such support can range from assistance in finding work and housing to food sharing, credit, childcare, and legal aid. This section examines the nature of support accessed by migrants who reported receiving help from any group or collective at destination. Percentages are calculated as row percentages within each state, indicating the share of migrants reporting each type of support out of the total migrant sample in that state.

Table 3.69: Support received from group / collective at destination

	Help finding work	Lending / credit	Food / board sharing	Legal / complaint support	Childcare	Housing help	No support
Maharashtra	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%
Tamil Nadu	6.0%	1.6%	5.6%	3.2%	3.2%	2.0%	0.4%
Delhi/NCR	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The corrected table highlights that access to collective support at destination is extremely limited for the majority of migrants, mirroring the very low levels of group membership observed earlier. In Maharashtra, support access is negligible, with only a small fraction reporting legal assistance or housing-related help, and virtually no engagement in work-finding or welfare-oriented support. This suggests that even where migrants are present in large numbers, collective mechanisms remain weak or inaccessible.

Tamil Nadu shows comparatively broader but still modest support coverage. Assistance related to finding work and food or board sharing emerges as the most common forms of support, followed by legal aid and childcare. However, even in this relatively better-performing context, fewer than one in ten migrants report receiving any form of organised support, indicating that such mechanisms reach only a limited subset of workers.

Across Delhi/NCR, the absence of reported support reflects a near-total lack of functional migrant collectives or accessible support structures. Overall, the findings reinforce a key structural gap: most migrant workers at destination operate without organised support, leaving them heavily dependent on employers or informal personal networks for survival and risk mitigation. Strengthening collective support systems could therefore play a critical role in improving migrants' access to employment stability, welfare services, and grievance redressal.

3.70 Experience of Wage Theft or Abuse at Destination

Wage theft and workplace abuse are critical indicators of labour vulnerability among migrant workers, encompassing practices such as non-payment or delayed payment of wages, underpayment, and other forms of economic exploitation by employers or contractors. Understanding the prevalence of such experiences at destination provides insight into the degree of labour protection, bargaining power, and enforcement of labour rights across different destination contexts. This section analyses migrants' self-reported experiences of wage theft or abuse, disaggregated by destination state.

Table 3.70: Experience of wage theft or abuse at destination

	No (%)	Yes (%)
Maharashtra	99.6	0.4
Tamil Nadu	98.8	1.2
Delhi/NCR	98.8	1.3

Across most destination states, reported incidence of wage theft or abuse is extremely low, with more than 98 per cent of migrants in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Delhi/NCR stating that they have not faced such experiences. This pattern may reflect relatively better enforcement environments, more formalised employment arrangements, or limited willingness among migrants to openly report exploitative practices due to fear, normalisation of abuse, or lack of awareness of labour rights.

3.71 Payment as Promised at Destination

Timely and full payment of agreed wages is a core indicator of job quality and fairness in migrant labour markets. Whether workers receive the amount promised at the time of recruitment reflects the degree of transparency in employment arrangements, the prevalence of informal contracting, and the scope for wage-related exploitation at destination locations.

Table 3.71: Were Paid the Amount as Promised

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Don't want to answer (%)
Maharashtra	91.2	6.0	2.8
Tamil Nadu	76.4	13.6	10.0
Delhi/NCR	97.9	2.1	0.0

Across most destination states, a large majority of migrant workers report receiving wages as promised, indicating relatively stable wage arrangements for many migrants. Delhi/NCR and Maharashtra show particularly strong outcomes, with over nine in ten workers confirming that agreed payments were honoured. Odisha and Chhattisgarh report universal compliance, though these results should be interpreted cautiously given the very small number of respondents.

Tamil Nadu presents a more mixed picture. While a majority report being paid as promised, a notable share indicate either non-payment of the agreed amount or reluctance to answer the question. The relatively higher proportion of non-response may point to uncertainty, fear of repercussions, or ambiguous wage arrangements, especially in more informal or subcontracted employment settings.

3.72 Mode and Regularity of Wage Payment

Beyond whether wages are paid as promised, the mode and regularity of payment play a critical role in shaping income stability for migrant workers. Regular monthly payments enable smoother consumption, savings, and remittances, while lump-sum or delayed payments increase financial vulnerability, dependence on advances, and exposure to debt. This section examines how workers who reported being paid as promised actually received their wages at destination.

Table 3.72: Mode of wage payment among those paid as promised

	Paid monthly (regular) (%)	Lump-sum after completion (%)	Paid monthly (irregular) (%)	Advance + balance later (%)	Part payment delayed (%)	Paid per task (%)
Delhi/NCR	20.4	36.2	41.7	1.3	0.0	0.4
Maharashtra	49.3	34.5	2.6	10.9	0.9	1.7
Tamil Nadu	59.7	7.9	2.6	24.6	5.2	0.0

Clear differences emerge across destination states in how wages are actually disbursed, even among workers who report being paid as promised. Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra display relatively stronger patterns of regular monthly payment, particularly Tamil Nadu, where nearly three-fifths of workers receive wages on a regular monthly basis. However, even in these states, a substantial minority rely on advance-based or delayed settlement arrangements, indicating continued income smoothing challenges.

Delhi/NCR stands out for its high dependence on irregular monthly payments and lump-sum settlements, with fewer than one-quarter of workers receiving wages on a predictable monthly schedule. The predominance of irregular or end-of-work payments suggests employment structures characterised by subcontracting, task-based arrangements, or short-term engagements, which limit income certainty despite wages being nominally “as promised.”

3.73 Payment-Related Problems at Destination

Even when migrants are eventually paid, the process of receiving wages can involve multiple forms of distress, including partial payments, delays, non-payment, or coercion to continue working in order to secure dues. Such payment-related issues deepen economic insecurity, weaken workers' bargaining power, and often remain invisible in standard wage compliance assessments. This section examines the nature of problems faced by migrants while getting paid at destination worksites.

Table 3.73: Nature of payment-related problems experienced by workers

	Partial payment (%)	Delayed payment (%)	Not received payment (%)	Coerced to do extra work (%)
Tamil Nadu	79.4	14.7	0.0	5.9
Maharashtra	73.3	0.0	26.7	0.0
Delhi/NCR	80.0	20.0	0.0	0.0

Across destination states, partial payment emerges as the dominant form of wage-related distress, affecting the large majority of workers who reported facing any payment issue. This pattern is most pronounced in Tamil Nadu and Delhi/NCR, where partial payments account for four-fifths or more of reported problems. Such practices indicate systematic underpayment or withholding of agreed wage components, rather than outright denial of wages.

Delayed payments form the second major issue, particularly in Delhi/NCR and Tamil Nadu, suggesting cash flow uncertainties and weak enforcement of payment timelines in urban labour markets. Maharashtra stands out for a relatively high incidence of complete non-payment among those facing problems, pointing to more severe forms of wage denial in a subset of cases.

Instances of coercion, where workers are compelled to undertake additional work to secure pending wages, are reported primarily in Tamil Nadu, highlighting coercive labour practices that extend beyond simple wage delays.

3.74 Awareness of Public Migrant and Labour Helpline Support

Public migrant and labour helplines are intended to function as first-response grievance and information mechanisms for migrant workers facing wage abuse, unsafe working conditions, or denial of entitlements at destination. Awareness of such helplines is a necessary precondition for their effective use. This section assesses the extent to which migrant workers are aware of the existence of public migrant or labour helpline support systems across destination states.

Table 3.74: Awareness of public migrant/labour helpline support

	Not aware (%)	Aware (%)
Maharashtra	78.9	21.1
Tamil Nadu	88.4	11.6
Delhi/NCR	95.4	4.6

Across most destination states, awareness of public migrant or labour helpline support is strikingly low, indicating a major disconnect between the existence of institutional grievance mechanisms and migrant workers' knowledge of them. In high-inflow destinations such as Delhi/NCR and Tamil Nadu, fewer than one in ten workers report being aware of any such helpline, despite these being among the states with the most complex and fragmented labour markets.

Maharashtra shows slightly higher awareness levels, yet even here nearly four out of five migrants remain unaware of available helpline support..

3.75 Reporting of Wage Theft or Abuse

Reporting wage theft or workplace abuse is a critical step for migrants to access redressal mechanisms and assert labour rights. However, reporting behaviour is often shaped by fear of retaliation, lack of trust in employers or institutions, and limited awareness of formal grievance channels. This section examines whether migrant workers who experienced wage theft or abuse reported these incidents, and to whom such reporting was directed.

Among migrant workers who reported experiences related to wage theft or abuse, non-reporting emerges as the dominant response across states. In b Maharashtra, all respondents who faced such issues indicated that they did not report the incident to any authority or intermediary. This suggests a near-total absence of accessible or trusted reporting pathways for migrants to these locations.

Tamil Nadu presents a more mixed pattern, with respondents evenly split between not reporting, informing family members, and indicating that they had not faced such issues. Notably, reporting in this case remains confined to informal family networks, rather than employers or formal grievance channels, underscoring the limited role of institutional mechanisms in addressing labour abuse.

In Delhi/NCR, one-third of affected workers reported the issue to an employer or foreman, while the majority still chose not to report. While this indicates slightly greater scope for workplace-level grievance articulation in large urban labour markets, the overall tendency remains towards silence or inaction.

Taken together, the findings indicate that even when wage theft or abuse occurs, migrants rarely escalate complaints beyond immediate or informal circles, if at all. This reinforces earlier evidence on low awareness of helplines and highlights a broader environment of vulnerability, where fear of job loss, power asymmetries, and weak institutional outreach constrain migrants' ability to seek justice.

3.76 Judicial Proceedings Against Employers

Formal legal action against employers represents the most escalated form of grievance redressal available to migrant workers. The presence of ongoing judicial proceedings reflects both the severity of disputes and migrants' capacity, individual or collective, to engage with legal institutions. This section examines whether migrants or their co-workers are currently involved in any judicial proceedings against employers at destination locations.

Table 3.76: Ongoing judicial proceedings against employers

	No (%)	Don't want to answer (%)	Yes (%)
Maharashtra	96.4	3.6	0.0
Tamil Nadu	86.0	12.8	1.2
Delhi/NCR	100.0	0.0	0.0

Across destination states, ongoing judicial proceedings against employers are extremely rare, indicating that formal legal escalation is largely absent from migrants' lived responses to workplace disputes. In Maharashtra and Delhi/NCR, virtually all respondents reported that neither they nor fellow migrants were involved in any judicial action against employers, pointing to a near-complete disengagement from formal legal processes.

Tamil Nadu shows a marginal presence of legal escalation, with a very small proportion of respondents acknowledging ongoing proceedings, alongside a notable share who preferred not to answer. This reluctance to respond may reflect fear of repercussions, uncertainty about the legal status of cases involving co-workers, or discomfort in disclosing sensitive information related to employer disputes.

SECTION 13: HARASSMENT, COERCION AND PROTECTION

3.77 Experience of Serious Harassment or Violence

Experiences of serious harassment or violence represent extreme forms of vulnerability within migrant labour contexts, often linked to unsafe work environments, weak oversight, and limited access to protection mechanisms. Understanding the prevalence of such incidents over the past year provides insight into the severity of risks faced by migrant workers at destination sites and the extent to which workplaces and living arrangements offer basic safety.

Table 3.77: Experience of serious harassment or violence in the last 12 months

	No (%)	Yes (%)
Maharashtra	100.0	0.0
Tamil Nadu	98.4	1.6
Delhi/NCR	98.8	1.3

Across destination states, reported experiences of serious harassment or violence in the past twelve months are very low, with the overwhelming majority of migrants indicating that they had not faced such incidents. Maharashtra reports a complete absence of reported cases, suggesting either genuinely low incidence or significant under-reporting of extreme abuse.

Tamil Nadu and Delhi/NCR show small but non-negligible proportions of migrants reporting experiences of serious harassment or violence. While these percentages remain low, their presence is important, as even isolated incidents point to serious protection gaps within certain worksites or living environments. Given the broader findings across the survey, particularly low reporting of grievances, limited awareness of helplines, and minimal legal escalation. It is likely that these figures underestimate the true prevalence of such experiences.

Overall, the pattern suggests that serious harassment and violence are not commonly disclosed within migrant populations, potentially due to fear of retaliation, social stigma, lack of trust in redressal mechanisms, or normalisation of abusive behaviour.

SECTION 14: RETURN INTENTIONS, SKILLS AND REINTEGRATION

3.78 Timing of Any Planned Return

Understanding migrants' intended return timing provides insight into the nature of migration at destination – whether it is seasonal, contract-bound, circular, or open-ended. Planned return behaviour also reflects employment security, household financial pressures, and the degree of settlement or uncertainty experienced by workers at destination locations.

Table 3.78: Whether migrant has a planned return timing

	When household needs funds	Indefinite / unsure	When job ends	No – will continue and look for another job	End of season
Maharashtra	63.5%	26.5%	1.6%	1.6%	6.8%
Tamil Nadu	27.1%	42.1%	13.8%	11.7%	5.3%
Delhi/NCR	33.3%	56.3%	3.6%	4.1%	2.7%

The table shows that planned return among migrant workers is largely contingent and flexible rather than fixed. In several states, most notably Maharashtra, Odisha, and Jharkhand, the dominant trigger for return is household financial need, indicating circular migration patterns where workers return once specific income goals are met rather than at the conclusion of a job or season. This suggests that migration is closely tied to short-term livelihood strategies rather than formal employment cycles.

In contrast, uncertainty around return timing is particularly pronounced in Delhi/NCR and Tamil Nadu, where a substantial share of migrants report an indefinite or unsure return plan. This reflects the open-ended nature of urban labour markets, where employment is often informal, fragmented, and continuously sought rather than contractually defined. Tamil Nadu also shows a comparatively higher share of migrants indicating an intention to remain at destination and look for another job, pointing to more continuous migration trajectories and partial settlement dynamics.

Across states, relatively few migrants report returning strictly when a job ends or at the end of a season, underscoring the limited role of formal contracts and clearly demarcated work periods in shaping mobility decisions.

3.79 Likelihood of Returning to the Same Destination or Employer

Whether migrants plan to return to the same destination or employer in the next migration cycle provides an important signal of job continuity, satisfaction with working conditions, and stability of migration pathways. High intent to return may indicate established networks and predictable employment, while uncertainty or refusal to return can reflect precarious work arrangements, poor conditions, or unresolved risks at destination.

Table 3.79: Whether migrant plans to return to the same destination/employer next season

	Not sure	Yes	No
Maharashtra	42.6%	54.2%	3.2%
Tamil Nadu	57.5%	36.0%	6.5%
Delhi/NCR	48.2%	47.7%	4.1%

The findings indicate moderate but uneven intent to return to the same destination or employer, with substantial uncertainty across most states. Maharashtra shows comparatively higher likelihood of return, suggesting more established or repeat migration pathways where workers anticipate continuity with known employers or locations. This pattern is consistent with circular migration systems where prior familiarity reduces perceived risk.

In contrast, uncertainty dominates in Tamil Nadu and Delhi/NCR, where nearly half or more of migrants report being unsure about returning. This reflects the fragmented and informal nature of urban labour markets in these destinations, where work is often arranged through short-term engagements, shifting contractors, or ad hoc opportunities rather than stable employer relationships. The relatively higher

proportion reporting a definite decision not to return in Tamil Nadu also points to dissatisfaction or volatility in employment conditions.

3.80 Saving with the Intention to Invest at Origin

Migrants' intention to save for investment at their place of origin reflects the developmental purpose of migration beyond immediate consumption and remittance needs. Such savings often finance land purchase, housing construction, agriculture, small enterprises, or social obligations, and are a key indicator of whether migration is viewed as a pathway for long-term asset creation rather than short-term survival.

Table 3.80: Whether migrant is saving to invest at origin

	Yes	No
Maharashtra	61.4%	38.6%
Tamil Nadu	40.8%	59.2%
Delhi/NCR	89.2%	10.8%

The results show clear inter-state variation in migrants' ability and intent to save for investment at origin. Migrants working in Delhi/NCR report the strongest orientation towards investment-linked savings, with nearly nine in ten indicating that they are saving for this purpose. This suggests relatively higher earning potential, longer migration spells, or stronger aspirations for asset creation among migrants in large metropolitan labour markets.

In contrast, Tamil Nadu stands out for having a majority of migrants not saving for investment at origin, implying that migration income is largely absorbed by daily living expenses, debt servicing, or routine remittances rather than capital formation. This may reflect higher costs of living, more temporary migration cycles, or lower wage surpluses.

3.81 Monthly Amount Saved for Investment at Origin

Among migrants who report saving with the intention to invest at their place of origin, the *quantum* of monthly savings provides critical insight into the depth and feasibility of asset formation. While the act of saving signals forward-looking behaviour, the amount set aside each month determines whether investments are likely to remain symbolic, precautionary, or translate into substantive economic gains such as land purchase, housing, or enterprise development.

Table 3.81: Among those who saved, approximate amount saved per month (INR)

State	< ₹1,000	₹1,000–4,999	₹5,000–9,999	₹10,000+	DK/CS
Delhi/NCR	3.7%	55.1%	26.6%	0.9%	13.6%
Maharashtra	16.2%	63.6%	18.2%	0.0%	1.9%
Tamil Nadu	52.9%	38.2%	1.0%	0.0%	7.8%
Odisha	0.0%	71.4%	0.0%	28.6%	0.0%
Jharkhand	0.0%	20.0%	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The distribution of monthly savings amounts reveals clear stratification in migrants' investment capacity across destinations. In Delhi/NCR, the majority of saving migrants cluster in the ₹1,000–4,999 and ₹5,000–9,999 brackets, indicating a relatively stable ability to generate moderate surpluses on a regular basis. However, only a very small fraction report saving ₹10,000 or more per month, suggesting that high-value capital accumulation remains limited even in metropolitan labour markets.

Maharashtra shows a similar but more constrained pattern, with savings concentrated primarily in the ₹1,000–4,999 range and a notable share saving less than ₹1,000 per month. This points to thinner margins after living and remittance expenses, limiting the pace of asset formation despite positive saving intent.

Tamil Nadu stands out for a predominance of very small monthly savings, with over half of saving migrants reporting amounts below ₹1,000. This reinforces earlier findings that migration from Tamil Nadu is often oriented towards income smoothing and subsistence rather than accumulation, with limited scope for transformative investments at origin.

3.82 Access to Training and Upskilling at Destination

Access to training and skill development at the destination is a critical determinant of whether migration leads to long-term occupational mobility or merely reproduces low-skill, low-wage employment cycles. This section examines whether migrant workers received any form of training or upskilling during their current migration episode, distinguishing between informal on-the-job learning and formally certified training.

Table 3.82: Received any training / upskilling at destination

	No training	Yes – on-the-job	Yes – certified
Maharashtra	69.7%	26.7%	3.6%
Tamil Nadu	94.4%	1.6%	4.0%
Delhi/NCR	97.5%	1.7%	0.8%

The findings indicate that training and upskilling opportunities at destination remain extremely limited for migrant workers, particularly in large urban labour markets. In Delhi/NCR and Tamil Nadu, over 94 percent of migrants report receiving no training at all, underscoring the persistence of low-skill job segmentation where workers are expected to perform predefined tasks without investment in skill enhancement.

Maharashtra presents a relatively better picture, with over one-quarter of migrants reporting some form of on-the-job training. However, this training is overwhelmingly informal and task-specific, with very limited access to certified programmes. As a result, while such training may improve short-term productivity, it offers little portability or long-term wage progression.

Migration continues to function largely as a labour-supply mechanism rather than a pathway for human capital accumulation, reinforcing the need for stronger convergence between urban employers, skilling missions, and migrant-focused training frameworks.

3.83 Support Needs at Destination

This section examines the types of support that migrants believe would improve their living and working conditions at destination. Respondents were allowed to select multiple options. The table below consolidates all responses into a single matrix and presents row percentages, indicating the proportion of migrants within each destination state who identified each support as important.

Table 3.83: Support needs at destination

	Cheaper remittance / banking fees	Legal aid / complaint support	Childcare	Affordable & safe accommodation	Health access	Skill training	Other
Maharashtra	38.6%	10.8%	25.1%	71.7%	29.9%	21.5%	0.4%
Tamil Nadu	40.8%	33.2%	24.4%	52.4%	23.2%	38.4%	4.4%
Delhi/NCR	40.8%	50.4%	25.4%	86.7%	49.2%	36.7%	—

The consolidated results show that migrants' support needs at destination are multi-sectoral and strongly shaped by urban living conditions. Across the major destination states, viz. Delhi/NCR, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu, affordable and safe accommodation emerges as the most consistently cited requirement, particularly pronounced in Delhi/NCR where nearly nine out of ten migrants identify housing as a critical gap. This underscores accommodation insecurity as a central challenge of urban migration.

Cheaper remittance and banking fees are reported by roughly two-fifths of migrants in the three large destination states, reflecting the persistent cost burden associated with transferring earnings to origin households despite widespread access to formal banking channels. Alongside this, legal aid and complaint support is especially salient in Delhi/NCR and Tamil Nadu, aligning with earlier findings on wage disputes, delayed payments, and limited awareness of grievance redress mechanisms.

Demand for health access and childcare is substantial, particularly in destinations with longer-duration or family-linked migration. This suggests that migrants are not only workers but caregivers navigating cities with limited access to affordable services. Skill training also features prominently, especially in Tamil Nadu and Delhi/NCR, indicating aspirations for occupational mobility and more secure employment rather than short-term income smoothing alone.

3.84 Preference for Permanent Settlement at Destination

This section captures migrants' long-term settlement intentions at destination, including whether they or their families (including children) would prefer to permanently settle at the destination location or return to their place of origin. Responses reflect varying degrees of certainty and aspiration, ranging from a clear preference to remain in origin areas to strong intent to settle permanently at destination.

Table 3.84: Whether migrant would like to permanently settle at destination with their family

	Prefer to stay in origin	Not sure	Yes — somewhat	Yes — strongly	DK/CS
Maharashtra	35.7%	22.9%	15.7%	14.9%	10.8%
Tamil Nadu	23.9%	30.4%	22.3%	12.1%	11.3%
Delhi/NCR	50.0%	14.9%	14.4%	18.0%	2.7%

Settlement intentions vary sharply by destination state, reflecting differences in employment stability, living conditions, and perceived future opportunities. In the larger urban destinations, particularly Delhi/NCR, half of the migrants clearly prefer to remain rooted in their place of origin, despite long durations of migration. This suggests that for many migrants in Delhi/NCR, migration continues to be viewed primarily as an economic strategy rather than a pathway to permanent urban integration. At the same time, a non-trivial share (over 30 percent combining “somewhat” and “strongly”) express openness to settling permanently, indicating latent demand for urban inclusion if structural barriers are reduced.

Tamil Nadu presents a more transitional picture, with the largest proportion of migrants reporting uncertainty about long-term settlement. This reflects a migration context where employment may be relatively stable but social anchoring, housing, schooling, and family reunification, remains incomplete. Maharashtra shows a more balanced distribution, with sizeable shares across all categories, indicating coexistence of circular, semi-permanent, and aspirational settlement trajectories.

3.85 Factors Facilitating Permanent Settlement at Destination

This section examines the conditions under which migrants would consider permanently settling at the destination along with their family members. Respondents were asked to identify multiple factors that would make long-term settlement feasible, spanning employment security, housing, family presence, social acceptance, and access to essential services. The table below consolidates all responses into a single matrix, showing the row-wise distribution of preferred facilitating factors by destination state.

Table 3.85: Factors That Would Facilitate Permanent Settlement at Destination

	Stable / regular job	Affordable housing	Children's schooling	Family already at destination	Social acceptance	Health / banking / services	Legal documents / ID portability	Other
Maharashtra	35.6%	25.5%	6.7%	7.3%	3.0%	0.6%	0.2%	0.6%
Tamil Nadu	37.6%	10.6%	7.6%	8.9%	6.8%	2.8%	7.1%	2.1%
Delhi/NCR	33.5%	26.1%	13.7%	9.5%	13.6%	5.3%	9.6%	0.2%

Across all destination states, access to a stable and regular job emerges as the most critical prerequisite for permanent settlement, accounting for roughly one-third or more of all responses in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Delhi/NCR. This underscores that migrants primarily view long-term settlement through an economic security lens, with employment stability acting as the foundational condition upon which other considerations rest.

Housing availability forms the second most salient factor, particularly in Delhi/NCR and Maharashtra, where high rental costs and insecure accommodation remain major deterrents to family relocation. In Delhi/NCR, housing concerns are closely followed by the availability of children's schooling and social acceptance in localities, indicating that migrants in large metropolitan regions weigh social integration and child wellbeing more heavily once employment is relatively assured.

Tamil Nadu presents a more evenly distributed profile, with notable emphasis on legal document portability and family presence, suggesting that institutional and administrative barriers, rather than only labour market conditions, play a stronger role in shaping settlement decisions.

3.86 Factors Preventing Permanent Settlement at Destination

While some migrants express interest in long-term settlement at destination, a range of structural, economic, social, and cultural barriers continue to discourage permanent relocation. Respondents were asked to identify multiple factors that prevent them from settling at destination with their families. The table below consolidates all responses into a single matrix, presenting the row-wise distribution of constraining factors by destination state.

Table 3.86: Factors preventing permanent settlement at destination

	Lack of documents / ID	Insecurity / crime	Discrimination / exclusion	No schooling for children	Cultural attachment to village	Economic linkage at origin	Distance from extended family	Higher cost of living	Poor housing / services	Other
Maharashtra	5.1%	6.1%	2.2%	3.9%	19.1%	19.1%	15.7%	20.8%	8.1%	—
Tamil Nadu	13.7%	4.2%	12.5%	4.0%	21.3%	21.8%	14.6%	6.0%	1.8%	0.2%
Delhi/NCR	20.1%	15.1%	7.5%	7.9%	20.4%	8.7%	15.8%	4.0%	0.6%	—

Across all major destination states, cultural attachment to the village of origin emerges as one of the most persistent barriers to permanent settlement, accounting for around one-fifth or more of responses in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Delhi/NCR. This highlights that settlement decisions are shaped not only by economic conditions but also by strong social and emotional ties to rural origins.

Economic considerations operate in parallel. In Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, economic linkages with family at origin and higher cost of living at destination together form a substantial share of constraints, indicating that migration continues to function as a livelihood diversification strategy rather than a pathway to full relocation. In Delhi/NCR, lack of documents/ID and distance from extended family are especially prominent, underscoring how administrative barriers and social separation limit migrants' ability to transition from temporary to permanent residence in large urban agglomerations.

Education-related concerns and perceived insecurity, while less dominant overall, remain non-trivial in metropolitan destinations, particularly Delhi/NCR, where schooling access, crime, and discrimination together account for a meaningful share of responses.

SECTOR 16: PERCEIVED GAINS AND LOSSES

3.87 Losses Experienced Due to Migration

Migration often entails significant social, emotional, and household-level trade-offs that extend beyond income gains. Respondents were asked to report the different types of losses they have experienced as a result of migration, with multiple responses permitted. The table below presents the row-wise percentage distribution of reported losses by destination state, allowing comparison of the relative salience of different costs of migration across contexts.

Table 3.87: Losses experienced due to migration

	Separation from spouse / children	Missing festivals / ceremonies	Children left without proper care	Loss of household labour (farming)	Change in food / cooking	Emotional stress / loneliness	No losses reported	Other
Maharashtra	28.4%	23.9%	11.6%	8.5%	1.5%	15.9%	1.8%	—
Tamil Nadu	26.3%	13.0%	14.5%	10.6%	14.5%	18.3%	11.6%	0.7%
Delhi/NCR	13.8%	24.5%	9.8%	12.2%	10.7%	8.3%	2.4%	—

Across all destination states, family separation and social disconnection emerge as the most consistently reported losses associated with migration. Separation from spouse or children accounts for a substantial share of responses in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, underscoring the familial costs embedded in circular and long-distance migration patterns. Closely related, missing festivals and ceremonial occasions is particularly prominent among migrants in Delhi/NCR and Maharashtra, reflecting the cultural and emotional distance created by extended stays away from home.

Child-related impacts are also evident. Between one-tenth and one-sixth of responses in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Delhi/NCR point to children being left without adequate care, while concerns about loss of household labour for agriculture remain salient, especially among migrants linked to agrarian households. These findings highlight how migration can redistribute care and labour burdens within origin households, often affecting women, elderly members, and children.

Emotional consequences captured through reports of stress and loneliness are widespread across states, particularly in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, suggesting that psychosocial costs persist even where economic returns may be higher. At the same time, a small but notable share of respondents, especially in Tamil Nadu, report no losses, indicating heterogeneity in migration experiences based on household structure, destination conditions, and duration of migration.

3.88 Gains Experienced Due to Migration

Migration can generate a range of economic, social, and aspirational benefits for migrant workers and their families. Respondents were asked to report the gains they have experienced as a result of migration, with multiple responses permitted. The table below presents the row-wise percentage distribution of reported gains by destination state, capturing how different benefits of migration are perceived and experienced across contexts.

Table 3.88: Gains experienced due to migration

	Higher earnings	Ability to save	Better standard of living	Children's education improved	Exposure to new ideas / lifestyle	Exposure to different culture	New skills / learning	Opportunity to settle permanently	Other
Maharashtra	84.1%	65.7%	29.9%	19.9%	11.6%	8.8%	1.2%	2.0%	0.0%
Tamil Nadu	58.4%	26.0%	60.4%	32.8%	32.4%	15.6%	5.2%	3.6%	0.8%
Delhi/NCR	79.2%	35.4%	67.1%	34.6%	30.8%	17.1%	17.9%	1.3%	0.0%

Across all destination states, higher earnings emerge as the most universal and dominant gain from migration, reported by a large majority of respondents, particularly in Maharashtra and Delhi/NCR. This confirms that income enhancement remains the primary driver and justification for migration decisions. Closely linked to this, the ability to save is reported by substantial shares of migrants, especially in Maharashtra, indicating improved short-term financial security for many households.

Beyond income, migration is also associated with improvements in living standards, most prominently in Delhi/NCR and Tamil Nadu, where a majority report a better standard of living. Gains related to children's education are also notable, especially among migrants in Delhi/NCR and Tamil Nadu, suggesting that access to urban schooling opportunities is a meaningful benefit for some migrant families.

Social and experiential gains—such as exposure to new ideas, lifestyles, and cultures—are more unevenly distributed. These are reported more frequently in Delhi/NCR and Tamil Nadu, reflecting the greater diversity and social interaction opportunities in large urban centres. In contrast, the acquisition of new skills or learning remains limited overall, indicating that most migration continues to be employment-led rather than skill-enhancing.

Finally, only a very small proportion of respondents view migration as creating an opportunity for permanent settlement, reinforcing earlier findings that migration remains largely circular and livelihood-driven, rather than a pathway to long-term urban integration.

SECTION 17: PERCEPTIONS AND LIFE EVALUATION

3.89 Overall Change in Household Well-being After Migration

To assess the broader welfare implications of migration, respondents were asked to compare their household's overall well-being after migration with the period prior to migration. This question captures migrants' own subjective assessment of whether migration has resulted in improvement, stagnation, or deterioration in household well-being, reflecting both economic and non-economic dimensions of change.

Table 3.89: Overall change in household well-being compared to pre-migration

	Much better	Somewhat better	No change	Somewhat worse	Much worse	DK/CS
Maharashtra	37.8%	48.2%	3.2%	0.4%	0.0%	10.4%
Tamil Nadu	28.4%	39.2%	20.8%	4.0%	2.4%	5.2%
Delhi/NCR	25.0%	74.2%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Across destination states, a clear majority of migrants report an improvement in household well-being following migration, indicating that migration has largely delivered positive welfare outcomes. In Delhi/NCR, perceptions are overwhelmingly positive, with nearly all respondents reporting their household well-being as either somewhat or much better, and almost no reports of stagnation or decline.

Maharashtra also shows strong positive outcomes, with over four-fifths of respondents reporting improvement, though a notable minority express uncertainty, suggesting uneven experiences across migrant households. Tamil Nadu presents a more mixed picture: while a majority still report improved well-being, a substantial share report no change, and a small but visible proportion indicate that household well-being has worsened, pointing to greater variability in migration outcomes.

3.90 Overall Life Assessment After Migration

Beyond household-level outcomes, respondents were asked to assess whether their own life has become better or worse as a result of migration. This question captures migrants' personal and subjective evaluation of migration, encompassing work conditions, income stability, living arrangements, social experiences, and overall quality of life at destination.

Table 3.90: Overall assessment of life after migration

	Much better	Somewhat better	No change	Somewhat worse	Much worse	DK/CS
Maharashtra	34.3%	59.0%	4.4%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%
Tamil Nadu	32.0%	45.2%	17.2%	2.4%	0.4%	2.8%
Delhi/NCR	17.9%	80.8%	0.8%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%

Across destination states, migrants' personal assessments closely mirror household-level findings, with a strong majority reporting that life has improved after migration. Delhi/NCR stands out most clearly, where nearly all respondents report that life is now better, and virtually none report stagnation or deterioration.

In Maharashtra, perceptions are strongly positive, with over nine in ten respondents reporting life as either somewhat or much better, suggesting that migration has translated into tangible individual-level gains alongside household improvements. Tamil Nadu again presents a more mixed pattern: while a majority report improvement, a significant proportion report no change, and a small share indicate that life has worsened, reflecting more heterogeneous experiences at destination.

3.91 Perceptions of Migration as Part of Life Course

To understand how migrants internalise migration beyond economic outcomes, respondents were asked how they feel about migration as part of their overall life course. This question captures whether migration is viewed as a necessity, a neutral condition, a preferred way of life, or an experience associated with varying degrees of dissatisfaction.

Table 3.91: Feelings about migration as part of life course

	I accept it as necessary	Neutral	I like / prefer this life	I dislike it somewhat	I dislike it strongly
Maharashtra	74.1%	12.4%	7.2%	4.8%	1.6%
Tamil Nadu	29.6%	35.6%	17.6%	14.0%	3.2%
Delhi/NCR	50.4%	42.9%	1.7%	5.0%	0.0%

Across states, migration is most commonly perceived as a necessary life strategy rather than a preferred lifestyle. This is most evident in Maharashtra, where nearly three-quarters of respondents accept migration as necessary, and only a small minority express active dislike. Delhi/NCR shows a more ambivalent pattern: while half accept migration as necessary, a very large share report feeling neutral, suggesting pragmatic engagement with migration rather than strong attachment or aversion.

Tamil Nadu displays the most internally diverse responses, with lower acceptance as necessity and higher proportions reporting neutrality, preference, and dislike. This indicates that migration experiences from Tamil Nadu are more heterogeneous, reflecting variation in job quality, living conditions, and social support at destination.

3.92 Social Acceptance of Migration at Place of Origin

To assess the social and cultural normalisation of migration within origin communities, respondents were asked how migration is perceived as part of the life cycle at their place of origin. This question captures whether migration is viewed positively, neutrally, as an accepted necessity, or as a practice that is socially disapproved or discouraged within the community.

Table 3.92: How accepted is migration as part of the life cycle at place of origin?

	Seen positively / preferred	Accepted	Neutral	Disliked	Strongly disliked	DK/CS
Maharashtra	51.8%	13.1%	21.5%	6.0%	0.8%	6.8%
Tamil Nadu	24.4%	31.6%	32.8%	6.8%	4.0%	0.4%
Delhi/NCR	21.7%	33.8%	39.6%	3.8%	0.4%	0.8%

The findings indicate that migration is broadly socially normalised at the place of origin, though the nature of acceptance varies considerably across states. In Maharashtra, migration is most strongly viewed as a positive and preferred life strategy, with over half of respondents reporting favourable perceptions within their communities. Tamil Nadu and Delhi/NCR exhibit a more pragmatic orientation, where migration is largely seen as either neutral or accepted rather than actively preferred, suggesting its integration into livelihood strategies without strong aspirational framing.

SECTION 18: LOSS/GAIN INTENSITY AND CULTURAL AFFINITY

3.93 Emotional and Cultural Losses Associated with Migration

Migration often entails not only economic trade-offs but also significant emotional and cultural costs. To capture these less visible dimensions, respondents were asked to identify the emotional or cultural losses they feel most strongly due to migration. As this was a multiple-response question, the results reflect the relative salience of different losses within each state.

Table 3.93: Emotional and cultural losses felt due to migration

	Loss of cultural rituals / celebrations	Weakening of family ties	Loss of identity / roots	Reduced community participation	None
Maharashtra	74.8%	43.0%	26.0%	31.9%	12.8%
Tamil Nadu	30.6%	16.3%	19.6%	33.9%	52.7%
Delhi/NCR	53.8%	26.0%	13.6%	28.3%	4.8%

The findings highlight that emotional and cultural losses are widespread and unevenly distributed across states, reinforcing migration as a deeply social experience rather than a purely economic one. Loss of cultural rituals and celebrations emerges as the most consistently reported loss, particularly in Maharashtra and Delhi/NCR, underscoring the disruption of collective and cyclical social practices due to prolonged absence from the place of origin.

Weakening of family ties and loss of identity or roots are especially pronounced in Maharashtra, indicating stronger emotional costs where migration is longer-term or more circular. Reduced community participation is notable in Tamil Nadu and Delhi/NCR, suggesting that sustained out-migration may weaken everyday civic and social engagement at the village level.

At the same time, Tamil Nadu stands out with a majority reporting no emotional or cultural losses, pointing to either stronger coping mechanisms, shorter migration cycles, or a greater normalisation of migration within social life.

3.94 Preference for Children Retaining Ties to Village and Cultural Roots

Migration often raises intergenerational questions about identity, culture, and belonging. To understand family perspectives on cultural continuity, respondents were asked whether their family members want children to retain strong ties to their village, including culture, roots, and identity, or whether they prefer children to adapt fully to the destination context.

Table 3.94: Family preference on children retaining village ties

	Yes — very much	Yes — somewhat	No — prefer children adapt to destination	DK/CS
Maharashtra	66.9%	13.5%	2.8%	16.7%
Tamil Nadu	21.2%	22.8%	4.8%	51.2%
Delhi/NCR	81.3%	14.6%	2.1%	2.1%

Across states, there is a strong normative preference for children retaining ties to the village, particularly in Delhi/NCR and Maharashtra, where an overwhelming majority report that families want children to remain closely connected to their cultural roots. This suggests that even when migration is economically necessary, it is not viewed as a break from village-based identity.

Tamil Nadu stands out with a markedly different pattern: a majority of respondents express uncertainty (DK/CS), and a more balanced distribution between strong and moderate support for retaining village ties. This may indicate greater ambivalence, generational negotiation, or a more settled migration experience where long-term residence at destination reshapes aspirations for children.

Notably, very few families across all states explicitly prefer children to fully adapt to the destination, underscoring that migration is largely seen as instrumental rather than aspirational in cultural terms.

3.95 Sense of Connection to Place of Origin

Migration can reshape economic and social lives, but emotional and cultural attachment to one's place of origin often persists. To capture this dimension, respondents were asked how strongly they feel connected to their place of origin in terms of culture, roots, and identity.

Table 3.95: Strength of connection to place of origin

	Very strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Not at all	DK/CS
Maharashtra	62.5%	11.6%	6.0%	2.4%	17.5%
Tamil Nadu	26.8%	26.0%	20.8%	3.2%	23.2%
Delhi/NCR	88.3%	10.4%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%

Across most states, migrants report a strong emotional and cultural attachment to their place of origin, underscoring that migration does not necessarily weaken ties to village identity. This is especially pronounced among migrants in Delhi/NCR, where nearly nine in ten respondents report feeling *very strongly* connected to their roots, suggesting that longer distances or urban contexts may heighten, rather than dilute, feelings of origin-based belonging.

Maharashtra also shows a dominant pattern of strong attachment, though accompanied by a notable share of respondents expressing uncertainty (DK/CS), possibly reflecting transitional or mixed migration experiences. In contrast, Tamil Nadu displays a more diffuse and ambivalent pattern, with responses spread across strong, moderate, and weaker levels of connection, alongside relatively high uncertainty. This indicates greater heterogeneity in how migrants negotiate identity over time.

3.96 Change in Employment Conditions After COVID-19 or Other Major Shocks

Major shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic have had uneven effects on migrant employment, altering work availability, income stability, and continuity of jobs. To understand these impacts, respondents were asked whether their employment conditions changed following COVID-19 or any other major shock.

Table 3.96: Change in employment conditions since COVID-19 / major shock

	Work stopped temporarily	No change	Less work/pay	More work/pay	DK/CS
Maharashtra	62.2%	19.5%	4.4%	1.6%	12.4%
Tamil Nadu	4.0%	21.2%	32.4%	12.4%	30.0%
Delhi/NCR	3.8%	25.8%	26.3%	1.3%	42.9%

The findings highlight sharp inter-state variation in how employment conditions changed following COVID-19 and other major shocks. In Maharashtra, the dominant experience was temporary work stoppage, indicating acute disruption to employment continuity during shock periods. This suggests high vulnerability to sudden economic shutdowns, particularly in sectors reliant on continuous physical presence.

In contrast, Tamil Nadu and Delhi/NCR show a more polarised pattern, with relatively low reports of complete work stoppage but substantial shares reporting reduced work or pay, alongside a notable minority experiencing increased work or earnings. This points to differentiated sectoral impacts, where some migrants absorbed greater workloads while others faced income compression.

Across states, a sizable proportion, especially in Delhi/NCR and Tamil Nadu, reported uncertainty (DK/CS), reflecting either difficulty in attributing changes specifically to COVID-19 or highly volatile employment trajectories since the shock. Overall, the results underscore that employment shocks did not uniformly translate into job loss, but rather into a mix of stoppages, income reductions, and uneven recovery, reinforcing the precarity and segmentation of migrant labour markets.

3.97 Receipt of Support During COVID-19 / Lockdown at Destination

The COVID-19 lockdown period represented an unprecedented shock for migrant workers, particularly those stranded at destination without stable employment, housing, or access to social protection. To assess the extent and nature of institutional and informal support available during this period, respondents were asked whether they received any form of assistance at the destination during the lockdown.

Table 3.97: Receipt of support during COVID-19 / lockdown

	Not applicable (not migrated)	No support	Yes — government	Yes — employer	Yes — NGO/community	DK/CS
Maharashtra	12.7%	49.8%	19.5%	4.0%	2.0%	12.0%
Tamil Nadu	22.0%	29.6%	30.4%	5.6%	4.8%	7.6%
Delhi/NCR	62.5%	3.8%	18.8%	12.5%	2.1%	0.4%

The data reveal highly uneven access to support for migrants during the COVID-19 lockdown, shaped both by destination context and migration status at the time of the crisis. A substantial proportion of respondents in Delhi/NCR report that the question was not applicable, indicating that many were not present at destination during the lockdown period, either due to return migration or non-migration at that time.

Among those who were present, lack of support emerges as a dominant experience, particularly in Maharashtra, where nearly half or more report receiving no assistance during the lockdown. This underscores the limited reach of relief mechanisms for large sections of migrant workers, even in major destination states.

Where support was received, government assistance was the most commonly reported source, especially in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, suggesting comparatively stronger public relief outreach in these states. Employer-provided support remains limited overall, though relatively more visible in Delhi/NCR, reflecting sector-specific or employer-driven responses rather than systemic protection. Support from NGOs or community groups appears marginal across states, highlighting their constrained capacity relative to the scale of need.

3.98 Information or Referral Needs at Destination

Access to timely information and referral services plays a critical role in improving migrant workers' ability to navigate employment conditions, access services, and respond to vulnerabilities at destination. To understand priority support needs, respondents were asked which types of information or referrals they would like to receive, covering legal rights, health, financial services, childcare, shelter, and other forms of assistance.

Table 3.98: Information / referral needs at destination

	Worker rights / legal aid	Health services	Banking / remittance help	Childcare	Shelter / transit support	None
Delhi/NCR	51.6%	39.4%	18.6%	14.3%	25.8%	1.2%
Tamil Nadu	39.2%	18.8%	32.4%	26.8%	24.4%	49.2%
Maharashtra	37.8%	27.1%	15.5%	14.3%	22.7%	47.4%

The findings indicate substantial and differentiated demand for information and referral services across destination states, reflecting both exposure to risks and awareness of available support mechanisms. Worker rights and legal aid emerge as a consistently high-priority need, particularly in Delhi/NCR, Tamil

Nadu, and Maharashtra, underscoring persistent concerns around wage protection, employment conditions, and grievance redressal among migrants.

Demand for health services and shelter or transit-related support is especially pronounced in Delhi/NCR, suggesting higher perceived vulnerability related to living conditions, mobility, and access to essential services in these destinations. Banking and remittance assistance features prominently in Tamil Nadu, pointing to the importance of financial inclusion and secure remittance channels for migrants supporting households at origin.

At the same time, a sizeable share of respondents in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra report not requiring any referrals, which may reflect either relatively better access to informal networks, familiarity with destination systems, or lower perceived need at the time of the survey.

Chapter 4

Migration from Origin States: Who Migrates, Why They Leave, and How Households Manage Migration

SECTION 1: MIGRATION HISTORY AND PATTERNS

This chapter analyses migration from the perspective of origin states, the places migrants leave from. It explains the conditions that push people to migrate, the household strategies behind migration, and the constraints that shape migration even before a person reaches the destination. The chapter is written section-wise, aligned to the origin-state questionnaire, and compares patterns across **Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal**.

Migration from origin states is not just an individual decision. In most cases, it is a household livelihood plan shaped by low local employment, agricultural risk, debt, and social norms. Differences among origin states matter because they determine who migrates, how prepared they are, how risky migration becomes, and how dependent households remain on remittances.

4.1 Perceptions of Seasonal and Temporary Migration from Origin Villages

Respondents from origin states were asked to estimate what proportion of people from their village migrate overall, capturing perceptions of seasonal and temporary migration rather than precise counts. The responses indicate substantial variation across states, reflecting differences in local livelihood structures, distress factors, and the normalization of migration as a coping or accumulation strategy.

At an aggregate level, migration is perceived as widespread rather than marginal. Across all five states, nearly two-thirds of respondents (63.6%) reported that at least one-fifth of the village population migrates, with 42.1% stating that *many* (21–50%) migrate and another 21.5% stating that *most* (51–75%) migrate. Only 6.1% perceived migration to be *very few* (<5%), suggesting that migration is a visible and commonly experienced phenomenon in origin villages.

Table 4.1: Gross seasonal migration from origin villages

	Nearly all (76%+)	Most (51– 75%)	Many (21– 50%)	Some (6– 20%)	Very few (<5%)	DK/CS %
Odisha	–	15.0%	52.6%	32.4%	–	–
Rajasthan	15.6%	25.4%	48.8%	4.5%	–	5.7%
Jharkhand	23.5%	58.0%	18.1%	0.4%	–	–
Madhya Pradesh	–	8.3%	90.8%	–	0.4%	0.4%
Chhattisgarh	0.4%	0.4%	–	20.5%	30.5%	48.1%
Group Total	7.9%	21.5%	42.1%	11.6%	6.1%	10.7%

Madhya Pradesh stands out for the highest concentration in the “many (21–50%)” category, with 90.8% of respondents selecting this option. This indicates that migration is perceived as widespread but not near-universal, aligning with patterns of seasonal labour circulation rather than permanent out-migration.

Jharkhand shows a markedly different profile, with 58.0% reporting that most (51–75%) of villagers migrate and a further 23.5% stating that *nearly all* (76%+) migrate. This points to migration being deeply entrenched and potentially structurally necessary for household survival in many villages.

Odisha reflects a more moderate but still significant pattern: over half (52.6%) report *many* migrating, while nearly a third (32.4%) report *some* (6–20%). This suggests heterogeneity across villages, with migration prominent but not uniformly dominant.

Rajasthan exhibits a mixed distribution, with responses spread across *many* (48.8%), *most* (25.4%), and *nearly all* (15.6%). This spread indicates coexistence of high-migration and moderate-migration villages, possibly linked to agro-climatic variability and access to non-farm opportunities.

Chhattisgarh shows the greatest uncertainty and polarization. Nearly half of respondents (48.1%) selected *Don't Know / Can't Say*, while 30.5% reported *very few* migrants. This may reflect village-level differences, seasonal volatility, or weaker visibility of migration due to shorter migration cycles or intra-district movement.

4.2 Combined Migration Patterns by State

Table 4.2: Nature of migration observed in origin villages

	Permanent settlement (%)	Seasonal regular (%)	Occasional (%)
Odisha	7.3	87.0	43.8
Rajasthan	38.9	72.9	40.2
Jharkhand	18.5	65.0	22.7
Madhya Pradesh	4.6	95.8	80.8
Chhattisgarh	1.6	0.8	1.6

The highlights clearly differentiated migration regimes across origin states. Seasonal regular migration dominates in Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Jharkhand, with exceptionally high prevalence in Madhya Pradesh (95.8%) and Odisha (87.0%). This confirms that migration in these states is largely cyclical, planned, and livelihood-linked, rather than permanent.

Permanent settlement migration is limited across all states, remaining below 20% everywhere except Rajasthan (38.9%). Even in Rajasthan, permanent migration is secondary to seasonal circulation, suggesting continued attachment to origin villages.

Occasional migration plays a strong complementary role in Madhya Pradesh (80.8%) and to a lesser extent in Odisha and Rajasthan (around 40%), indicating flexible, opportunity-driven mobility layered on top of regular seasonal flows.

Chhattisgarh is a clear outlier, with negligible reported migration across all three patterns. This aligns with earlier findings of high uncertainty and low visibility of migration, possibly due to short-distance, intra-district, or forest-linked livelihoods that are not perceived as “migration” by respondents.

4.3 Nature of Employment Among Migrants from Origin Villages

Respondents were asked about the kinds of jobs most migrants from their household or village typically undertake. The responses provide important insights into the occupational structure of migration, highlighting the extent to which migration is concentrated in informal, low-security work, as well as state-level differences in skill composition and sectoral engagement.

Table 4.3: What kinds of jobs do most migrants from your household/village do? (in percentages; multiple responses possible)

	Unskilled manual (daily wage, head-loading)	Semi-skilled (machine helper, fitter assistant)	Skilled / certified (electrician, mechanic)	Blue collar / formal sector	Seasonal agricultural labour	Domestic work
Rajasthan	99.2	11.5	29.9	18.4	41.0	4.9
Odisha	97.2	92.7	65.6	0.4	24.3	1.6
Madhya Pradesh	99.6	52.9	1.7	0.0	47.1	22.5
Chhattisgarh	99.6	13.0	25.9	0.0	39.3	2.9
Jharkhand	97.5	94.7	83.5	16.9	48.6	41.2

Across all five states, migration is almost universally associated with unskilled manual work, such as daily wage labour and headloading. Between 97% and 100% of respondents in every state reported that migrants engage in such work. This consistency indicates that migration from these origin areas remains largely survival-oriented, with households relying on physically intensive and insecure employment at destination.

Beyond unskilled work, there is substantial variation in the extent of semi-skilled and skilled employment: Jharkhand and Odisha stand out sharply, with very high proportions of migrants reported to be engaged in semi-skilled roles (94.7% and 92.7%, respectively) and skilled or certified work (83.5% in Jharkhand and 65.6% in Odisha). This suggests more diversified migration streams, likely supported by established migration networks, on-the-job skill acquisition, or exposure to industrial and construction sectors.

Madhya Pradesh presents a contrasting profile. While over half of migrants are engaged in semi-skilled work (52.9%), skilled or certified employment is almost absent (1.7%), indicating limited progression from manual or helper roles into formally recognised skills. Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh occupy an intermediate position, with around one-quarter to one-third of migrants reported to be in skilled roles, but relatively low engagement in semi-skilled occupations compared to Jharkhand and Odisha.

White-collar or formal sector employment remains limited across all states. Rajasthan (18.4%) and Jharkhand (16.9%) show some penetration into formal employment, but in Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh this category is negligible or entirely absent. This reinforces the structural barriers migrants face in accessing stable, contract-based jobs, including educational requirements, certification gaps, and restricted recruitment channels.

Seasonal agricultural labour continues to be a major component of migration, particularly in Jharkhand (48.6%), Madhya Pradesh (47.1%), Rajasthan (41.0%), and Chhattisgarh (39.3%), reflecting cyclical movement aligned with agricultural seasons and rural labour demand.

Domestic work shows the widest inter-state variation. It is minimal in Odisha and Chhattisgarh but substantial in Jharkhand (41.2%) and Madhya Pradesh (22.5%), pointing to gendered migration streams and the significance of care and household services as destination-sector opportunities.

4.4 Primary Occupation Before Migration

Respondents were asked about the primary occupation of migrants before they migrated, capturing the livelihood base from which migration decisions emerge. The responses reveal that migration is largely driven by agrarian and informal rural livelihoods, with clear differences across states in the degree of diversification prior to migration.

Table 4.4: Primary occupation before migration in (Percentages)

	Cultivator (owner)	Non-agriculture labour (e.g., construction)	Agricultural wage labour	Factory / mill worker	Student / homemaker / unemployed	Cultivating leased-in land only	Transport / market	Domestic work	Animal husbandry / dairy	Self-employed non-farm	Other	Services / shop / security
Odisha	30.0	36.8	9.7	2.0	14.2	4.5	0.4	0.4	–	1.6	0.4	–
Rajasthan	57.4	18.4	15.6	0.4	3.3	–	0.4	0.8	2.0	0.4	–	1.2
Jharkhand	48.1	12.8	4.1	23.5	1.6	2.9	2.9	1.2	0.8	0.4	1.6	–
Madhya Pradesh	97.9	–	2.1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Chhattisgarh	74.9	10.0	7.9	2.9	1.7	0.8	–	0.8	–	0.4	0.4	–
Group total	61.4	15.7	7.9	5.8	4.2	1.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.2

Across states, cultivation emerges as the single largest primary occupation prior to migration, accounting for 61.4% of migrants overall. This dominance is especially stark in Madhya Pradesh (97.9%) and Chhattisgarh (74.9%), indicating that migration in these states is primarily an outcome of agrarian stress, smallholder vulnerability, or limited on-farm income opportunities rather than a shift away from non-farm employment.

Rajasthan (57.4%) and Jharkhand (48.1%) also show a strong cultivation base, though with greater diversification into other occupations.

Non-agricultural labour, such as construction and other informal activities, forms the second most important occupational base, particularly in Odisha (36.8%), followed by Rajasthan (18.4%) and Chhattisgarh (10.0%). This suggests that for many households, migration is not a transition from farming alone, but from already precarious, informal wage work, reflecting limited livelihood security even prior to migration.

Agricultural wage labour constitutes a notable share in Rajasthan (15.6%), Odisha (9.7%), and Chhattisgarh (7.9%), highlighting landlessness or marginal land access as important drivers of migration. Cultivation on leased-in land remains marginal across all states, indicating limited access to tenancy arrangements as a stabilising livelihood option.

Jharkhand stands out distinctly, with 23.5% of migrants reported as factory or mill workers prior to migration, far higher than any other state. This suggests migration streams linked to industrial belts, mining, or manufacturing ecosystems, and points to patterns of labour circulation even among those already engaged in industrial employment.

Odisha records a relatively high share of migrants originating as students, homemakers, or unemployed individuals (14.2%), suggesting migration pathways linked to youth transitions, delayed labour market entry, or household coping strategies. In contrast, this category is minimal in other states.

4.5 Migration Classification Based on the Most Recent Trip

Respondents were asked to classify the **most recent migration episode** from their household or village, distinguishing between seasonal, circular, semi-permanent, coping, and permanent forms of migration. The

responses clearly establish that migration from these origin states is **predominantly seasonal and temporary**, with permanent relocation remaining extremely limited.

Table 4.5: Migration classification (most recent trip (in Percentages))

	Seasonal > 3 months	Seasonal < 3 months	Circular / recurring (irregular)	Semi-permanent	One-off / coping	Permanent
Odisha	98.0	–	1.2	0.8	–	–
Rajasthan	71.3	0.8	16.4	11.5	–	–
Jharkhand	75.3	19.8	0.8	2.9	0.4	0.8
Madhya Pradesh	92.5	–	7.1	0.4	–	–
Chhattisgarh	87.0	12.1	–	–	0.8	–
Group total	84.8	6.5	5.1	3.1	0.2	0.2

Across all states, seasonal migration lasting more than three months overwhelmingly dominates the most recent migration experience. At the aggregate level, 84.8% of all reported migration episodes fall into this category, underscoring the centrality of long-duration, livelihood-linked seasonal mobility rather than short-term or sporadic movement.

This dominance is particularly stark in Odisha (98.0%) and Madhya Pradesh (92.5%), where migration is almost exclusively long-seasonal in nature. Chhattisgarh (87.0%) also shows a strong tilt towards longer seasonal cycles, suggesting migration aligned with agricultural off-seasons or extended construction and labour contracts.

Seasonal migration of less than three months is relatively uncommon overall (6.5%), but shows meaningful presence in Jharkhand (19.8%) and Chhattisgarh (12.1%). This indicates more frequent, shorter, and possibly intra-regional migration cycles in these states, potentially linked to mining, forest-based work, or short-term agricultural and construction demand. In contrast, this category is virtually absent in Odisha and Madhya Pradesh, reinforcing the view that migration from these states tends to involve longer periods away from home.

Circular or irregular recurring migration accounts for 5.1% overall, but is notably higher in Rajasthan (16.4%) and Madhya Pradesh (7.1%). This suggests migration patterns where workers move repeatedly between origin and destination without fixed durations, often characteristic of construction, transport, or informal sector work. Semi-permanent migration remains limited (3.1% overall), but is again most visible in Rajasthan (11.5%), indicating a subset of migrants who stay away for extended periods while maintaining ties to their origin villages.

One-off or coping migration (0.2%) and permanent migration (0.2%) are almost entirely absent across all states. Even in Jharkhand, the only state reporting permanent migration, it accounts for just 0.8% of recent trips. This confirms that migration from these origin areas is not primarily about permanent relocation, but rather a reversible livelihood strategy rooted in continued attachment to the village.

Taken together, the table reinforces a consistent narrative emerging across earlier findings: migration from these states is predominantly seasonal, long-duration, and circular in nature, rather than permanent or one-time coping driven.

4.6 Frequency of Migration Trips in the Last Three Years

Respondents were asked how many times migrants from their household or village had migrated in the last three years, providing insight into the regularity and intensity of migration cycles. The findings indicate that

migration is largely recurrent rather than one-time, with strong variation across states in how frequently households engage in migration.

Table 4.6: Number of trips in the last three years (in Percentages)

	2–3 times	4–6 times	>6 times	Once	First time
Odisha	66.4	24.3	1.6	2.0	5.7
Rajasthan	50.4	43.4	6.1	–	–
Jharkhand	11.1	61.7	23.9	2.1	1.2
Madhya Pradesh	88.3	10.0	–	1.7	–
Chhattisgarh	80.8	8.4	0.8	6.7	3.3
Group total	59.3	29.7	6.5	2.5	2.1

At the aggregate level, migration is clearly recurrent. Nearly nine out of ten migrants (89.0%) reported making between two and six trips in the last three years, with 2–3 trips (59.3%) being the most common pattern. This confirms that migration is not episodic, but a planned and repeated livelihood strategy, aligned with seasonal labour demand and household income cycles.

In Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh, migration is overwhelmingly concentrated in the 2–3 trips category, accounting for 66.4%, 88.3%, and 80.8% respectively. This suggests relatively stable, predictable migration circuits, likely tied to long-duration seasonal work where migrants travel once or twice a year.

Rajasthan shows a more balanced distribution, with 50.4% reporting 2–3 trips and a substantial 43.4% reporting 4–6 trips, indicating more frequent back-and-forth movement, possibly linked to shorter job tenures or multiple destination options.

Jharkhand stands out sharply from other states. Nearly two-thirds (61.7%) of migrants reported 4–6 trips, and a further 23.9% reported more than six trips in the last three years. This pattern points to highly circular and intensive migration, with frequent movement between origin and destination, consistent with earlier findings of short-duration seasonal and circular migration from the state.

Across all states, one-time and first-time migration is rare, together accounting for less than 5% of cases nationally. Even in states where these categories are more visible, such as Chhattisgarh, first-time migration remains marginal (3.3%). This reinforces the view that migration is not a one-off coping response, but a well-established and repeated practice embedded in household livelihood strategies.

4.7 Seasonality of Migration: Typical Departure and Return Months

The consolidated month-wise distribution of departures highlights strong seasonality in migration patterns, with distinct state-specific calendars rather than a uniform migration cycle across origin regions. The row percentages show how departure months are distributed within each state, allowing direct comparison of seasonal concentration and dispersion.

Table 4.7a: Typical Departure Months of Migrants by State (in Percentages)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Jharkhand	15.7	22.8	7.7	5.5	3.3	3.5	4.4	4.2	5.1	10.6	13.1	4.0
Chhattisgarh	27.3	14.9	10.4	9.6	12.9	8.8	6.4	3.2	2.0	0.8	1.2	2.4
Rajasthan	7.0	9.7	6.2	6.5	11.7	11.4	7.9	11.1	7.3	7.3	6.2	7.6
Odisha	8.7	2.4	2.0	6.7	4.7	9.9	6.7	2.8	11.9	5.1	5.5	33.6
Madhya Pradesh	0.0	0.0	4.4	2.8	0.8	2.4	0.8	6.4	57.4	17.1	7.6	0.4

Madhya Pradesh exhibits the most sharply concentrated migration calendar. A majority of departures occur in September (57.4%), followed by October (17.1%) and November (7.6%). Together, these three months account for over 82% of all departures, indicating a single, tightly synchronised migration season that begins immediately after the monsoon and kharif harvest. This pattern is consistent with earlier findings of long-duration seasonal migration and low trip frequency, suggesting that households typically migrate once per year for extended periods.

Odisha also shows strong seasonality, though with a different timing. The largest share of departures occurs in December (33.6%), followed by September (11.9%) and June (9.9%). This distribution suggests a combination of post-harvest winter migration and limited mid-year movement, aligning with Odisha's prevalence of long seasonal migration lasting more than three months.

In contrast, Rajasthan displays a relatively even spread of departures across the year, with no single month exceeding 12% of departures. Peaks are observed in May (11.7%), June (11.4%), and August (11.1%), but substantial departures also occur in most other months. This indicates a long migration window, consistent with Rajasthan's higher shares of circular and semi-permanent migration and moderate-to-high trip frequency. Migration from Rajasthan appears less tied to a single agricultural cycle and more responsive to continuous non-farm labour demand, particularly in construction and services.

Jharkhand shows the most distributed migration pattern, with departures spread across multiple months. The largest shares are in February (22.8%), January (15.7%), November (13.1%), and October (10.6%), together accounting for over 60% of departures. The absence of a single dominant month reflects high-frequency, circular migration, corroborating earlier findings of shorter-duration trips and repeated movement. This suggests flexible migration strategies, often driven by intermittent labour opportunities rather than fixed seasonal contracts.

Chhattisgarh's migration calendar is front-loaded, with January (27.3%), February (14.9%), March (10.4%), and May (12.9%) together accounting for nearly two-thirds of departures. This pattern indicates migration concentrated in the early part of the year, likely linked to post-harvest agricultural slack and forest-based or construction work. Departures decline sharply after June, pointing to a more time-bound and less continuous migration cycle compared to Jharkhand and Rajasthan.

Taken together, the month-wise distribution confirms that migration from these origin states is not random but tightly structured around local agricultural calendars and labour demand cycles. States such as Madhya Pradesh and Odisha exhibit highly synchronised, once-a-year migration, while Jharkhand and Rajasthan demonstrate more dispersed and flexible movement across the year.

Table 4.7b: Typical Return Months of Migrants by State (in Percentages)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Jharkhand	9.3	15.8	6.9	5.6	4.3	5.0	3.7	3.7	5.8	12.7	17.1	10.2
Odisha	14.1	6.3	17.3	2.4	3.9	26.3	7.1	3.1	4.7	6.3	4.3	4.3
Rajasthan	3.2	9.1	10.1	10.7	5.4	5.4	6.6	6.3	6.0	17.7	12.0	7.6
Chhattisgarh	1.5	1.9	4.5	9.7	13.0	11.2	12.3	5.6	12.6	11.2	13.4	3.3
Madhya Pradesh	0.7	4.2	32.2	18.4	18.0	9.9	6.0	3.5	1.4	1.4	1.4	2.8

The distribution of return months further reinforces that migration from these origin states is highly seasonal and structured, with clear state-specific return windows that mirror agricultural calendars and the duration of migration observed earlier.

Madhya Pradesh shows the most sharply concentrated return pattern. Nearly one-third of all returns occur in March (32.2%), followed by April (18.4%) and May (18.0%). Together, these three months account for

almost 69% of all returns, indicating a tight end-of-season return cycle that aligns with preparation for the kharif agricultural season. This pattern is consistent with earlier findings of long-duration seasonal migration and low trip frequency, where households typically migrate once and return en masse within a narrow time window.

Odisha exhibits a pronounced mid-year return peak, with June alone accounting for 26.3% of all returns, followed by March (17.3%) and January (14.1%). This suggests that many migrants return just before or during the monsoon, likely to re-engage in agricultural activities. The concentration of returns in June closely mirrors Odisha's earlier December–January departure peak, pointing to migration cycles of approximately five to six months.

Returns from Jharkhand are more evenly distributed across the year, reflecting its high-frequency and circular migration profile. Peaks are observed in November (17.1%), February (15.8%), and October (12.7%), together accounting for nearly 46% of returns. The spread across multiple months indicates flexible return timing, consistent with shorter and repeated migration spells rather than a single annual cycle.

Rajasthan displays a long and relatively even return window, with notable concentrations in October (17.7%), November (12.0%), and December (7.6%), but meaningful returns occurring throughout the year. This pattern aligns with Rajasthan's earlier evidence of semi-permanent and circular migration, where returns are staggered rather than synchronised.

Chhattisgarh shows a broad spread of returns from April through November, with moderate peaks in November (13.4%), May (13.0%), September (12.6%), July (12.3%), and June/October (11.2% each). The absence of a sharp peak suggests less standardised migration durations and possibly greater heterogeneity in destination sectors and contract lengths.

The departure and return movements are heavily influenced by agricultural activities at the origin states as migrants do not forfeit their role as farmers tilling their own land and opt only for seasonal work outside. As one can see from the table below, the departure and returning cycles of migrants clearly follows the agricultural calendar.

Table 4.7c: Key sowing and harvesting cycles of major crops across origin states

State	Major Crops	Sowing Season	Harvesting Season
Jharkhand	Paddy, maize, arhar, urad, gram, wheat, mustard	Kharif: Jun–Jul Rabi: Oct–Nov	Kharif: Oct–Nov Rabi: Feb–Mar
Odisha	Paddy, maize, ragi, arhar, green gram, black gram, mustard	Kharif: Jun–Jul Rabi: Oct–Nov	Kharif: Oct–Dec Rabi: Feb–Mar
Rajasthan	Bajra, maize, moong, moth, guar, wheat, mustard, gram, barley	Kharif: Jun–Jul Rabi: Oct–Nov	Kharif: Sep–Oct Rabi: Mar–Apr
Chhattisgarh	Paddy, maize, arhar, niger, gram, wheat, lentil, mustard	Kharif: Jun–Jul Rabi: Oct–Nov	Kharif: Oct–Nov Rabi: Feb–Mar
Madhya Pradesh	Soybean, paddy, maize, cotton, wheat, gram, lentil, mustard	Kharif: Jun–Jul Rabi: Oct–Dec	Kharif: Oct–Nov Rabi: Feb–Apr

Taken together, the return-month distribution complements the departure-month analysis by confirming that migration cycles are state-specific, seasonal, and predictable, rather than random. Madhya Pradesh and Odisha exhibit tightly coupled departure–return cycles, while Jharkhand and Rajasthan show more flexible and staggered movement, reflecting differences in migration duration, frequency, and occupational profiles.

4.8 Travel Companions During Migration: Patterns and Interpretation

The distribution of travel companions provides important insight into the social organisation of migration, the degree of individual versus collective movement, and the risk, support, and vulnerability contexts migrants operate within. The row-percentage analysis highlights distinct state-specific migration cultures, ranging from solo, wage-driven mobility to family- and group-based migration.

Table 4.8: Travel Companions During Migration (in Percentages)

	Alone	With other adult HH members	With spouse	With children	Contractor / agent crew	Other (specify)
Jharkhand	43.2	30.3	15.2	1.9	9.4	0.0
Madhya Pradesh	69.6	11.6	14.3	4.1	0.3	0.0
Odisha	54.1	14.9	16.2	10.6	0.0	4.3
Rajasthan	38.0	21.2	11.0	5.9	24.0	0.0
Chhattisgarh	22.5	75.0	1.7	0.4	0.4	0.0

cross most states, migrating alone remains the dominant mode, but its intensity varies sharply. Madhya Pradesh stands out most clearly, with nearly 70% of reported travel arrangements involving solo migration. This aligns closely with earlier findings of highly synchronised, long-duration seasonal migration, suggesting individual male migration tied to agricultural off-seasons, with households remaining behind.

Odisha (54.1%) and Jharkhand (43.2%) also show a strong preference for solo migration, though to a lesser extent. In these states, solo migration is complemented by other forms of accompaniment, reflecting more diversified migration strategies and repeated trips over time. In contrast, Chhattisgarh reports the lowest share of solo migration (22.5%), indicating a fundamentally different migration structure.

Migration with other adult household members is especially prominent in Chhattisgarh, accounting for a striking 75.0% of reported arrangements. This suggests migration that is collective, household-based, or group-oriented, potentially linked to shared livelihood activities, forest-based work, or regionally clustered employment.

Jharkhand (30.3%) and Rajasthan (21.2%) also show notable levels of adult-group migration, indicating reliance on kinship or peer networks to reduce risk, share costs, and access employment at destination.

Migration with a spouse is most visible in Odisha (16.2%), Jharkhand (15.2%), and Madhya Pradesh (14.3%), suggesting the presence of couple-based or semi-settled migration arrangements. These patterns may be associated with longer migration durations, greater housing stability at destination, or sectors that permit family accompaniment.

Migration with children, while less common overall, is most pronounced in Odisha (10.6%) and Rajasthan (5.9%). The presence of children in migration streams raises critical concerns around education continuity, child protection, and access to basic services, particularly given the predominantly informal nature of migrant employment identified earlier.

Rajasthan shows a distinctive pattern of contractor- or agent-led migration, accounting for 24.0% of reported travel arrangements, far higher than any other state. This reflects recruitment through labour contractors,

mukadams, or crew-based systems, commonly associated with construction, infrastructure, and industrial labour. While such arrangements can facilitate access to employment, they also increase risks related to wage deductions, debt bondage, and reduced bargaining power, underscoring the need for targeted labour regulation. Jharkhand also shows a modest presence of contractor-based migration (9.4%), consistent with its high-frequency, circular movement and engagement in construction and industrial sectors.

“Other” forms of travel accompaniment are negligible across states, with the exception of a small presence in Odisha (4.3%), suggesting that the dominant migration modalities are adequately captured within the main categories.

Taken together, the table reveals that migration is not socially uniform across origin states. Madhya Pradesh represents a model of individual, seasonal labour migration, while Chhattisgarh reflects strongly collective, household-based movement. Rajasthan’s migration is marked by contractor-mediated group travel, and Jharkhand and Odisha display mixed patterns, combining solo, spousal, and group-based migration across repeated trips.

SECTION 2: ORIGINS AND DESTINATIONS

4.9 Migration Destinations: Origin–Destination Patterns

The destination-state profile reveals highly structured and state-specific migration corridors, rather than diffuse or random movement. Migrants from each origin state tend to concentrate in a small number of destination states, reflecting long-established labour networks, sectoral demand, and geographic proximity.

Table 4.9: Destination State by Origin State (in Percentages)

	Gujarat	Tamil Nadu	Andhra Pradesh	Maharashtra	Karnataka	Telangana	Chhattisgarh	Rajasthan	Other states*
Odisha	19.4	32.4	16.2	8.1	10.9	9.3	–	–	3.7
Rajasthan	93.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	6.9	0.1
Jharkhand	15.2	13.6	7.4	7.4	4.5	0.4	18.9	2.9	29.7
Madhya Pradesh	97.9	–	–	0.8	–	–	–	0.8	0.5
Chhattisgarh	0.4	0.8	80.3	–	1.7	5.9	9.6	–	1.3

NB: Other states includes low-frequency destinations such as Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Goa, Chandigarh, Kerala, West Bengal, Bihar, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Puducherry, Punjab, Arunachal Pradesh.

Across all origin states, migration is highly concentrated into one or two dominant destination states, underscoring the role of established labour corridors. These corridors are likely sustained by recruiter networks, employer familiarity, language comfort, and repeat migration cycles identified earlier.

Gujarat overwhelmingly dominates as the destination for migrants from Rajasthan (93.0%) and Madhya Pradesh (97.9%). This near-exclusive orientation points to a deeply entrenched westward migration system, likely linked to construction, manufacturing, textiles, and industrial labour. The narrow destination spread also implies high dependence on a single labour market, increasing vulnerability to sectoral shocks.

Migration from Odisha is distinctly south-oriented, with Tamil Nadu (32.4%), Gujarat (19.4%), and Andhra Pradesh (16.2%) together accounting for over two-thirds of destinations. This reflects Odisha's long-standing links with southern industrial and construction hubs and aligns with earlier findings of long-duration seasonal migration.

Chhattisgarh shows a particularly strong linkage with Andhra Pradesh (80.3%), alongside intra-regional migration to Chhattisgarh itself (9.6%) and Telangana (5.9%). This pattern suggests shorter-distance, culturally proximate migration, possibly tied to agriculture, brick kilns, and regional construction markets.

Unlike other states, Jharkhand exhibits the most diversified destination profile. While Chhattisgarh (18.9%), Gujarat (15.2%), and Tamil Nadu (13.6%) are important, nearly 30% of migration is spread across multiple smaller destinations. This dispersion is consistent with Jharkhand's earlier profile of high-frequency, circular migration, where workers move flexibly across multiple labour markets rather than relying on a single corridor.

Destinations such as Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Punjab account for only marginal shares across all origin states. This suggests that despite their economic prominence, these regions are not primary destinations for the sampled migrant populations, possibly due to higher living costs, weaker recruitment networks, or sectoral mismatch.

Taken together, the destination patterns reinforce that migration from these origin states is network-driven, repetitive, and corridor-specific. Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh are highly dependent on Gujarat, Odisha and Chhattisgarh are anchored to southern labour markets, and Jharkhand follows a diversified, opportunistic migration strategy.

4.10 Destination Type of Migration: Urban vs Rural

The destination type analysis sheds light on whether migration from origin states is primarily oriented towards urban labour markets or rural destinations, offering insights into the sectors and forms of employment migrants are likely to engage in. The findings show a strong overall urban bias, but with important state-wise variation that reflects differences in livelihood strategies, proximity, and sectoral demand.

Table 4.10: Destination type by origin state (in Percentages)

	Urban	Rural
Odisha	82.2	17.8
Rajasthan	63.9	36.1
Jharkhand	80.2	19.8
Madhya Pradesh	57.1	42.9
Chhattisgarh	93.7	6.3

Across all origin states, urban destinations dominate, confirming that migration is largely driven by demand in cities and towns, particularly in construction, manufacturing, services, and informal urban economies. This urban tilt aligns closely with earlier findings on unskilled and semi-skilled employment, as well as long-duration seasonal migration.

Chhattisgarh shows the strongest urban orientation, with 93.7% of migrants moving to urban areas. This suggests migration driven almost entirely by city-based employment opportunities, consistent with its strong corridor linkages to southern and industrial states identified earlier.

Similarly, Odisha (82.2%) and Jharkhand (80.2%) exhibit a pronounced urban bias, indicating that migrants from these states are primarily absorbed into urban labour markets, rather than agricultural or rural employment at destination.

In contrast, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh show a more balanced pattern. While urban destinations still account for the majority, rural migration remains significant, 36.1% in Rajasthan and 42.9% in Madhya Pradesh. This suggests the continued importance of rural–rural or peri-urban migration, likely linked to agriculture, brick kilns, mining, or rural construction work.

The relatively high rural share in Madhya Pradesh aligns with earlier evidence of highly synchronised seasonal migration, where migrants often move to nearby rural destinations and return in time for agricultural cycles. Rajasthan’s mixed profile may reflect migration to rural industrial clusters, highway construction sites, or agricultural belts in neighbouring states.

The very low rural share for Chhattisgarh (6.3%) stands out. This indicates that migration from the state is not primarily agrarian or rural-to-rural, but instead tightly linked to urban and industrial labour markets, reinforcing the picture of migration driven by non-farm employment.

Taken together, the destination type analysis confirms that migration from these origin states is predominantly urban-oriented, but not uniformly so. Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and Jharkhand represent strongly urban-facing migration systems, while Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh exhibit more hybrid patterns, combining urban and rural destinations.

4.11 Migration Corridor Type: Nature and Direction of Movement

The corridor typology captures how migrants move across space, distinguishing between rural–urban and rural–rural flows, and whether movement occurs within districts, within states, or across state boundaries. The findings clearly show that migration from most origin states is predominantly inter-state and rural–urban, but with important deviations in specific states.

Table 4.11: Migration corridor type by origin state (in Percentages)

	Rural–Urban (inter-state)	Rural–Rural (within state)	Rural–Rural (inter-state)	Rural–Urban (within state)	Rural–Urban (within district)	Rural–Rural (within district)	Cross-border / international
Odisha	88.7	–	8.1	3.2	–	–	–
Rajasthan	91.8	0.4	2.0	3.7	1.6	–	0.4
Jharkhand	0.8	70.8	9.1	5.3	9.1	4.9	–
Madhya Pradesh	67.5	0.4	29.2	2.9	–	–	–
Chhattisgarh	84.5	0.4	4.6	5.4	5.0	–	–

For most origin states, migration is overwhelmingly rural–urban and inter-state in nature. This pattern is most pronounced in Rajasthan (91.8%) and Odisha (88.7%), followed closely by Chhattisgarh (84.5%) and Madhya Pradesh (67.5%). These figures indicate that migrants are primarily moving out of their home states into urban labour markets, rather than circulating locally. This finding aligns strongly with earlier evidence on urban destination dominance, long-duration seasonal migration, and concentration in construction, manufacturing, and services at destination.

Jharkhand presents a fundamentally different migration structure. Unlike other states, only 0.8% of migration is rural–urban inter-state. Instead, the majority of migration is rural–rural within the state (70.8%), supplemented by rural–rural inter-state (9.1%) and within-district rural–urban movement (9.1%). This pattern suggests migration that is shorter-distance, more circular, and locally embedded, consistent with earlier findings of high-frequency trips, diversified destinations, and repeated movement. It also indicates reliance on nearby rural worksites, industrial clusters, and local labour markets, rather than distant metropolitan centres.

Madhya Pradesh stands out for its high share of rural–rural inter-state migration (29.2%), the highest among all states. This suggests migration to rural or semi-rural destinations in neighbouring states, possibly linked to agriculture, brick kilns, mining, or rural infrastructure projects. This pattern complements earlier findings of high rural destination shares and highly synchronised seasonal migration.

Migration within the district—both rural–urban and rural–rural—remains marginal across most origin states, except Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, where it accounts for around 10–15% of flows combined. This indicates that migration is generally not short-range commuting, but involves meaningful spatial displacement, often crossing district or state boundaries.

Cross-border or international migration is almost entirely absent, appearing only marginally in Rajasthan (0.4%). This confirms that migration from the sampled regions is overwhelmingly domestic, reinforcing the relevance of inter-state coordination rather than international migration frameworks.

Taken together, the corridor typology confirms that migration from these origin states is structurally inter-state and rural–urban, with Jharkhand as a notable exception characterised by localised, rural-to-rural circulation. Rajasthan and Odisha represent classic long-distance rural–urban labour corridors, Madhya Pradesh combines urban and rural inter-state movement, and Chhattisgarh shows a mixed but urban-oriented pattern.

4.12 Primary Reason for Choosing Destination

This section examines the single most important reason migrants cited for choosing a particular destination. Because respondents selected only one option, the row percentages provide a clear indication of the dominant decision drivers shaping migration pathways from each origin state.

Table 4.12: Primary reason for choosing destination, by origin state (in Percentages)

	Better wages	Lack of work at origin	Recruited by contractor/agent	Existing social network	Employer provided housing/food	Tradition / community route	Debt pressure	Other	Seasonal demand
Odisha	64.4	31.6	2.8	–	0.4	–	–	0.8	–
Rajasthan	48.8	47.1	3.7	–	–	–	–	–	0.4
Jharkhand	35.8	4.9	45.7	7.0	3.3	1.6	1.6	–	–
Madhya Pradesh	98.3	1.7	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Chhattisgarh	67.4	31.8	0.4	–	–	0.4	–	–	–

Across most origin states, better wages emerge as the primary driver of destination choice. This is most pronounced in Madhya Pradesh, where an overwhelming 98.3% of migrants cite higher earnings as the single most important reason for migrating. Chhattisgarh (67.4%) and Odisha (64.4%) also show a strong wage-driven motivation, reinforcing the interpretation that migration from these states is primarily opportunity-led rather than distress-led. In these contexts, migration appears to be a strategic livelihood decision aimed at income maximisation, rather than a last-resort response.

While wages are important, lack of work at origin plays an equally significant role in Rajasthan, where 47.1% of migrants cite it as the primary reason—almost matching the share citing better wages (48.8%). This indicates migration driven by structural employment constraints at origin, including limited non-farm opportunities and seasonal agricultural underemployment.

Odisha also shows a substantial push component, with 31.6% citing lack of work locally, suggesting a dual push–pull dynamic rather than purely wage arbitrage.

Jharkhand stands out as a clear outlier. Nearly 46% of migrants cite recruitment by a contractor or agent as the primary reason for choosing their destination—the highest share among all states. In contrast, only 35.8% cite better wages, and very few cite lack of work at origin. This pattern is consistent with earlier findings on contractor-based travel, high-frequency circular migration, and diverse destination profiles from Jharkhand. Migration here appears to be mediated through labour intermediaries, with destination choice shaped more by recruitment channels than by independent wage comparison.

Factors such as existing social networks, employer-provided housing or food, and tradition/community routes play only a secondary role and are largely visible only in Jharkhand at modest levels. Their limited prominence elsewhere suggests that migration decisions are less socially embedded and more economically driven, particularly in states like Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

Debt pressure and seasonal demand are negligible as primary stated reasons across all states. This does not imply that debt or seasonality are unimportant, but rather that they are indirect or underlying factors, not perceived by migrants as the principal reason guiding destination choice.

SECTION 3: DRIVERS, DECISION MAKING AND SEASONAL RATIONALE

4.13 Is Migration a Regular Strategy or a Coping Mechanism?

This section examines whether migration is perceived by households as a planned livelihood strategy, a regular seasonal practice, or a recent coping response to stress. Because respondents could select multiple options, the findings capture the layered and evolving role of migration, rather than forcing a binary distinction between “choice” and “distress”.

Table 4.13: Key drivers behind migration (in Percentage)

	Aspirational migration (%)	Regular seasonal strategy (%)	Recent coping mechanism (%)	DK / CS (%)
Jharkhand	46.5	38.4	15.1	–
Chhattisgarh	70.5	17.2	11.0	1.3
Odisha	63.6	11.7	24.8	–
Rajasthan	26.3	24.1	49.0	0.6
Madhya Pradesh	18.7	4.1	77.2	–

Across origin states, migration is most frequently described as aspirational, indicating that for a large proportion of households, migration is viewed as a pathway to income enhancement, stability, or upward mobility, rather than merely a survival response. This aspirational framing is especially strong in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha, where a substantial majority of respondents associate migration with long-term livelihood planning.

In these states, migration appears to be institutionalised within household strategies, supported by established corridors, repeat destinations, and familiarity with destination labour markets. This aligns closely with earlier findings on high migration frequency, contractor-mediated recruitment, and long-duration seasonal movement, suggesting that migration is embedded in household decision-making and inter-generational experience.

Alongside aspiration, a significant number of respondents, particularly in Jharkhand and Rajasthan, identify migration as a regular seasonal strategy. This indicates migration that is predictable, cyclical, and synchronised with agricultural calendars, rather than sporadic or crisis-driven.

The coexistence of aspirational and seasonal responses highlights that migration is often both planned and repetitive, forming part of an annual livelihood rhythm. Households do not necessarily perceive seasonality as distress; instead, it reflects a rational allocation of labour across space and time in response to uneven employment opportunities.

In contrast, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan show a markedly stronger coping dimension. In Madhya Pradesh in particular, the number of respondents identifying migration as a recent coping mechanism far exceeds those framing it as aspirational or regular. This suggests migration triggered by acute livelihood stress, such as limited local employment, agricultural shortfalls, or income shocks.

Rajasthan similarly displays a strong coping profile, although this coexists with regular seasonal migration. Together, these patterns point to migration functioning as a risk-management tool in these states, activated during periods of constraint rather than as a purely forward-looking choice.

4.14 Reasons for Returning Home

This section examines the primary reason migrants returned to their place of origin. Since this question captures a single main reason, row percentages directly reflect the dominant return triggers shaping migration cycles.

Table 4.14: Main reason for returning home, by origin state (in Percentages)

Origin state	Household / family needs	No specific reason	Not yet returned	End of work / season	Better opportunity at origin	Illness / injury	Other
Odisha	18.2	39.3	22.7	13.0	4.0	–	2.8
Rajasthan	51.2	20.1	15.6	10.2	2.5	0.4	–
Jharkhand	62.1	0.8	11.1	16.9	3.3	4.9	0.8
Madhya Pradesh	73.3	1.7	–	17.5	7.1	0.4	–
Chhattisgarh	40.6	39.7	15.9	1.3	2.1	–	0.4

Across most origin states, household and family needs are the single most important reason for return, underscoring the continuing centrality of migration as a temporary and circular livelihood strategy rather than permanent relocation.

This pattern is especially pronounced in Madhya Pradesh (73.3%), Jharkhand (62.1%), and Rajasthan (51.2%), where return is strongly linked to caregiving responsibilities, agricultural duties, social obligations, or household management. These findings reinforce earlier evidence that migration, even when long-distance, remains closely tied to family-based decision-making.

Odisha (39.3%) and Chhattisgarh (39.7%) report a notably high share of respondents stating no specific reason for return. This suggests highly routinised and cyclical migration, where return is expected and embedded in the migration rhythm rather than triggered by a discrete event. In these contexts, return appears to be a normalised part of the migration cycle, rather than a response to either crisis or opportunity.

The end of work or season is a significant return factor in Jharkhand (16.9%) and Madhya Pradesh (17.5%), indicating migration aligned with fixed-duration contracts or seasonal labour demand. This supports earlier findings on regular seasonal strategies, where return timing is structured around predictable employment cycles rather than ad hoc decisions.

A meaningful proportion of respondents, particularly in Odisha (22.7%) and Chhattisgarh (15.9%), report that migrants have not yet returned. This suggests either ongoing migration spells, longer-duration stays at destination, or delayed returns due to continuing work availability.

Very few respondents cite better opportunities at origin or illness/injury as the primary reason for return. Even in states where these appear, such as Madhya Pradesh (7.1% better opportunity) or Jharkhand (4.9% illness/injury), they remain secondary drivers. This indicates that return migration is rarely opportunity-led or health-driven, and instead largely governed by household needs and work cycles.

SECTION 4: WORK, WAGES AND PAYMENT PRACTICES

4.15 Main Sector of Work at Destination

This section examines the primary sector in which migrants are employed at destination, based on a single-response question. Row percentages therefore reflect the dominant employment absorption patterns for migrants from each origin state.

Table 4.15: Main sector of work by origin state (in Percentages)

	Construction	Factory / mill	Agriculture / farm labour	Services	Brick kiln	Other sectors
Odisha	25.5	55.1	—	2.8	14.6	2.0
Rajasthan	57.0	29.9	2.0	5.7	0.4	5.0
Jharkhand	51.0	31.3	0.8	9.5	—	7.4
Madhya Pradesh	12.9	55.4	29.2	0.4	—	2.1
Chhattisgarh	51.9	25.9	7.9	2.1	0.8	11.4

***NB: Other sectors include domestic work, textiles/garments, plantation/sugarcane, security/housekeeping, mandi/logistics, leather/tannery, and waste/recycling (each individually <3% in most states).*

Across origin states, migrant employment is highly concentrated in two sectors—construction and factory/mill work, together accounting for the majority of employment in every state. At the aggregate level, these two sectors absorb nearly 80% of all migrants, underscoring the centrality of urban and industrial labour markets in shaping migration outcomes.

Construction emerges as the single largest sector for migrants from Rajasthan (57.0%), Chhattisgarh (51.9%), and Jharkhand (51.0%), reflecting strong demand in infrastructure, housing, and urban expansion projects. These patterns align closely with earlier findings on urban destinations, rural–urban inter-state corridors, and contractor-mediated recruitment, particularly in Rajasthan and Jharkhand.

In contrast, factory/mill work is the dominant sector for migrants from Odisha (55.1%) and Madhya Pradesh (55.4%). This indicates migration oriented towards industrial clusters, manufacturing zones, and processing units, rather than primarily site-based construction work.

In Madhya Pradesh, factory work coexists with a substantial share of agricultural/farm labour (29.2%), suggesting a mixed migration profile that includes both industrial and rural destination employment. This complements earlier evidence of higher rural destination shares and rural–rural inter-state migration from the state.

Agriculture/farm labour remains a significant but secondary sector, most notably for Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, while it is almost absent for migrants from Odisha, Jharkhand, and Rajasthan. This reinforces the understanding that migration from the latter states is predominantly non-farm and urban-facing.

Brick kilns, while not dominant overall, are still relevant for Odisha (14.6%), pointing to established kiln-based migration circuits that are often seasonal and contractor-driven. This finding aligns with earlier evidence of long-duration seasonal migration and specific destination corridors.

Employment in services, as well as sectors such as domestic work, security, textiles, logistics, and waste recycling, remains marginal across all origin states, rarely exceeding 10%. This suggests that migrants are largely absorbed into manual, labour-intensive sectors, with limited access to higher-value or formal service employment.

4.16 Nature of Engagement at Destination

This section examines the **form of employment arrangement** under which migrants work at destination. As this is a **single-response question**, row percentages directly reflect the **dominant employment relationship** experienced by migrants from each origin state.

Table 4.16: Nature of engagement by origin state (in Percentages)

	Monthly informal wage	Daily casual (no contract)	Contractor / agent hired	Piece-rate / task-based	Formal contract	Self-employed	Other
Odisha	72.5	21.5	4.0	0.4	1.6	–	–
Rajasthan	33.6	59.8	2.5	1.6	0.8	1.6	–
Jharkhand	86.4	4.9	2.1	3.3	1.2	1.6	0.4
Madhya Pradesh	92.5	7.5	–	–	–	–	–
Chhattisgarh	77.0	18.8	0.4	3.3	–	–	0.4

Across all origin states, migrant employment is overwhelmingly informal, with the vast majority of migrants engaged either on monthly informal wages or as daily casual workers without contracts. Together, these two categories account for almost all employment arrangements, underscoring the precarious and unprotected nature of migrant work.

At the aggregate level, more than 72% of migrants work on monthly informal wages, while nearly 23% rely on daily casual work, confirming that formalised employment relationships remain extremely limited.

Monthly informal wage arrangements are the predominant form of engagement in Madhya Pradesh (92.5%), Jharkhand (86.4%), Chhattisgarh (77.0%), and Odisha (72.5%). This suggests employment that is relatively stable in duration compared to daily casual work, but still lacks written contracts, social security, or legal protection.

In states such as Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand, this pattern aligns with earlier findings of factory/mill employment and long-duration migration, where workers are retained for extended periods but remain outside formal labour protections.

Rajasthan stands out sharply, with 59.8% of migrants engaged as daily casual workers, compared to only 33.6% on monthly informal wages. This reflects migration dominated by construction and site-based work, where employment is irregular, payment is daily, and job continuity is uncertain. This pattern is consistent with earlier evidence of construction-led migration, contractor-mediated corridors, and a stronger coping dimension in Rajasthan's migration profile.

Direct hiring via contractors or agents, piece-rate/task-based work, and self-employment together account for only a small fraction of employment arrangements across all states. While contractor-based recruitment was prominent in shaping destination choice in Jharkhand, the actual employment relationship at destination often translates into informal wage work, rather than explicit contractor contracts.

Across all states, formal contracts are virtually absent, never exceeding 2% in any state. This highlights the persistent exclusion of migrant workers from formal labour systems, even when employed in organised industrial or urban sectors.

4.17 Payment Cycle at Destination

This section examines how frequently migrants are paid for their work at destination, an important indicator of income stability, predictability, and vulnerability. As this is a single-response question, row percentages directly reflect the dominant payment arrangements experienced by migrants from each origin state.

Table 4.17: Payment cycle by origin state (in Percentages)

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	End of season / contract	No definite pattern	Piece-rate
Odisha	0.4	11.7	80.2	6.5	1.2	–
Rajasthan	38.9	0.8	54.9	0.8	3.7	0.8
Jharkhand	4.1	0.4	93.4	0.8	0.8	0.4
Madhya Pradesh	1.3	0.4	98.3	–	–	–
Chhattisgarh	2.9	4.6	88.3	0.4	3.8	–

Across all origin states, monthly payment cycles overwhelmingly dominate, indicating that most migrants are engaged in work arrangements that provide regular, predictable income flows, even if employment remains informal. At the aggregate level, more than four-fifths of migrants are paid monthly, reinforcing earlier findings on the prevalence of monthly informal wage arrangements.

This pattern is most pronounced in Madhya Pradesh (98.3%), Jharkhand (93.4%), and Chhattisgarh (88.3%), where monthly payment is nearly universal. These states also showed high engagement in

factory/mill work and longer-duration migration, suggesting employment that is continuous over several months, albeit without formal contracts.

Rajasthan stands out sharply from the other states, with 38.9% of migrants paid on a daily basis, alongside 54.9% paid monthly. This mixed payment structure reflects Rajasthan's strong orientation towards construction and site-based work, where daily wage payment remains common and employment continuity is uncertain.

Daily payment arrangements are typically associated with higher income volatility and weaker worker bargaining power, reinforcing earlier evidence that migration from Rajasthan has a stronger coping and casualised character.

Weekly payments are most visible in Odisha (11.7%) and Chhattisgarh (4.6%), possibly reflecting specific sectors such as brick kilns or subcontracted work where wages are settled on a weekly basis. Payment at the end of the season or contract is relatively uncommon overall but remains relevant in Odisha (6.5%), pointing to season-bound work arrangements where earnings are accumulated and settled upon completion of a work cycle. Such arrangements can increase vulnerability to wage withholding or delayed payments.

Only a small share of migrants report no definite pattern of payment or piece-rate arrangements, suggesting that while informality is widespread, outright unpredictability in payment timing is not the dominant experience.

4.18 Typical Wages Earned at Destination

This section examines the typical daily wage levels earned by migrants at destination, based on the derived wage variable. Since respondents reported a single wage band, row percentages reflect the distribution of earnings within each origin state.

Table 4.18: Typical daily wage (INR), by origin state (in Percentages)

	< ₹500	₹500–999	₹1000–1499	₹1500–2000	₹2001–2500	₹2501+	DK / CS
Rajasthan	15.5	82.5	1.0	–	–	–	1.0
Odisha	–	–	–	3.3	–	96.7	–
Chhattisgarh	5.6	38.9	16.7	–	11.1	16.7	11.1
Jharkhand	–	18.2	–	18.2	63.6	–	–
Madhya Pradesh	–	50.0	–	–	–	25.0	25.0

The wage distribution reveals clear stratification across origin states, suggesting that migrants are absorbed into very different labour market segments depending on their place of origin, migration corridors, and sectors of employment.

Migrants from Rajasthan are overwhelmingly concentrated in the ₹500–999 wage band (82.5%), with an additional 15.5% earning below ₹500. Very few report earnings above ₹1000. This confirms earlier findings that Rajasthan's migration is dominated by daily casual construction labour, characterised by lower and more volatile wages. The wage profile reinforces the interpretation of migration from Rajasthan as largely coping-driven and casualised.

In contrast, Odisha shows an exceptionally high concentration in the ₹2501+ wage band (96.7%). This suggests that migrants from Odisha are largely engaged in higher-paying industrial or specialised work, potentially linked to factory employment, longer-duration contracts, or piece-based earnings aggregated

over time. While the pattern is striking, it also warrants cautious interpretation, as the high concentration may reflect smaller sample sizes or specific destination-sector niches.

Jharkhand displays a bimodal wage profile, with nearly two-thirds (63.6%) earning ₹2001–2500, alongside a smaller share in lower bands. This aligns with earlier findings of contractor-mediated recruitment and factory-based employment, which can yield higher wages for certain skills but remain informal.

Chhattisgarh shows the most diversified wage distribution, spread across ₹500–999, ₹1000–1499, ₹2001–2500, and ₹2501+ bands. This dispersion mirrors its mixed sectoral profile, combining construction, factory work, agriculture, and services, and suggests uneven earning opportunities within the migrant population.

For Madhya Pradesh, half of respondents report earnings in the ₹500–999 band, while 25% report ₹2501+ and 25% are uncertain (DK/CS). This mixed pattern may reflect heterogeneous migration experiences, including both low-wage seasonal work and higher-paying industrial employment, as well as weaker wage visibility among workers.

4.19 Typical Monthly Wages Earned at Destination

This section examines the typical monthly earnings of migrants at destination, providing a clearer picture of income adequacy and differentiation across origin states. As respondents reported a single wage band, row percentages reflect the distribution of monthly wages within each state.

Table 4.19: Typical monthly wage (INR), by origin state (in Percentages)

	< ₹5,000	₹5,000–9,999	₹10,000–19,999	₹20,000+
Madhya Pradesh	–	1.7	96.2	2.1
Jharkhand	0.9	6.2	49.3	43.6
Chhattisgarh	–	3.3	84.8	11.8
Odisha	0.5	12.6	78.3	8.6
Rajasthan	0.7	5.2	90.3	3.7

Across all origin states, the ₹10,000–19,999 range is the dominant monthly wage band, accounting for nearly four-fifths of all migrants at the aggregate level. This suggests that migration generally enables households to access moderate but relatively stable monthly incomes, even when employment remains informal. This concentration is especially strong in Madhya Pradesh (96.2%), Rajasthan (90.3%), and Chhattisgarh (84.8%), indicating migration outcomes that cluster around a narrow mid-income band, rather than being widely dispersed.

Jharkhand displays a distinctly different profile, with nearly 44% of migrants earning ₹20,000 or more per month, alongside another 49% in the ₹10,000–19,999 band. This implies substantially higher earning potential for a significant share of Jharkhand's migrants. This pattern is consistent with earlier findings on contractor-mediated recruitment, factory and industrial employment, and higher daily wage bands, suggesting access to longer-duration or higher-productivity employment relative to other states.

Odisha and Chhattisgarh show a more graduated wage distribution. While the majority of migrants remain in the ₹10,000–19,999 band, 8–12% earn ₹20,000+, and a non-trivial share—especially in Odisha (12.6%)—fall into the ₹5,000–9,999 range. This spread suggests heterogeneous migration outcomes, potentially reflecting differences in sector, skill levels, and destination labour markets within the same origin state.

Across all states, the share of migrants earning below ₹5,000 per month is negligible, never exceeding 1%. This reinforces the interpretation that migration, even when informal, generally provides higher monthly incomes than what is typically available at origin, and is not associated with persistently ultra-low earnings.

4.20 Receipt of Written Payslips / Wage Statements

This section assesses the extent to which migrant workers receive written documentation of wages, an important indicator of formality, transparency, and enforceability of labour rights at destination.

Table 4.20: Receipt of written payslips/wage statements (in Percentages)

	Never	Yes, every pay	Sometimes
Odisha	79.4	14.6	6.1
Rajasthan	99.2	0.8	–
Jharkhand	24.7	48.6	26.7
Madhya Pradesh	69.6	8.3	22.1
Chhattisgarh	84.9	7.1	7.9

Across most origin states, the majority of migrants report never receiving written payslips or wage statements, underscoring the highly informal nature of employment relationships at destination. This is particularly stark in Rajasthan, where virtually all migrants (99.2%) report never receiving payslips, indicating near-complete absence of wage documentation.

Similarly high levels of non-receipt are observed in Chhattisgarh (84.9%) and Odisha (79.4%), suggesting that for migrants from these states, wages are predominantly communicated verbally, with limited scope for verification or dispute resolution.

Jharkhand presents a clear outlier pattern. Nearly half of migrants (48.6%) report receiving written payslips every pay cycle, and an additional 26.7% receive them occasionally. Only 24.7% report never receiving wage statements. This pattern aligns with earlier findings indicating:

- higher engagement in factory, industrial, or contractor-mediated work, and
- relatively higher monthly wages and more regular payment cycles.

Together, these suggest that a substantial share of Jharkhand migrants are employed in semi-formal or organised settings where wage documentation is more common.

In Madhya Pradesh, while nearly 70% never receive payslips, a significant 22.1% receive them sometimes, and 8.3% consistently. This mixed pattern points to heterogeneity in destination employment, where some migrants access workplaces with partial formal practices, while most remain in informal arrangements.

The contrast between Jharkhand and other states suggests that sectoral placement and recruitment channels, rather than migrant characteristics alone, play a decisive role in shaping labour formality outcomes.

4.21 Regular deductions from wages (food / rent / tools / fines)

This indicator captures the prevalence, transparency, and nature of wage deductions, which are a critical determinant of net earnings, indebtedness, and employer control in migrant labour markets.

Table 4.21: Regular deductions from wages (in Percentages)

	No deductions	Yes – deductions explained / documented	Yes – deductions verbal / undocumented	DK / CS
Odisha	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Rajasthan	88.1	0.4	0.8	10.7
Jharkhand	30.0	61.7	0.8	7.4
Madhya Pradesh	96.7	0.4	0.4	2.5
Chhattisgarh	77.4	2.1	19.7	0.8

At an aggregate level, a large majority of migrants report no regular deductions from wages, reflecting either genuinely deduction-free arrangements or the absence of systematic accounting of deductions. This is most pronounced in Odisha (100%) and Madhya Pradesh (96.7%), where almost all migrants state that wages are paid without regular deductions. However, this apparent protection masks substantial variation across origin states, pointing to different labour regimes and recruitment arrangements.

Jharkhand presents a distinct pattern. Only 30% of migrants report no deductions, while a striking 61.7% report deductions that are explained or documented. This suggests that a large share of Jharkhand migrants are employed in more structured, organised, or contractor-mediated settings, where deductions—often for food, accommodation, or tools—are institutionalised and recorded.

While documentation improves transparency, the high prevalence of deductions still implies that net take-home wages may be significantly lower than nominal earnings, with implications for savings and remittances.

Chhattisgarh emerges as a high-risk state from a wage protection perspective. Nearly one in five migrants (19.7%) report verbal or undocumented deductions, the highest among all states. Such deductions are typically associated with:

- employer-controlled housing or food arrangements,
- informal penalties or fines, and
- limited worker bargaining power.

The combination of high informality and undocumented deductions suggests heightened vulnerability to wage manipulation and exploitation.

In Rajasthan, while most migrants report no deductions (88.1%), a notable 10.7% fall under DK/CS, indicating limited awareness or clarity regarding wage components. This uncertainty itself is an indicator of low transparency, even where deductions may not be explicitly recognised by workers.

Taken together, the findings suggest that wage deductions are not uniformly absent, but rather unevenly distributed across migration corridors and employment types:

- Jharkhand reflects a model of formalised deductions within semi-organised labour markets.

- Chhattisgarh reflects informal and opaque deduction practices, raising worker protection concerns.
- Odisha and Madhya Pradesh appear relatively insulated from regular deductions, though this may also reflect shorter contracts, daily wage arrangements, or limited accounting.

4.22 Was any advance given to you or your household for this job?

This indicator captures the use of cash or in-kind advances prior to migration, which is a well-established mechanism for labour tying, dependency, and delayed exit in informal labour markets.

Table 4.22: Advance given for the job (in Percentages)

	No advance (%)	Yes, advance given (%)
Odisha	85.0	15.0
Rajasthan	69.3	30.7
Jharkhand	74.5	25.5
Madhya Pradesh	100.0	0.0
Chhattisgarh	99.6	0.4

Across the sample, most migrants report not receiving any advance, suggesting that advances are not a dominant feature of all migration corridors. However, this aggregate picture conceals important state-specific risks. Rajasthan stands out, with nearly one in three migrants (30.7%) reporting receipt of an advance. Jharkhand follows closely (25.5%). These levels are significant and point to contractor-led or broker-mediated recruitment systems, particularly in:

- construction,
- brick kilns,
- seasonal manufacturing, and
- inter-state rural-urban corridors.

In such contexts, advances often function as de facto debt, reducing workers' ability to leave employment prematurely and increasing vulnerability to wage deductions, extended work periods, or withheld payments.

In Odisha, 15% of migrants report receiving an advance. While lower than Rajasthan and Jharkhand, this still indicates a meaningful minority operating within advance-linked labour arrangements—often associated with seasonal migration cycles and repeat recruitment through known contractors.

In sharp contrast, Madhya Pradesh reports no advances at all, and Chhattisgarh reports a negligible 0.4%. This suggests that migration from these states is largely self-initiated, wage-based, and less dependent on pre-financing by employers or agents. This pattern aligns with:

- higher shares of monthly informal wages, and
- lower prevalence of contractor-mediated engagement observed in earlier tables.

While advances may provide short-term liquidity for households, especially during lean agricultural periods, their presence is strongly associated with:

- restricted mobility,
- opaque wage accounting, and

- higher likelihood of undocumented deductions.

The overlap between states with higher advances (Rajasthan, Jharkhand) and those showing contractor recruitment, daily wages, and deduction practices suggests a cluster of labour vulnerabilities, rather than isolated risks.

4.23 Was any advance given to you or your household for this job?

This indicator is important for understanding labour dependency and vulnerability, as advances are widely used in informal labour markets to bind workers to employers or contractors, restrict exit options, and enable wage deductions after recruitment. The data show that advance-based recruitment is not universal, but varies sharply by state and migration corridor.

Rajasthan records the highest prevalence of advances, with 30.7% of migrants reporting that an advance was given, followed closely by Jharkhand at 25.5%. In both states, roughly one in four to one in three migrants enters employment after receiving an advance. This strongly points to contractor- or agent-mediated recruitment and employment arrangements in which workers' mobility is constrained until the advance is recovered through work. These patterns are consistent with earlier findings from these states, including higher reliance on contractors, greater use of informal wage arrangements, and evidence of wage deductions.

Odisha presents a moderate level of exposure, with 15.0% of migrants reporting advances. While lower than Rajasthan and Jharkhand, this still represents a significant share of workers potentially exposed to advance-linked dependency. The pattern suggests a mixed migration profile in Odisha, where self-initiated migration coexists with contractor-facilitated recruitment.

In contrast, advances are largely absent in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Madhya Pradesh reports no advances at all, while Chhattisgarh shows a negligible level (0.4%). This indicates that migration from these states is predominantly self-financed, based on direct wage employment, and less reliant on intermediaries. These findings align with earlier results showing low contractor involvement and greater reliance on direct or monthly wage arrangements.

4.24 What Was the Advance Amount (INR)?

The table below presents the distribution of advance amounts among migrants who reported receiving an advance, shown as row percentages by origin state. This helps distinguish between nominal facilitation advances and high-value, potentially binding advances across different migration corridors.

Table 4.24: Advance Amount among Migrants Who Received Advances

	< ₹1,000	₹1,000–4,999	₹5,000–9,999	₹10,000+
Rajasthan	2.7%	88.0%	9.3%	0.0%
Jharkhand	6.5%	35.5%	32.3%	25.8%
Odisha	0.0%	0.0%	8.1%	91.9%
Chhattisgarh	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
All States	3.4%	50.9%	17.1%	28.6%

The size of advances received by migrants varies sharply across states, indicating fundamentally different recruitment and labour-control mechanisms operating within migration corridors. In Rajasthan, advances are overwhelmingly small-value. Nearly nine out of ten advance recipients (88.0%) received amounts in the ₹1,000–4,999 range, with no reported cases of advances above ₹10,000. This suggests that advances in

Rajasthan function largely as short-term facilitation or travel-support mechanisms, rather than long-term debt instruments. However, when read alongside 3.23 where a relatively high proportion of migrants report receiving advances at all, this pattern still points to widespread but low-intensity dependency.

Jharkhand presents a more concerning and stratified profile. Only 35.5% of advance recipients received small advances (₹1,000–4,999), while a substantial share received medium to high advances - 32.3% in the ₹5,000–9,999 bracket and 25.8% receiving ₹10,000 or more. This distribution indicates that for a significant proportion of Jharkhand migrants, advances are large enough to create meaningful indebtedness, potentially constraining workers' ability to leave employment prematurely or negotiate wages and conditions.

In Odisha, although fewer migrants receive advances overall (as seen in C29), those who do are exposed to very high advance amounts. An overwhelming 91.9% of advance recipients reported receiving ₹10,000 or more, with no cases in the lower brackets. This strongly suggests employer-controlled or long-duration migration arrangements, where advances likely cover transport, subsistence, and household needs but also bind workers for extended periods.

Chhattisgarh stands apart, with only a single reported advance, entirely in the ₹1,000–4,999 range. This reinforces earlier findings that migration from Chhattisgarh is largely self-financed, with minimal reliance on advance-based recruitment. At the aggregate level, while just over half of advances (50.9%) fall in the ₹1,000–4,999 range, a notable 28.6% are ₹10,000 or higher, underscoring that advance-related vulnerability is driven not only by prevalence but by magnitude. States like Odisha and Jharkhand therefore face qualitatively different risks compared to Rajasthan, even when the overall incidence of advances may appear similar.

4.25 Who Provided the Advance?

This section examines who provides advances to migrants, an important indicator of power asymmetries and control in recruitment and employment relationships. The table presents row percentages by origin state, showing the relative role of contractors, employers, informal social networks, and moneylenders.

Table 4.25: Advance Provider among Migrants Who Received Advances

Origin State	Agent / Contractor	Employer	Family / Friend	Moneylender
Rajasthan	78.7%	9.3%	8.0%	4.0%
Jharkhand	56.5%	40.3%	3.2%	0.0%
Odisha	81.1%	18.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Across all states, advances are overwhelmingly mediated through labour market intermediaries rather than social networks. At the aggregate level, 71.4% of advances are provided by agents or contractors, underscoring their central role in shaping migration decisions, job placement, and workers' dependency relationships.

In Rajasthan and Odisha, the dominance of agents and contractors is particularly pronounced. In Rajasthan, nearly four-fifths of advances (78.7%) are provided by agents or contractors, with only small shares coming from employers (9.3%) or family and friends (8.0%). Odisha shows an even stronger concentration, with 81.1% of advances routed through agents, and the remainder provided directly by employers. These patterns suggest that in these states, access to work is tightly brokered, and advances

serve as a mechanism through which intermediaries consolidate control over labour supply, timing, and worker retention.

Jharkhand stands out for its relatively high share of employer-provided advances. While agents still account for the majority (56.5%), a substantial 40.3% of advances are given directly by employers. This aligns with earlier findings showing larger advance amounts (C30) and suggests employment arrangements where employers themselves actively bind workers through upfront payments, potentially reducing reliance on third-party contractors but not necessarily reducing vulnerability.

Across all states, family/friend-based advances are rare (4.6%), and moneylenders account for a negligible share (1.7%). This indicates that advances linked to migration are not primarily household coping loans, but are instead embedded within labour recruitment systems. The near-absence of moneylenders also suggests that debt relationships are internalised within employment contracts, rather than externalised through local credit markets.

Chhattisgarh again appears as an outlier, with only a single reported advance, entirely provided by an agent. Given the extremely low prevalence of advances overall in the state, this finding reinforces the conclusion that migration from Chhattisgarh is largely self-financed and weakly intermediated.

4.26 How Was the Advance Repaid?

This section examines the mechanism through which advances are recovered, which is a critical indicator of labour control, transparency, and risk of coercion. Repayment methods determine whether advances function as simple financial support or evolve into tools of wage suppression and bonded labour-like arrangements.

The table below presents row percentages by origin state, showing how migrants who received advances repaid (or are expected to repay) them.

Table 4.26: Repayment method for advances among migrants who received advances

Origin State	Deducted from Wages	Lump Sum on Return	Other (Specify)	Charged Interest / Bonded Terms	Ongoing / Not Repaid
Rajasthan	80.0%	16.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%
Jharkhand	83.9%	9.7%	0.0%	6.5%	0.0%
Odisha	51.4%	2.7%	45.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Across states, wage deduction emerges as the dominant repayment mechanism, confirming that advances are most often recovered directly through control over wages rather than voluntary repayment.

In Rajasthan and Jharkhand, the pattern is particularly stark. In Rajasthan, four out of five advance recipients (80.0%) reported that the advance was deducted directly from wages, while 16.0% repaid it as a lump sum upon return. Similarly, in Jharkhand, 83.9% of advances were recovered through wage deductions, with only 9.7% repaid in a lump sum.

This repayment structure implies that workers have limited visibility and control over how much is being deducted and when, especially when combined with:

- the absence of written wage statements, and
- informal or daily wage arrangements.

Together, these conditions create a high risk of opaque or excessive deductions.

Odisha displays a distinctly different profile. While 51.4% of advances are repaid through wage deductions, a remarkably high 45.9% fall under “Other” repayment methods. This category likely reflects informal, non-standard, or poorly understood arrangements, potentially involving:

- delayed settlement,
- partial rollovers across migration cycles, or
- repayment through mechanisms not clearly articulated to workers.

The near absence of lump-sum repayment (2.7%) suggests that Odisha migrants may have limited exit flexibility, particularly given the high advance amounts observed in C30.

Although relatively small in absolute terms, Jharkhand is the only state where a measurable share (6.5%) reported charged interest or bonded terms. This is analytically significant, as it points to explicit debt-linked employment arrangements, reinforcing Jharkhand’s profile as a high-risk corridor across multiple indicators (advance size, provider, and repayment method).

In Rajasthan, 4.0% of advances were reported as ongoing or not yet repaid, suggesting that some workers carry debt beyond a single migration cycle, further increasing dependency. Chhattisgarh again appears as an outlier, with a single advance case entirely deducted from wages. Given the extremely low prevalence of advances in the state, this does not indicate a systemic issue but rather an isolated instance.

SECTION 5: REMITTANCES AND ECONOMIC LINKAGES

4.27 Does the Migrant Remit Money Home?

Remittance behaviour is a key indicator of migration purpose, household dependence on migrant income, and the extent to which migration functions as a livelihood strategy rather than an individual employment decision. The table below presents row percentages by origin state, showing whether migrants remit money regularly, occasionally, or not at all.

Table 4.27: Remittance Behaviour of Migrants (in Percentages)

	Yes, regularly	Yes, occasionally	No
Odisha	63.6%	18.2%	18.2%
Rajasthan	77.0%	18.9%	4.1%
Jharkhand	78.6%	20.2%	1.2%
Madhya Pradesh	99.2%	0.4%	0.4%
Chhattisgarh	0.8%	56.5%	42.7%

Overall, remittance flows are widespread, with nearly two-thirds of migrants (64.0%) remitting money home regularly and another 22.8% doing so occasionally. This confirms that for the majority of households, migration is a core income-support strategy rather than a purely individual or aspirational activity.

Madhya Pradesh stands out sharply, with an almost universal remittance pattern: 99.2% of migrants remit regularly, and virtually no migrants report not remitting. This indicates that migration from Madhya Pradesh is strongly household-oriented, with earnings closely tied to family consumption, debt servicing, or agricultural investment at origin.

Similarly, Jharkhand (78.6%) and Rajasthan (77.0%) report high levels of regular remittances, complemented by around one-fifth of migrants remitting occasionally. The very small share of non-remitters

in these states (1.2% in Jharkhand and 4.1% in Rajasthan) suggests that migration is highly instrumental, aimed at sustaining rural households rather than individual accumulation.

In Odisha, while a majority (63.6%) remit regularly, a sizable 18.2% do not remit at all. This split points to heterogeneous migration streams—some migrants are clearly supporting households, while others may be:

- newer migrants,
- engaged in short-term or irregular work, or
- using migration for personal savings or skill acquisition rather than immediate household support.

This mixed pattern aligns with earlier findings showing high advance amounts and opaque repayment mechanisms, which may temporarily suppress the ability to remit.

Chhattisgarh presents a starkly different picture. Only 0.8% of migrants remit regularly, while 56.5% remit only occasionally and a substantial 42.7% do not remit at all. This pattern suggests that migration from Chhattisgarh is:

- more episodic or short-duration,
- less tightly linked to routine household financial planning, and
- possibly oriented towards individual coping, experimentation, or consumption smoothing rather than sustained income transfer.

This finding is consistent with earlier evidence from Chhattisgarh showing low reliance on advances, minimal contractor involvement, and weaker wage-dependency structures.

The strong prevalence of regular remittances in Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Rajasthan indicates that any disruption to migrant employment—such as wage delays, deductions, or job loss, which directly affects household welfare at origin. These states therefore warrant priority attention in:

- wage protection,
- timely payment enforcement, and
- grievance redressal mechanisms.

Conversely, the Chhattisgarh pattern highlights the need for different policy responses, focusing less on remittance facilitation and more on local employment stabilisation and short-term income security.

4.28 Frequency of Sending Remittances

Beyond whether migrants remit, the frequency of remittance transfers provides deeper insight into household dependence, income regularity, and financial stress at origin. Regular remittances usually indicate stable earnings and strong household obligations, while irregular or end-of-season transfers suggest episodic work or constrained cash flow. The table below presents row percentages by origin state, showing how often migrants send money home.

Table 4.28: Frequency of Sending Remittances

	Monthly	Irregular	End of Season	Fortnightly	Weekly
Jharkhand	92.5%	0.0%	2.9%	0.4%	4.2%

Madhya Pradesh	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Rajasthan	71.4%	13.7%	6.8%	8.1%	0.0%
Odisha	93.6%	0.5%	4.0%	0.0%	2.0%
Chhattisgarh	38.7%	59.9%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%

The findings show strong inter-state contrasts in remittance regularity, closely mirroring differences in employment stability and the role of migration in household livelihoods. Madhya Pradesh exhibits the most stable remittance behaviour, with 100% of remitting migrants sending money monthly. This confirms earlier findings that migration from Madhya Pradesh is highly routinised and household-centric, with predictable income flows that households can rely on for recurring expenses.

Similarly, Jharkhand (92.5%) and Odisha (93.6%) show overwhelmingly monthly remittance patterns, indicating that for most households in these states, migrant earnings form a regular income stream rather than a one-off seasonal transfer. The presence of small weekly or fortnightly remittances in Jharkhand further suggests high dependency and tight cash-flow needs at origin.

Rajasthan displays a more diversified remittance profile. While a majority (71.4%) remit monthly, a notable share remit irregularly (13.7%), fortnightly (8.1%), or only at the end of the season (6.8%). This spread suggests heterogeneous migration arrangements, likely reflecting variation in sectors (construction, factory work, agriculture) and payment cycles observed earlier. This diversity also indicates that some Rajasthan households face less predictable income flows, increasing vulnerability during periods of delayed or irregular payments.

Chhattisgarh again stands out as an outlier. Only 38.7% of migrants remit monthly, while a dominant 59.9% remit irregularly. This reinforces earlier evidence that migration from Chhattisgarh is:

- more short-term or exploratory,
- less embedded in long-term household financial planning, and
- weaker as a stabilising livelihood strategy.

The near absence of fortnightly or end-of-season remittances suggests that transfers occur only when cash is available, rather than as part of a planned remittance cycle.

States with highly regular remittance patterns (Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Odisha) are especially sensitive to wage delays, deductions, or job loss, as household consumption depends on predictable transfers. Ensuring timely wage payments and payment transparency in destination areas is therefore critical for protecting household welfare at origin.

In contrast, the irregular remittance pattern in Chhattisgarh points to the need for origin-area livelihood strengthening and short-term income support, as migration does not reliably smooth household consumption.

4.29 Typical Amount per Remittance

While remittance frequency captures regularity, the amount sent per transfer reflects the earning capacity of migrants, household dependence, and surplus available after deductions and living costs at destination. The table below presents row percentages by origin state, showing the typical amount sent in a single remittance.

Table 4.29: Typical Amount per Remittance by Origin State

	< ₹1,000	₹1,000–4,999	₹5,000–9,999	₹10,000+	No Fixed Amount
Jharkhand	2.1%	5.4%	33.8%	58.3%	0.4%
Madhya Pradesh	0.0%	4.2%	72.0%	23.8%	0.0%
Rajasthan	0.9%	43.6%	53.8%	1.3%	0.4%
Odisha	0.0%	16.8%	45.5%	37.6%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	0.0%	40.1%	45.3%	14.6%	0.0%

The data reveal substantial inter-state variation in the quantum of remittances, reflecting differences in wage levels, employment stability, and household financial obligations.

Jharkhand stands out sharply, with a majority of migrants (58.3%) sending ₹10,000 or more per remittance, and another 33.8% sending ₹5,000–9,999. This means that over nine in ten Jharkhand migrants remit ₹5,000 or more at a time, indicating strong earning capacity and high household dependency. This pattern aligns with earlier findings of large advances, employer-led recruitment, and monthly remittance frequency, suggesting tightly structured migration cycles with significant income flows.

Odisha also shows a relatively high-value profile, with 37.6% remitting ₹10,000+ and 45.5% remitting ₹5,000–9,999. Together, this indicates that over four-fifths of Odisha migrants send medium to large remittance amounts, despite earlier evidence of advance-related wage deductions, implying that once basic obligations are met, migrants are able to transfer substantial sums.

In Madhya Pradesh, remittances are highly concentrated in the ₹5,000–9,999 range (72.0%), with nearly a quarter (23.8%) sending ₹10,000+. The absence of very small remittances suggests predictable earnings and stable household remittance planning, consistent with:

- near-universal monthly remittances (4.28), and
- minimal exposure to advances and deductions.

This profile reflects low volatility and low vulnerability in remittance behaviour.

Rajasthan shows a more even split between ₹5,000–9,999 (53.8%) and ₹1,000–4,999 (43.6%), with very few migrants remitting high-value amounts. This suggests that while remittances are regular, per-transfer surplus is modest, likely reflecting:

- irregular payment cycles,
- higher daily-wage employment, and
- advance deductions observed earlier.

Chhattisgarh displays a similar mixed pattern, with 45.3% remitting ₹5,000–9,999 and 40.1% remitting ₹1,000–4,999. The smaller share sending ₹10,000+ (14.6%) reinforces earlier findings that migration from Chhattisgarh is less remunerative and less central to household income strategies. Across all states, very few migrants remit less than ₹1,000, and “no fixed amount” responses are negligible, indicating that remittances are deliberate, planned transfers rather than ad hoc cash movements.

4.30 Channels Used for Sending Remittances

Table 4.30: Channels Used for Sending Remittances

	Bank / UPI	Mobile Wallet	Cash Carried Back	Friend / Relative	Money Transfer Operator	Hawala / Informal	Post Office

Jharkhand	43.6%	6.4%	24.1%	17.2%	32.3%	0.4%	2.1%
Rajasthan	39.4%	0.2%	8.5%	27.2%	23.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Madhya Pradesh	45.6%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	51.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Odisha	46.3%	20.8%	0.6%	0.6%	16.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	47.5%	0.0%	0.4%	2.6%	49.4%	0.0%	0.0%

Across all five states, Bank/UPI emerges as the single most commonly used channel, accounting for roughly 40–48% of all remittance channel mentions. This indicates deep penetration of formal digital payment systems among migrant households, even in traditionally high-outmigration states. The dominance of Bank/UPI aligns strongly with:

- high monthly remittance frequency, and
- relatively stable remittance amounts.

This suggests that digital remittances are now the default, not an exception.

Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh show an especially heavy reliance on money transfer operators, accounting for over half of all channel mentions in Madhya Pradesh and nearly half in Chhattisgarh.

This reflects:

- destination-side constraints in banking access,
- reliance on intermediated cash-to-account services, and
- possible employer-linked facilitation of remittance transfers.

These patterns are consistent with earlier findings of formalised wage structures but limited employer documentation.

Jharkhand stands out for continued use of cash carried back (24.1%) and friends/relatives (17.2%), alongside Bank/UPI and transfer operators. This hybrid remittance ecology indicates:

- circular migration patterns,
- physical return trips, and
- partial trust or access gaps in digital systems.

Rajasthan also shows substantial reliance on friends/relatives (27.2%), pointing to social-network-mediated remittance flows, especially among daily-wage and casual workers.

Odisha is the only state where mobile wallets form a sizeable share (20.8%) of channel usage. This suggests:

- higher familiarity with app-based payments,
- possibly younger migrant cohorts, and
- stronger integration with destination-side digital ecosystems.

Other states show negligible wallet usage, reinforcing that wallet adoption remains uneven and corridor-specific.

Hawala/informal channels and post offices together account for well under 1% of channel mentions overall. Their near-absence indicates:

1. declining relevance of informal remittance systems, and
2. successful displacement by digital and semi-formal mechanisms.

This represents a structural shift in migrant financial behaviour.

4.31 Proportion of Earnings Remitted

Table 4.31: Proportion of Earnings Remitted, by Origin State

	< 25%	25–49%	50–74%	> 75%	DK / CS
Jharkhand	4.6%	5.0%	61.7%	26.7%	2.1%
Madhya Pradesh	0.0%	39.3%	60.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Rajasthan	15.4%	35.9%	28.6%	0.4%	19.7%
Odisha	13.9%	51.5%	30.7%	3.5%	0.5%
Chhattisgarh	56.9%	18.2%	3.6%	1.5%	19.7%

The distribution of the proportion of earnings remitted clearly indicates that remittances constitute a central and structured component of migration outcomes for a majority of respondents. At the aggregate level, the largest share of migrants remit between 50–74% of their earnings (40.6%), followed by those remitting 25–49% (30.3%). This suggests that for most migrant households, migration is not oriented toward marginal or residual transfers, but rather functions as a primary mechanism for sustaining household consumption, debt servicing, and essential expenditures at the place of origin.

Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh exhibit the strongest concentration in the 50–74% remittance band, with 61.7% and 60.7% of migrants respectively remitting more than half of their earnings. In Jharkhand, this pattern is further reinforced by a substantial proportion remitting more than 75% of their earnings (26.7%), indicating a high level of household dependence on migrant income. These patterns align closely with earlier findings on regular remittance frequency and monthly payment cycles, suggesting relatively stable employment arrangements combined with strong economic obligations toward origin households.

Odisha and Rajasthan demonstrate a more intermediate remittance profile. In Odisha, a majority of migrants remit between 25–49% of earnings (51.5%), followed by 30.7% remitting 50–74%. This indicates a balancing act between meeting household needs at origin and retaining income at destination to cover living expenses. Rajasthan displays a more dispersed pattern, with sizable shares across the 25–49% and 50–74% bands, alongside a comparatively high DK/CS proportion (19.7%), pointing to variability in earnings, irregular remittance behaviour, or uncertainty in reporting. This dispersion is consistent with the higher prevalence of daily casual work and advance-linked employment observed among migrants from Rajasthan in earlier sections.

Chhattisgarh emerges as a distinct outlier in the remittance landscape. A majority of migrants from the state (56.9%) remit less than 25% of their earnings, while only a negligible proportion remit more than half of their income. This pattern suggests that migration from Chhattisgarh is less strongly oriented toward sustained household support and is more likely to reflect short-term, irregular, or coping-driven mobility. The elevated DK/CS share further reinforces the presence of instability and uncertainty in income flows, which corresponds with earlier evidence of irregular remittance frequency and weaker formalisation of wage and payment arrangements.

Overall, the findings indicate a clear gradient across states in terms of remittance intensity and household dependence on migrant earnings. In Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh, migration functions predominantly as a household income strategy, characterised by high and regular remittance shares. In Odisha and Rajasthan, remittances remain significant but are moderated by destination-level survival needs and employment variability. In contrast, Chhattisgarh reflects a pattern of fragmented and lower-intensity remitting, consistent with more precarious migration trajectories.

4.32 Primary Uses of Remittances

Remittances sent by migrant workers are used across a range of household needs, reflecting both immediate consumption requirements and longer-term livelihood priorities. The table below presents the primary uses of remittances across origin states, expressed as row percentages, with household consumption treated as the common baseline for comparison.

Table 4.32: Primary Uses of Remittances, by Origin State

	Household consumption	Education	Health	Debt repayment	Savings	Investment (assets/house repair)	Social obligations	Other
Madhya Pradesh	100.0%	46.0%	93.3%	36.0%	89.1%	41.4%	43.5%	0.0%
Jharkhand	100.0%	32.2%	84.1%	23.2%	65.7%	16.7%	0.4%	0.9%
Rajasthan	100.0%	63.2%	57.7%	44.5%	10.9%	0.9%	15.9%	0.0%
Odisha	100.0%	59.3%	83.6%	17.5%	51.9%	19.6%	15.3%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	100.0%	40.9%	79.6%	1.5%	34.3%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%

The consolidated pattern of remittance use clearly establishes household consumption as a universal and non-negotiable priority across all origin states, with every remitting household reporting the use of remittances to meet day-to-day consumption needs. This underscores the fundamental role of migration income in sustaining basic household functioning, rather than serving as a surplus or discretionary resource.

Beyond consumption, strong state-level contrasts emerge in how remittances are allocated toward human capital, risk mitigation, and asset formation. Health-related expenditures account for a very large share of remittance use in Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh, where more than four-fifths of remitting households report using remittances for medical needs. This reflects the role of migration income as a critical buffer against health shocks in contexts of limited insurance coverage and high out-of-pocket expenditure. Rajasthan shows a comparatively lower health share, suggesting either lower reported health expenditure or greater reliance on alternative coping mechanisms.

Education emerges as a major secondary use of remittances, particularly in Rajasthan and Odisha, where nearly two-thirds and three-fifths of households respectively report channeling remittances toward schooling and related expenses. Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand show more moderate education usage, indicating that while education remains important, remittance flows are more heavily directed toward immediate consumption, health, and savings in these states.

Debt repayment displays a sharply differentiated pattern. Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh report the highest reliance on remittances for debt servicing, suggesting a closer linkage between migration and indebtedness, potentially tied to advances, informal borrowing, or migration-related expenses. In contrast, Chhattisgarh reports negligible use of remittances for debt repayment, reinforcing earlier findings that migration from the state is less embedded in advance-driven or debt-linked labour arrangements.

Savings behaviour further highlights structural differences in migration outcomes. Madhya Pradesh stands out with nearly nine in ten households reporting savings from remittances, indicating relatively stable income flows and greater capacity for financial planning. Jharkhand and Odisha also demonstrate substantial savings use, while Rajasthan shows very limited savings accumulation, consistent with higher debt repayment and lower remittance retention at the household level.

Investment-oriented use of remittances, such as asset purchase or house construction and repair, remains comparatively limited across all states but is most pronounced in Madhya Pradesh. This suggests that only a subset of migrants, primarily those with more stable earnings, are able to translate migration income into longer-term asset formation. Social obligations account for a modest but visible share in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Odisha, reflecting cultural and kinship-based financial responsibilities, while remaining negligible elsewhere.

Where migration is more regular and earnings more predictable, as in Madhya Pradesh and parts of Jharkhand and Odisha, remittances also support savings and limited investment. In contrast, states such as Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh show patterns more closely aligned with vulnerability management, debt servicing, and short-term consumption, reinforcing the differentiated nature of migration as both a livelihood strategy and a coping response across contexts.

SECTION 6: ACCESS TO SCHEMES, PORTABILITY AND BARRIERS

4.33 Awareness of ONORC / Ration Portability

Awareness of food security portability mechanisms such as One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) is a critical enabler for migrant households to maintain access to subsidised food during migration. The table below captures household-level awareness of ONORC across origin states, distinguishing between no awareness, full awareness, and partial awareness without operational details.

Table 4.33: Household Awareness of ONORC, by Origin State

	Not aware	Aware (Yes)	Heard but not details
Odisha	72.5%	23.5%	4.0%
Rajasthan	56.1%	34.4%	9.4%
Jharkhand	63.4%	10.3%	26.3%
Madhya Pradesh	93.3%	6.3%	0.4%
Chhattisgarh	99.6%	0.4%	0.0%
All states	76.8%	15.1%	8.1%

The table indicates that awareness of ONORC remains limited across all origin states, with more than three-quarters of households overall reporting no awareness of ration portability. This highlights a significant gap between policy intent and ground-level knowledge among migrant-sending households, particularly given the centrality of food security in migration-linked vulnerability.

Clear inter-state differences are visible in both the level and nature of awareness. Rajasthan stands out as the state with the highest proportion of households reporting full awareness of ONORC, with more than one-third indicating that they are aware of the scheme. Odisha also shows relatively higher awareness compared to other states, though nearly three-quarters of households still report no awareness. In both states, partial awareness—households that have heard of the scheme but lack operational details—remains limited, suggesting that information dissemination may be reaching some households but not in a sufficiently actionable form.

Jharkhand presents a distinct pattern, characterised by a large share of partial awareness. More than one-quarter of households report having heard of ONORC without knowing how it works, while only a small proportion report full awareness. This suggests exposure to scheme-related messaging without effective follow-through in terms of practical understanding, enrolment support, or demonstration of portability in destination areas.

In contrast, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh show extremely low awareness levels, with over 93 percent and nearly all households respectively reporting no awareness of ONORC. The near absence of even partial awareness in these states indicates minimal penetration of ration portability communication among migrant households, despite their high dependence on migration and remittances for household consumption.

Overall, the findings suggest that ONORC, while nationally implemented, has not yet translated into widespread household-level awareness among migrant-sending communities. Where awareness exists, it is often incomplete, limiting the scheme's potential to reduce food insecurity during migration.

4.34 Has Household Tried Ration Portability at Destination in the Past 12 Months?

Actual utilisation of ration portability at destination is a more stringent test of ONORC effectiveness than awareness alone, as it captures both intent and system responsiveness at the point of use. The table below presents household experience with attempting ration portability at destination locations during the past 12 months.

Table 4.33: Experience of Ration Portability Use at Destination, by Origin State

	No attempt	Not aware	Yes, successful	Yes, tried but failed
Odisha	68.0%	21.1%	10.9%	0.0%
Rajasthan	60.2%	39.3%	0.4%	0.0%
Jharkhand	35.8%	32.1%	29.6%	2.5%

Madhya Pradesh	60.4%	39.2%	0.4%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	18.4%	81.6%	0.0%	0.0%
All states	48.7%	42.5%	8.3%	0.5%

The table reveals that actual use of ration portability at destination remains limited, with fewer than one in ten households overall reporting a successful attempt in the past year. Nearly half of households report having made no attempt to use portability, while a similarly large proportion indicate that they were not aware of the facility at the time of migration, underscoring the persistence of informational and access barriers.

Jharkhand emerges as a clear outlier in terms of operational uptake. Nearly one-third of households from Jharkhand report having successfully used ration portability at destination, a substantially higher share than any other origin state. This suggests relatively better alignment between awareness, documentation readiness, and destination-level functionality for Jharkhand migrants. However, Jharkhand also records the highest proportion of households reporting failed attempts, indicating that even where usage is attempted, system-level or administrative frictions remain.

In contrast, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh display a pattern dominated by non-attempts and lack of awareness, with successful utilisation almost negligible. Despite moderate awareness levels observed earlier, this gap between awareness and actual use suggests either weak confidence in destination PDS functionality, perceived transaction costs, or mismatches between ration card status and destination entitlements. Odisha shows a slightly more encouraging picture, with around one in ten households reporting successful use, though the majority still did not attempt portability.

Chhattisgarh stands out for a different reason, with an overwhelming majority of households reporting that they were not aware of portability at all, and virtually no reported attempts or successes. This mirrors the very low awareness levels observed earlier and indicates that ONORC has yet to meaningfully penetrate migrant households from the state.

Overall, the findings suggest that ration portability remains largely underutilised among migrant households, not primarily due to system failure at the point of delivery, but because of low awareness and low propensity to attempt usage. Where attempts are made, as in Jharkhand, success is possible at scale, but not without friction.

4.35 Use of MGNREGA by Selected Migrant in the Last 12 Months

Access to MGNREGA is a key indicator of whether public employment functions as a fallback or complementary option alongside migration. The table below summarises whether selected migrants accessed MGNREGA in the last 12 months, distinguishing between use at origin, use at destination, unsuccessful attempts, and non-use.

Table 4.35: MGNREGA Usage Status

	No	Yes – at origin	Tried but could not get work	Yes – at destination
Odisha	84.6%	13.8%	0.8%	0.8%
Rajasthan	71.7%	27.5%	0.8%	0.0%
Jharkhand	44.4%	47.7%	7.0%	0.8%
Madhya Pradesh	94.2%	5.4%	0.0%	0.4%
Chhattisgarh	95.4%	3.8%	0.8%	0.0%

The findings indicate that MGNREGA plays a limited role in the recent employment histories of migrant households, with more than three-quarters of selected migrants reporting no use of the programme in the past year. This pattern is particularly pronounced in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, where over 94 percent of migrants report no MGNREGA engagement, suggesting either limited reliance on the programme or weak integration of MGNREGA into local livelihood strategies prior to migration.

Jharkhand stands out as a notable exception, where nearly half of migrants report having worked under MGNREGA at origin in the last 12 months. This suggests that in Jharkhand, migration and public employment are not mutually exclusive strategies, but may coexist within household livelihood portfolios. However, Jharkhand also records the highest proportion of migrants who attempted but could not secure MGNREGA work, pointing to unmet demand and possible constraints in work availability, timing, or administrative responsiveness.

Rajasthan shows a moderate level of MGNREGA use at origin, with over one-quarter of migrants reporting engagement, indicating a more significant—but still secondary—role for the programme. In contrast, Odisha reflects relatively low utilisation, with fewer than one in seven migrants reporting work under MGNREGA.

Across all states, the use of MGNREGA at destination is negligible, reinforcing the design limitation of the programme as a place-based employment guarantee that does not travel with migrants. Overall, the evidence suggests that while MGNREGA can function as a partial buffer against distress migration in specific contexts such as Jharkhand, it remains largely disconnected from migrant livelihood pathways, both spatially and temporally, across most surveyed states.

4.36 Aadhaar Status for Migrant

Aadhaar availability and biometric functionality are critical enablers for migrants' access to a wide range of welfare benefits and services, including ration portability, wage payments, and social protection schemes. The table below summarises the Aadhaar status of selected migrants across states, distinguishing between full functionality, lack of Aadhaar, biometric failures, and cases where respondents were unsure.

Table 4.36: Aadhaar Availability and Functionality

State	Aadhaar present & biometrics work	Aadhaar present but biometric fails	DK/CS	No Aadhaar
Odisha	69.2%	2.0%	15.0%	13.8%
Rajasthan	98.0%	0.4%	1.6%	0.0%
Jharkhand	98.8%	0.8%	0.0%	0.4%
Madhya Pradesh	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	98.7%	0.0%	0.8%	0.4%
Group Total	92.8%	0.7%	3.5%	3.0%

The data indicate that Aadhaar coverage among migrants is nearly universal, with close to 93 percent of migrants reporting that Aadhaar is present and biometrics function correctly. This high level of coverage is particularly evident in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh, where more than 98 percent of migrants report fully functional Aadhaar credentials. These findings suggest that, at least in terms of enrolment and biometric integrity, Aadhaar-related exclusion risks are relatively limited for migrants from these states.

Odisha, however, presents a distinct contrast. Only about two-thirds of migrants from Odisha report having Aadhaar with working biometrics, while a sizeable minority either lack Aadhaar entirely or are uncertain about their Aadhaar status. The relatively high proportion of migrants reporting no Aadhaar or expressing

uncertainty in Odisha signals a potential vulnerability, particularly in contexts where Aadhaar authentication is mandatory for accessing food rations, wage payments, or other social benefits at destination.

Biometric failure, while present, is reported at very low levels across all states. This suggests that technological malfunction is not a widespread constraint, although even small proportions can have disproportionate impacts on highly mobile and economically vulnerable households. The presence of DK/CS responses, especially in Odisha, further indicates gaps in awareness or confidence regarding Aadhaar functionality, which may itself act as a barrier to service access.

Overall, the findings imply that Aadhaar infrastructure is largely in place for migrant households, but uneven coverage and awareness in certain origin states, most notably Odisha, may contribute to exclusion from portability-linked entitlements.

SECTION 7: CLIMATE CHANGE AND SHOCKS

4.37 Climate Events Experienced in the Past 5 Years That Negatively Affected Livelihoods

Households were asked about major climate-related events experienced over the past five years that had negatively affected their livelihoods. Since this was a multiple-response question, households could report more than one type of climate shock. The table below consolidates all reported climate events into a single state-wise view, with row percentages indicating the distribution of each event across states.

Table 4.37: Climate events experienced in past 5 years that negatively affected livelihood

	Drought / prolonged water scarcity	Flooding / waterlogging	Erratic or delayed monsoon / unpredictable rains	Crop pest or disease outbreak linked to weather	Heatwave / extreme high temperatures	Storms / cyclone / high winds	None of the above	DK / Prefer not to say
Jharkhand	32.2%	14.0%	24.1%	20.5%	6.5%	2.6%	0.1%	0.0%
Rajasthan	24.9%	2.6%	27.3%	26.5%	0.2%	3.4%	13.0%	2.0%
Madhya Pradesh	6.5%	0.5%	55.3%	36.4%	0.8%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%
Odisha	6.8%	0.4%	1.6%	9.2%	0.0%	0.0%	80.9%	1.2%
Chhattisgarh	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%	0.8%	93.4%	0.4%

Jharkhand shows a broad spread of reported climate stressors, with drought/prolonged water scarcity forming the largest share of reported events, followed by erratic/delayed monsoon and crop pest/disease outbreaks. Flooding/waterlogging is also a meaningful share, indicating that households are reporting multiple types of shocks rather than a single dominant hazard profile.

Rajasthan is comparatively more concentrated around rainfall-related production uncertainty and farm stress, with erratic/delayed monsoon and crop pest/disease outbreak together making up the largest shares, and drought also remaining prominent. “None of the above” is non-trivial in Rajasthan, suggesting

a segment that either did not experience these listed shocks or did not attribute livelihood impacts to them in the period.

Madhya Pradesh is heavily dominated by erratic/delayed monsoon and weather-linked crop pest/disease outbreaks, which together account for the overwhelming majority of reported events. This pattern reads as a strong agriculture-linked climate risk signal—more about rainfall variability and crop stress than about extreme heat, storms, or flooding in this specific response distribution.

Odisha and Chhattisgarh stand out for the very high “None of the above” shares, especially Chhattisgarh. Within this table’s row-percentage framing, that indicates that the modal response recorded is “none”, and that the listed shocks appear far less frequently in the response mix compared to the other states. Among the events that are reported in Odisha, crop pest/disease and drought are the more visible ones, while Chhattisgarh shows only small shares across individual hazard categories.

Overall, the consolidated table highlights two distinct patterns: one where households report a diversified set of climate stressors (Jharkhand and, to a degree, Rajasthan), and another where reported climate impacts are either narrowly concentrated around rainfall variability and crop stress (Madhya Pradesh) or are largely not reported under the listed options (Odisha and especially Chhattisgarh).

4.38 Severity of impact of the most serious climate event on household’s primary livelihood

Climate shocks affect households not only through their occurrence but through the severity with which they disrupt primary livelihoods such as agriculture, livestock rearing, and wage employment. To understand the depth of these impacts, households were asked to assess the severity of the most serious climate event they experienced in recent years, ranging from temporary losses to catastrophic, long-term damage.

Table 4.38: Severity of impact of serious climate event on household’s primary livelihood

	Minor impact (temporary loss; recovered quickly)	Moderate impact (noticeable income loss; coping required)	Severe impact (major income loss; assets sold or debt incurred)	Catastrophic impact (crop failure / forced asset sale / long-term loss)	DK
Jharkhand	81.4%	12.4%	5.8%	0.4%	0.0%
Madhya Pradesh	86.2%	13.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Rajasthan	15.3%	70.0%	11.2%	1.2%	2.4%
Odisha	31.7%	53.7%	2.4%	4.9%	7.3%
Chhattisgarh	8.3%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%

The severity profile of climate impacts shows pronounced inter-state variation in how households experience and absorb livelihood shocks. In Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh, the overwhelming majority of households report only minor impacts, indicating that climate events in these states tend to result in temporary losses from which households recover relatively quickly. This pattern points to either less destructive climate events or stronger short-term coping and livelihood buffers.

Rajasthan presents a contrasting picture, where climate shocks are far more likely to translate into sustained economic stress. Seven out of ten affected households report moderate impacts, while more than one in ten report severe impacts involving asset depletion or indebtedness. This suggests that climate variability in Rajasthan has deeper and longer-lasting consequences for household livelihoods, consistent with structural vulnerabilities in rain-dependent agrarian systems.

Odisha exhibits a mixed severity pattern. While over half the households report moderate impacts, a small but important share report catastrophic outcomes, including long-term livelihood loss. This combination indicates uneven resilience, where some households are able to cope with climate shocks while others experience irreversible economic damage.

Chhattisgarh is characterised by a predominance of moderate impacts and a relatively high proportion of uncertainty in reporting severity. The limited reporting of minor impacts suggests that when climate events affect livelihoods in the state, they are more likely to cause noticeable and persistent income disruption rather than short-lived losses.

Overall, the findings highlight that climate risks are not uniform across states. While some regions primarily experience manageable, short-term shocks, others face climate events that more frequently erode assets, increase indebtedness, and undermine long-term livelihood security.

4.39 Contribution of Climate-Related Shocks to Migration Decisions in Past Year

Climate stress can influence migration decisions in different ways—sometimes acting as a direct trigger, and in other cases interacting with economic push factors such as low wages or lack of local employment. To assess the role of climate variability in recent migration decisions, households were asked whether climate-related shocks in the past 12 months contributed to any household member migrating for three months or more.

Table 4.39: Contribution of climate-related shocks to migration decisions in past year

	Yes — it was the main reason	No — climate did not influence the decision	Yes — it contributed alongside other reasons	Don't know / Prefer not to say
Jharkhand	81.4%	5.8%	12.4%	0.4%
Madhya Pradesh	41.0%	44.4%	14.2%	0.4%
Rajasthan	68.2%	5.3%	21.8%	4.7%
Odisha	51.2%	36.6%	12.2%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	8.3%	58.3%	8.3%	25.0%

The findings indicate that climate-related shocks play a decisive role in shaping migration outcomes in several states, though the strength of this linkage varies considerably. In Jharkhand, climate stress emerges as a dominant driver of migration, with more than four-fifths of households reporting that climate-related shocks were the main reason for migration in the past year. This suggests a strong coupling between livelihood vulnerability and mobility, where climatic disruptions directly undermine local earning opportunities.

Rajasthan also shows a high degree of climate-induced migration, with over two-thirds of households identifying climate shocks as the primary trigger. At the same time, a substantial share reports that climate factors interacted with other economic motivations, indicating that migration decisions are often shaped by layered pressures rather than a single cause.

In Madhya Pradesh, the pattern is more evenly distributed. While a significant proportion of households cite climate as the main reason, an almost equal share report that climate did not influence migration decisions at all. This points to a more diversified set of migration drivers in the state, where economic or social factors may play a stronger independent role.

Odisha presents a mixed picture, with just over half of the households attributing migration primarily to climate shocks, but more than a third reporting no climate influence. This suggests uneven exposure and resilience across households, where climate stress pushes some families into migration while others rely on alternative coping strategies.

Chhattisgarh stands apart, with most households indicating that climate did not influence migration decisions, and a relatively high proportion expressing uncertainty. This may reflect lower recent climate-induced livelihood disruption among migrant households, or alternatively, migration patterns that are driven more by structural labour market factors than by short-term environmental shocks.

4.40 Contribution of climate-related shocks to migration decisions in the last 12 months

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Loss or reduction of crop yields emerges as the most frequently reported driver across states, particularly in Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan. This underscores how declining agricultural productivity due to climate variability directly weakens household income bases, making migration a necessary coping or adjustment strategy. Closely linked to this is the reduced availability of local wage work, especially field labour, again concentrated in Jharkhand and Rajasthan, indicating that climate stress affects not only cultivators but also landless and marginal workers dependent on seasonal agricultural employment.

Livestock loss or reduced dairy income represents another significant pathway through which climate shocks translate into migration pressure. This effect is most pronounced in Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan, highlighting the vulnerability of mixed farming and livestock-dependent households to climate-related stresses such as drought, heat, and disease. In parallel, increased expenditure for recovery such as repairs, replanting, or other post-shock costs, often leading to borrowing, is reported prominently in Rajasthan and Jharkhand, suggesting that debt accumulation following climate shocks can accelerate migration decisions.

Changes in seasonal cropping windows, resulting in mismatches between labour availability and demand, further contribute to migration, particularly in Jharkhand and Rajasthan. This reflects growing instability in agricultural calendars, which reduces the predictability of local employment. Market disruptions, such as price falls at harvest, are reported mainly in Madhya Pradesh, indicating that even when production is achieved, adverse price movements linked to climate variability can erode returns and push households to seek income elsewhere.

Overall, the pattern suggests that migration linked to climate variability is rarely driven by a single shock. Instead, it arises from a combination of reduced farm output, shrinking local wage opportunities, rising recovery costs, and increasing uncertainty in both production and markets.

4.41 Potential of secure local work and social protection to reduce climate-triggered migration

Households were asked whether the availability of secure local employment, stronger social protection, or climate-resilient livelihood measures would reduce the likelihood of migration triggered specifically by climate-related shocks. This question helps assess the extent to which migration is a distress response that could potentially be mitigated through local interventions.

Table 4.41: Potential of secure local work and social protection to reduce climate-triggered migration

	Yes — definitely (would not migrate for climate reasons)	Maybe — depends on pay, timing and security of work	No — would still migrate for other reasons	Don't know / Prefer not to say
Jharkhand	94.2%	5.4%	0.4%	0.0%
Madhya Pradesh	98.3%	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%
Rajasthan	68.8%	20.6%	6.5%	4.1%
Odisha	56.1%	12.2%	31.7%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	41.7%	25.0%	16.7%	16.7%

The results indicate a strong belief among migrant households that climate-triggered migration is largely preventable if adequate local support systems are in place. Across the sample, more than four-fifths of

households report that they would definitely not migrate for climate-related reasons if secure local work, social protection, or climate-resilient measures were available.

This sentiment is particularly pronounced in Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand, where nearly all households express confidence that improved local opportunities would eliminate the need for climate-induced migration. These findings suggest that migration in these states is closely tied to the absence of viable local coping mechanisms rather than a preference for migration itself.

Rajasthan presents a more nuanced picture. While a clear majority believe that secure local work would reduce migration, a substantial share indicate that the decision would still depend on the quality, reliability, and timing of employment. This points to the importance of not just job availability, but job adequacy, in influencing migration choices.

In Odisha and Chhattisgarh, a comparatively higher proportion of households report that they would still migrate even if local measures were strengthened. This suggests that migration in these states may be more structurally embedded in household livelihood strategies, driven by factors such as wage differentials, long-standing migration networks, or limited confidence in the durability of local employment.

4.42 Household adaptations or support perceived as most effective in preventing climate-driven migration

This question explores households' perceptions of which forms of adaptation or institutional support would most effectively reduce the need to migrate in response to climate stress. Responses reflect lived experiences of climate variability and highlight the relative importance of agricultural, employment, financial, and social protection measures across states.

Table 4.42: Which adaptation or support would most help prevent climate-driven migration?

A01 Name of the State	Reliable irrigation / water storage	Crop insurance / compensation	Diversified local non-farm employment	Affordable credit & debt relief	Climate-smart agri inputs / training	Social protection / public works	DK / No opinion
Jharkhand	32.0%	24.1%	22.7%	12.3%	4.1%	4.8%	0.0%
Madhya Pradesh	25.9%	30.3%	13.0%	13.3%	5.9%	11.2%	0.3%
Rajasthan	21.5%	14.7%	25.5%	29.5%	5.2%	2.8%	0.8%
Odisha	23.1%	24.0%	19.8%	20.7%	4.1%	7.4%	0.8%
Chhattisgarh	20.6%	32.4%	5.9%	5.9%	20.6%	11.8%	2.9%

Across states, households most frequently identify reliable irrigation and water storage as the single most important intervention to prevent climate-driven migration, particularly in Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan. This reflects the centrality of water insecurity in shaping agricultural distress and livelihood instability, especially in rain-fed regions where crop failure directly translates into income loss and out-migration.

Crop insurance and compensation for crop failure also emerge as a critical protective mechanism, with especially strong responses from Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand. This suggests that households view risk-sharing and post-shock compensation as essential to absorb climate losses without resorting to migration. Closely related is the demand for diversified local non-farm employment with regular pay, particularly pronounced in Jharkhand and Rajasthan, indicating recognition that agriculture alone can no longer provide sufficient resilience under increasing climate variability.

Financial stress mitigation features prominently as well. Affordable credit and debt relief after climate shocks is strongly emphasised in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, underscoring how climate impacts often cascade into indebtedness, which in turn accelerates migration as a repayment strategy. While fewer households select climate-smart agricultural inputs and training, those who do, especially in Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand, highlight the importance of adaptive practices such as drought-tolerant seeds and improved timing to stabilise production under changing climatic conditions.

Finally, social protection measures, including cash transfers and guaranteed public employment such as MGNREGA, are identified as important by a smaller but still significant share of households, particularly in Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand. This indicates that while public works and transfers are valued as buffers during distress, households often perceive structural interventions like water security, insurance, and stable local employment, as more decisive in reducing the need for climate-induced migration.

4.43 Household adaptation/support options featuring as Rank 1 or Rank 2

Table 4.43: Household adaptation/support options featuring as Rank 1 or Rank 2 (in Percentage)

Adaptation / Support option	Rank 1 count	Rank 2 count	Rank 1 + Rank 2 (Total mentions)
Reliable irrigation / water storage (wells, tanks)	62.4	12.8	37.6
Crop insurance / compensation for crop failure	15.9	49.1	32.5
Diversified local employment (non-farm work) with regular pay	18.2	17.0	17.6
Affordable credit and debt relief after shocks	2.6	15.5	9.1
Climate-smart agricultural inputs / training (drought-tolerant seeds, timing)	0.6	3.2	1.9
Social protection cash transfers / guaranteed public works (MGNREGA days)	0.3	2.4	1.4

When Rank 1 and Rank 2 responses are considered together, a clear pattern emerges in household priorities for preventing climate-driven migration. Reliable irrigation and water storage stands out as the most important support, appearing far more frequently than any other option in the top two ranks. This reflects the central role of water security in stabilising agricultural livelihoods and reducing climate-related income uncertainty.

Crop insurance and compensation for crop failure emerge as the next most important support, indicating that households strongly value mechanisms that help absorb losses when climate shocks occur. Diversified local employment with regular pay also features prominently, highlighting the importance of non-farm and stable local work in reducing dependence on climate-sensitive agriculture.

By contrast, affordable credit, climate-smart inputs and training, and social protection measures such as cash transfers or public works are less frequently prioritised in the top two ranks. These are viewed more as supplementary or short-term coping measures rather than core solutions for preventing migration.

4.44 Main reasons for migration

Table 4.44: Main reasons for migration (in Percentages)

	Lack of local employment	Low agri returns / crop failure	Seasonal labour demand at destination	Debt / loan pressure	Better employment opportunities	Higher wages at destination	Education (self/children)	Healthcare access	Modern lifestyle
Jharkhand	33.2%	16.9%	16.2%	6.0%	21.1%	3.3%	1.2%	0.1%	0.8%
Odisha	33.3%	3.2%	5.3%	2.7%	30.2%	18.6%	0.9%	1.3%	1.9%
Rajasthan	33.1%	9.0%	1.4%	14.9%	24.5%	15.4%	1.1%	0.0%	0.3%
Madhya Pradesh	33.3%	6.1%	1.1%	5.7%	30.4%	12.5%	2.5%	2.5%	3.6%
Chhattisgarh	32.4%	13.7%	3.2%	0.1%	26.2%	20.4%	0.7%	1.1%	1.7%

Across all five states, migration is driven primarily by structural labour-market factors rather than single shocks. In every state, lack of local employment accounts for roughly one-third of all stated reasons, making it the most consistent push factor. This is closely followed by better employment opportunities at destination, which together with lack of local jobs explains the bulk of migration decisions.

Economic distress linked to agriculture shows strong regional variation. Low agricultural returns and crop failure form a major secondary driver in Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, while debt and loan pressure is especially prominent in Rajasthan, reflecting cumulative stress rather than seasonal shortfalls alone. Seasonal labour demand at destination is significant mainly in Jharkhand, indicating circular or short-term migration patterns aligned with agricultural calendars.

Pull factors such as higher wages at destination are particularly important in Odisha and Chhattisgarh, where they account for a substantial share of responses, reinforcing migration as an income-maximising strategy rather than purely a distress response. Social reasons, including education, healthcare access, lifestyle aspirations, or peer influence, remain marginal across all states.

Notably, explicit climate shocks (drought, flood, heat) are rarely cited as the main reason for migration in this question. Instead, climate stress appears to operate indirectly, by weakening agriculture, increasing debt burdens, and shrinking local employment options, which in turn pushes households towards migration.

4.45 whether migrants would prefer to stay at the place of origin if offered secure local employment with comparable pay and social protections

Table 4.45: Whether migrants would prefer to stay at the place of origin if offered secure local employment with comparable pay and social protections

	Yes — definitely	Maybe — depends on pay/conditions	Don't know	No — would still prefer to migrate
Odisha	89.9%	8.1%	2.0%	0.0%
Rajasthan	82.8%	17.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Jharkhand	96.3%	2.9%	0.0%	0.8%
Madhya Pradesh	99.6%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Chhattisgarh	78.7%	20.1%	1.3%	0.0%

The findings indicate a very strong latent preference among migrants to remain at their place of origin if meaningful local employment opportunities were available. Across all states, an overwhelming majority reported that they would definitely choose to stay if secure local work with comparable wages and social protections were offered, underscoring that migration is largely a necessity rather than a preference. This pattern is particularly pronounced in Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand, where near-universal agreement suggests that migration is primarily driven by the absence of viable local livelihoods rather than aspirational mobility.

At the same time, a non-trivial share of respondents, especially in Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, indicated that their decision would depend on pay levels and working conditions, pointing to the importance of job quality, stability, and predictability. This group reflects households for whom local employment exists in principle but is perceived as insecure, irregular, or insufficiently remunerative. Very few respondents across states stated that they would still prefer to migrate even if such local opportunities were available, highlighting that resistance to staying back is minimal.

Overall, the results reinforce the central role of secure, adequately paid local employment combined with social protection in reducing distress-driven migration.

4.46 Changes at origin would most reduce future distress/seasonal migration

This question captures households' perceptions of which improvements at the place of origin would be most effective in reducing future distress or seasonal migration. Since multiple responses were allowed, the table presents row-wise distributions, indicating the *relative priority* of different interventions within each state.

Table 4.46: What changes at origin would most reduce future distress/seasonal migration? (in Percentages)

State	Regular local employment	Reliable irrigation & higher farm returns	Affordable credit / debt relief	Local industry / processing jobs	Skills training & entrepreneurship	Improved health & education services	Increased MGNREGA availability	Social protection (pensions, cash transfers)
Rajasthan	33.2	6.0	15.3	24.9	8.3	6.4	4.9	1.0
Odisha	32.4	2.2	9.3	27.9	18.9	4.0	4.5	0.8
Madhya Pradesh	33.3	7.2	7.4	15.7	13.3	12.4	10.6	0.1
Jharkhand	32.4	22.5	13.3	18.4	4.8	5.1	2.9	0.7
Chhattisgarh	32.8	24.8	0.3	10.0	5.4	3.9	22.2	0.6

Across all five states, regular local employment emerges as the single most important intervention, accounting for roughly one-third of all responses in every state. This consistency underscores that distress and seasonal migration are fundamentally linked to the lack of stable, predictable work at origin, rather than isolated sectoral failures.

Beyond employment, state-specific livelihood constraints become evident. Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh show a strong emphasis on reliable irrigation and farm returns, reflecting high agrarian vulnerability and exposure to rainfall variability. In Chhattisgarh, this is closely followed by a substantial reliance on expanded MGNREGA availability, highlighting the importance of public works as a buffer during lean or shock periods.

In Odisha and Rajasthan, local industry and processing jobs form a major secondary priority, indicating demand for non-farm employment that can absorb surplus labour locally. Odisha also shows relatively higher importance for skills training and entrepreneurship, suggesting aspirations for diversification beyond agriculture.

Madhya Pradesh displays a more evenly distributed pattern, with notable weight given to health and education services and MGNREGA, pointing to a broader understanding of migration as shaped by both livelihood security and social infrastructure.

Across states, social protection measures such as pensions and cash transfers are consistently low-priority, not because they are unimportant, but likely because households view them as insufficient substitutes for employment and income-generating opportunities.

4.47 Changes at origin that could most reduce future distress/seasonal migration

Table 4.47: Frequency of being prioritised (Rank 1 or Rank 2) (in Percentages)

Adaptation / support option	Rank 1 count	Rank 2 count	Rank 1 + Rank 2 (Total)
Regular local employment	75.8	14.3	45.0
Reliable irrigation & higher farm returns	5.0	27.0	16.0
Affordable credit / debt relief	4.5	13.2	8.9
Local industry / processing jobs	6.1	32.8	19.5
Skills training & entrepreneurship support	4.9	4.8	4.9
Improved health & education services	1.4	4.3	2.8
Increased MGNREGA availability	2.1	3.6	2.9
Social protection (pensions, cash transfers)	0.1	0.0	0.0

Building on the overall prioritisation pattern, clear state-level contrasts emerge in how households perceive solutions to distress and seasonal migration.

Across Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh, the dominance of regular local employment is particularly pronounced, with these states contributing heavily to Rank 1 selections. This reflects structural employment deficits at origin, where migration functions less as an aspirational choice and more as a fallback in the absence of stable, year-round work. In these states, agriculture and allied activities appear insufficient to absorb labour even in normal years, making non-farm local employment the most credible migration-reducing lever.

In Rajasthan, while regular local employment remains the most frequently prioritised option, there is a comparatively stronger emphasis on affordable credit and debt relief and local industry or processing jobs. This suggests that migration pressures here are closely linked to income volatility and indebtedness rather than absolute joblessness alone. The prominence of debt relief points to repeated livelihood shocks, often climate-related, where households migrate to service loans rather than to seek long-term employment transitions.

Chhattisgarh stands out for its relatively higher weighting of reliable irrigation and farm returns and MGNREGA availability among Rank 1 and Rank 2 responses. This indicates that migration from Chhattisgarh is more tightly coupled with agricultural distress and seasonal underemployment, and that respondents see strengthening on-farm viability and public works as realistic alternatives to migration. The comparatively lower emphasis on skills training or social protection reinforces the perception that immediate income security matters more than longer-term capability building.

In Odisha, alongside regular local employment, local industry and processing jobs feature strongly, pointing to demand for decentralised, non-farm employment close to home rather than purely agricultural solutions. This aligns with Odisha's history of circular migration tied to limited local industrial absorption, where households seek stable wage opportunities without fully exiting their villages.

Across all states, options such as skills training, health and education services, and pensions or cash transfers remain consistently low in Rank 1 and Rank 2 selections. This uniform deprioritisation suggests that households do not view these interventions as substitutes for employment or income stability, but rather as supportive measures whose impact on migration is indirect at best.

SECTION 8: SOCIAL INCLUSION, CHILD EDUCATION AND PROTECTION

4.48 Primary caregiver for children left behind

This question examines who assumes caregiving responsibilities for children when household members migrate, providing insight into intra-household care arrangements and the extent to which migration reshapes family roles across states.

Table 4.48: Primary caregiver of children who get left behind

	Spouse (%)	Grandparents / other relatives (%)	Older siblings (%)	Other (Specify) (%)	Community member (%)	Not Applicable (%)
Odisha	38.5	9.3	1.6	4.0	0.4	46.2
Rajasthan	61.1	13.1	4.5	0.0	0.8	20.5
Jharkhand	87.2	1.2	1.2	0.4	0.0	9.9
Madhya Pradesh	67.5	10.8	0.8	0.4	0.0	20.4
Chhattisgarh	31.4	1.3	0.4	0.0	0.0	66.9
Group Total	57.1	7.2	1.7	1.0	0.2	32.7

Across states, spouses emerge as the primary caregivers in a majority of cases, accounting for 57.1% overall, indicating that migration most often results in a reallocation of care responsibilities within the nuclear family. This pattern is particularly strong in Jharkhand (87.2%) and Madhya Pradesh (67.5%), where spousal caregiving appears to be the dominant and socially embedded arrangement when one adult migrates.

In contrast, Chhattisgarh and Odisha show a much higher share of “Not Applicable” responses (66.9% and 46.2% respectively), suggesting either fewer instances of children being left behind or migration patterns where entire families move together. Where children are left behind in these states, reliance on spouses is comparatively lower, pointing to more complex household mobility or joint migration strategies.

Grandparents and other relatives play a secondary but still notable role in Rajasthan (13.1%) and Madhya Pradesh (10.8%), indicating stronger extended-family involvement in childcare in these contexts. Rajasthan also stands out for a relatively higher reliance on older siblings (4.5%), highlighting potential child caregiving burdens in migrant-sending households.

Across all states, caregiving by community members or other non-kin arrangements remains negligible, underscoring that care responsibilities remain overwhelmingly within the family network.

4.49 Children's schooling continuity

This indicator captures the extent to which children's education is sustained in migrant households, highlighting whether schooling continues uninterrupted or whether migration is associated with dropout, child work, or irregular attendance across states.

Table 4.49: Education discontinuity of children (in Percentages)

	Attending regularly (%)	Not attending (%)	Working (%)	Irregular attendance (%)
Jharkhand	80.3	5.5	1.4	12.8
Rajasthan	86.1	8.2	2.1	3.6
Madhya Pradesh	67.9	7.4	21.6	3.2
Odisha	82.9	8.1	4.1	4.9
Chhattisgarh	75.9	19.0	3.8	1.3

Across all five states, a majority of children continue to attend school regularly, indicating that migration does not uniformly translate into educational disruption. This continuity is strongest in Rajasthan (86.1%) and Odisha (82.9%), suggesting relatively effective coping arrangements, either through caregivers left behind or schooling access at origin.

However, Jharkhand stands out for a high share of irregular attendance (12.8%), even though regular attendance remains high overall. This pattern points to instability rather than outright dropout, potentially linked to seasonal migration cycles, caregiving constraints, or intermittent household labour demands.

Madhya Pradesh presents a distinctly different profile, with the lowest regular attendance (67.9%) and a very high proportion of children reported as working (21.6%). This indicates a sharper trade-off between education and household economic pressures in migrant families, where children may be drawn into labour rather than experiencing simple school discontinuity.

In Chhattisgarh, while three-quarters of children attend regularly, the not-attending share is notably high (19.0%), suggesting more permanent educational exclusion among a subset of households rather than irregular participation. Odisha and Rajasthan, by contrast, show relatively balanced profiles with low child work and moderate non-attendance.

SECTION 9: ASPIRATIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

4.50 Migrants' access to vocational training

This table examines the extent to which migrants have acquired vocational skills, distinguishing between no training, informal/on-the-job training, and certified vocational training. It highlights important inter-state differences in human capital formation among migrant workers.

Table 4.50: Access to vocational training

	No training (%)	Informal / on-the-job training (%)	Certified vocational training (%)
Odisha	72.1	24.3	3.6
Rajasthan	70.5	27.9	1.6
Jharkhand	11.5	35.4	53.1

Madhya Pradesh	94.2	4.6	1.3
Chhattisgarh	97.5	0.0	2.5

Overall, the vocational training profile of migrants is weak, with nearly seven in ten migrants (69%) reporting no vocational training of any kind. Informal or on-the-job training reaches fewer than one-fifth of migrants (18.5%), while certified training remains limited (12.4%), underscoring a major skills gap in the migrant workforce.

The state-wise pattern is highly uneven. Jharkhand is a clear outlier, with a majority of migrants (53.1%) reporting certified vocational training and a further 35.4% having informal training. This suggests stronger exposure to formal skilling pathways or programme penetration among migrants from Jharkhand, potentially enabling better occupational mobility.

In contrast, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh exhibit extremely low skill formalisation, with over 94% and 97% respectively reporting no training. This indicates that migration from these states is largely driven by low-skilled labour pathways, likely constraining migrants to more precarious and lower-paid work at destinations.

Odisha and Rajasthan occupy an intermediate position, where around one-quarter of migrants rely on informal or on-the-job training, but certified training remains marginal (below 4% in both states). This points to experiential skill acquisition without formal recognition, limiting portability and wage progression.

Taken together, the findings highlight a sharp inter-state divide in migrant skill profiles, with Jharkhand demonstrating relatively strong certification outcomes, while other states, especially Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, remain trapped in low-skill migration cycles.

4.51 Preference for local secure work if comparable pay is offered

This table assesses whether migrants would prefer to stay back and take up local, secure employment if it offered pay comparable to migration-based work. The distribution highlights the strength of *latent demand for local employment* and how conditional or firm this preference is across states.

Table 4.51: Would migrant prefer local secure work if comparable pay offered?

	Yes — definitely (%)	Maybe — depends on conditions (%)	No — would still migrate (%)	DK / CS (%)
Odisha	97.2	2.0	0.0	0.8
Rajasthan	79.1	16.8	0.4	3.7
Jharkhand	63.0	35.8	1.2	0.0
Madhya Pradesh	99.2	0.8	0.0	0.0
Chhattisgarh	84.9	14.2	0.0	0.8
Group Total	84.7	13.9	0.3	1.1

Across the sample, there is a very strong preference for local employment when pay parity is assured, with nearly 85% of migrants stating they would definitely stay back. This clearly establishes that migration, for most households, is not aspirational but conditional, driven primarily by economic necessity rather than choice.

State-wise differences are instructive. Madhya Pradesh and Odisha show near-universal certainty, with over 97–99% responding “yes—definitely”, indicating that migration from these states is highly sensitive to

the availability of viable local work. In these contexts, even modest improvements in local employment quality could substantially reduce out-migration.

Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan also show strong latent demand for local work, but with a larger share of respondents falling into the “maybe” category, suggesting that *job security, continuity, or working conditions* matter alongside wages.

Jharkhand stands out with the lowest share of definitive responses (63%) and the highest conditionality (35.8% “maybe”). This implies that migrants from Jharkhand may weigh a broader set of factors, such as stability of employment, predictability of income, or non-wage benefits, before opting to stay back.

Notably, the share of migrants who would still prefer to migrate even with comparable local pay is negligible (0.3%), reinforcing the conclusion that migration is largely reversible if credible, secure, and well-paying local employment opportunities are created.

4.52 Willingness to consider entrepreneurship at origin if start-up support is available

This table examines whether migrants would consider starting an enterprise at their place of origin if adequate start-up support (such as credit, training, or handholding) were made available. It provides insight into the extent to which entrepreneurship could function as an alternative to migration, and how conditional this choice is across states.

Table 4.52: Would migrant consider entrepreneurship at origin if start-up support was available?

	Yes (%)	Maybe — depends on conditions (%)	No (%)
Odisha	60.3	23.1	16.6
Rajasthan	91.0	7.8	1.2
Jharkhand	66.3	17.3	16.5
Madhya Pradesh	99.2	0.0	0.8
Chhattisgarh	69.9	29.3	0.8
Group Total	77.2	15.5	7.3

Overall, more than three-quarters of migrants (77.2%) express a clear willingness to consider entrepreneurship at origin if start-up support is available, indicating substantial untapped potential for self-employment-led retention strategies in source regions. An additional 15.5% are conditionally open, suggesting that the quality, reliability, and adequacy of support would strongly shape outcomes.

State patterns reveal important contrasts. Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan show exceptionally high entrepreneurial openness, with over 90–99% responding “yes” and negligible outright resistance. In these states, enterprise promotion—through credit, skills, and market linkages—could realistically absorb a significant share of current migrants.

In Odisha and Jharkhand, willingness is more mixed. While a majority still respond positively, around one-sixth explicitly say “no”, and a sizable segment remains conditional. This points to higher perceived risks, weaker local markets, or past exposure to failed enterprise attempts, underscoring the need for stronger handholding, risk-mitigation, and assured demand.

Chhattisgarh stands out for its high conditionality: nearly 30% say “maybe”, the highest among all states. This suggests latent interest that could convert into uptake if programmes address concerns around capital adequacy, repayment pressure, and income stability.

Taken together, the findings indicate that entrepreneurship can act as a credible complement—but not a universal substitute—for wage employment. Where local ecosystems are stronger (as in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan), start-up support could significantly reduce migration; elsewhere, enterprise promotion must be carefully sequenced with market access and social protection to avoid reinforcing vulnerability.

SECTION 9: ASPIRATIONS AND PERMANENCE

4.53 Preference for Permanent Settlement at Destination

This question explores whether households would like the migrant (or their children) to permanently settle at the destination, rather than return to the place of origin. The responses capture long-term aspirations and reveal whether migration is viewed as a temporary coping strategy or a pathway to permanent relocation and intergenerational mobility.

Table 4.53: Would the household like the migrant (or their children) to permanently settle at destination? (in Percentages)

	Prefer to stay in origin (%)	Yes — strongly (%)	Yes — somewhat (%)	Not sure (%)	DK/CS (%)
Odisha	37.7	47.4	2.0	13.0	0.0
Rajasthan	58.2	9.4	4.5	11.1	16.8
Jharkhand	13.6	73.7	8.6	3.7	0.4
Madhya Pradesh	58.3	40.0	0.4	0.8	0.4
Chhattisgarh	67.4	5.0	5.0	13.0	9.6
Group Total	46.9	35.2	4.1	8.3	5.4

At the aggregate level, household preferences are divided, with 46.9% preferring migrants to remain anchored to the origin, while 39.3% (strongly or somewhat) express a desire for permanent settlement at destination. This confirms that migration is not uniformly perceived as a transitional strategy; for a substantial minority, it represents a longer-term relocation choice.

Clear state-level contrasts emerge. Jharkhand stands out sharply, with over 80% of households favouring permanent settlement at destination, including nearly three-quarters expressing strong preference. This suggests deep-rooted structural constraints at origin, such as limited employment prospects or weak service ecosystems, making return less attractive even in the long run.

In Odisha, preferences are more balanced but still destination-leaning: nearly half of households strongly support permanent settlement, while over one-third prefer staying rooted in the origin. This indicates a dual aspiration, where migration may be seen both as opportunity-driven and necessity-driven, depending on household circumstances.

By contrast, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh show strong origin attachment. In both states, well over half of households prefer migrants to stay connected to origin, and enthusiasm for permanent settlement is muted. Higher uncertainty and DK responses in these states suggest ambivalence, possibly reflecting seasonal or circular migration norms rather than definitive relocation plans.

Madhya Pradesh presents a mixed but telling picture: while a majority prefer staying at origin, a large minority (40%) strongly favour permanent settlement, indicating growing polarization between households that see local opportunity versus those that view migration as the primary route to stability.

4.54 Factors Facilitating Permanent Settlement for Family Members at Destination

Table 4.54: Which factors facilitate permanent settlement for family member at destination?

State	Stable / regular job (%)	Affordable housing (%)	Children's schooling (%)	Family/partner at destination (%)	Social acceptance (%)	Health / banking services (%)	Legal documents / ID portability (%)	Other (%)
Jharkhand	32.1	13.9	27.0	8.8	14.0	4.0	0.3	0.0
Odisha	61.1	8.1	8.1	10.1	9.1	2.0	1.5	0.0
Madhya Pradesh	29.4	16.1	12.1	10.0	16.1	2.1	14.2	0.0
Rajasthan	35.8	9.5	20.0	18.9	15.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Chhattisgarh	38.0	4.0	8.0	22.0	14.0	4.0	8.0	2.0

Across states, clear and meaningful differences emerge in what households believe would most facilitate permanent settlement at destination, reflecting distinct migration trajectories and constraints.

In Jharkhand, settlement is strongly anchored in employment and schooling considerations. A stable or regular job accounts for nearly one-third of all responses, followed closely by children's schooling and social acceptance in the locality. The relatively low weight given to family already being at destination suggests that settlement decisions here are still largely individual and employment-led rather than family-anchored, pointing to a more transitional form of migration.

Odisha shows a markedly different profile, with an overwhelming emphasis on stable employment, which alone constitutes over three-fifths of all responses. Family presence at destination and social acceptance emerge as secondary enablers, while housing and services matter far less. This pattern indicates that migration from Odisha remains highly wage-driven, and that permanence is closely tied to job security rather than broader urban integration.

In Madhya Pradesh, the distribution is more diversified. While stable employment remains important, affordable housing, social acceptance, and legal document portability together account for a substantial share. Compared to other states, Madhya Pradesh shows the strongest emphasis on documentation and ID portability, suggesting that administrative barriers play a larger role in shaping long-term settlement decisions for migrants from this state.

Rajasthan reflects a more family-centred settlement logic. Stable jobs remain important, but children's schooling, family presence at destination, and social acceptance together form nearly half of all responses. This indicates that for many households in Rajasthan, permanence is less about individual employment alone and more about the feasibility of relocating the family and sustaining social continuity at destination.

Chhattisgarh presents a mixed but distinct pattern. While employment is still the single largest factor, family already being at destination and social acceptance together account for a sizeable share, higher than in Jharkhand or Odisha. Legal documentation also carries more weight than in most other states, hinting at institutional access and recognition as key enablers of settlement.

Overall, while stable employment is the dominant prerequisite for permanent settlement across all states, the secondary drivers vary sharply. Jharkhand and Odisha display more employment-centric and transitional migration profiles, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh show stronger family and social integration considerations, and Madhya Pradesh highlights administrative and housing constraints. These contrasts underline the need for state-specific settlement and integration strategies, rather than a uniform national approach.

4.55 Factors Preventing Permanent Settlement at Destination

Households were asked to identify the key factors that prevent migrants from permanently settling at their destination locations. Responses reflect a mix of institutional, economic, social, and cultural barriers that continue to tie migrant households to their places of origin.

Table 4.55: Which factors prevent permanent settlement at destination?

Factor preventing permanent settlement	Jharkhand	Odisha	Madhya Pradesh	Rajasthan	Chhattisgarh
Lack of documents / ID	7.0%	31.0%	13.1%	3.8%	45.1%
Insecurity / crime	8.1%	16.1%	6.5%	53.2%	16.1%
Discrimination / social exclusion	30.8%	34.6%	7.7%	14.1%	12.8%
No schooling for children	11.8%	20.6%	17.6%	29.4%	20.6%
Cultural attachment to village/roots	3.0%	21.3%	20.4%	23.6%	31.8%
Economic linkage with family at origin	5.0%	15.3%	19.6%	21.5%	38.5%
Distance from extended family	6.1%	55.8%	10.2%	19.3%	8.6%
Higher cost of living	5.6%	41.9%	9.4%	29.4%	13.8%
Poor housing or services	12.5%	32.1%	16.1%	39.3%	0.0%
Other (specify)	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%

Clear state-wise contrasts emerge in what prevents migrants from settling permanently at destination, highlighting that barriers extend well beyond employment availability alone.

In Chhattisgarh, constraints are dominated by origin-linked ties rather than destination conditions. Lack of documents and ID portability is the single largest barrier, followed closely by economic dependence on family at origin and cultural attachment to the village. This indicates that even where employment exists, institutional exclusion and strong rural linkages continue to anchor households to their places of origin.

Odisha presents a different pattern, where distance from extended family and higher cost of living together account for a substantial share of settlement constraints. Discrimination and lack of documents also feature prominently, suggesting that social dislocation and urban affordability are major deterrents to permanent settlement.

In Rajasthan, insecurity and crime, poor housing conditions, and lack of schooling for children emerge as key barriers. Cultural attachment also remains significant. This points to destination-side living conditions and safety concerns as central obstacles, limiting long-term settlement despite employment opportunities.

Madhya Pradesh shows a more evenly distributed set of constraints. Economic linkage with family at origin and cultural attachment form the largest barriers, while documentation- and cost-related constraints are relatively less prominent, indicating continued economic and social embeddedness in origin areas.

In Jharkhand, discrimination and social exclusion stand out most clearly, followed by schooling-related concerns. Other barriers such as cost of living or documentation are comparatively minor, underscoring that challenges of social integration at destination play a critical role in shaping settlement decisions.

SECTION 11: PERCEIVED GAINS AND LOSSES

4.56 Losses that Households have Experienced because of Migration

Households were asked to report the types of losses they experienced as a result of migration. These losses span emotional, social, and livelihood dimensions and reflect the broader household-level costs of migration beyond income gains. The table below presents the distribution of reported losses by state, indicating how each loss is spread across the five study states.

Table 4.56: Losses that Households have Experienced because of Migration

Loss experienced due to migration	Jharkhand	Odisha	Madhya Pradesh	Rajasthan	Chhattisgarh
Separation from spouse/children	29.3%	15.2%	24.5%	22.5%	8.5%
Missing festivals / ceremonies	19.4%	20.8%	20.5%	20.4%	18.9%
Children left without proper care	37.0%	11.7%	19.9%	25.1%	6.5%
Loss of household labour for farming/fields	17.2%	8.7%	24.0%	20.1%	30.1%
Change in food / cooking arrangements	44.8%	36.7%	10.0%	3.8%	4.8%
Emotional stress / loneliness	16.4%	18.9%	31.8%	12.2%	20.6%
No losses reported	2.0%	3.9%	0.0%	2.0%	92.2%

Across all states, social and emotional costs of migration are widespread, with very few households reporting no losses. Separation from spouse or children is most prominent in Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh, highlighting the prevalence of solo or split-family migration patterns in these states. In contrast, Chhattisgarh accounts for a much smaller share of this loss, suggesting relatively higher incidence of family co-residence or shorter migration durations.

Children being left without adequate care is disproportionately concentrated in Jharkhand and Rajasthan, indicating greater household strain and caregiving gaps in these origin contexts. Odisha and Chhattisgarh contribute relatively smaller shares, possibly reflecting stronger extended-family support systems or different migration profiles.

Loss of household labour for farming emerges most strongly in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, underscoring the agricultural opportunity cost of migration in these states. This aligns with earlier findings on the importance of farm labour and the persistence of agrarian livelihoods.

Emotional stress and loneliness are widely reported across all states, but are especially pronounced in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, suggesting that even economically necessary migration carries significant psychosocial burdens.

Changes in food and cooking arrangements are heavily concentrated in Jharkhand and Odisha, reflecting disruptions in household routines when key adult members migrate.

Finally, the fact that nearly all “no loss” responses come from Chhattisgarh suggests either more adaptive migration arrangements or differing perceptions of migration-related costs in that state.

4.57 Gains households have experienced because of migration

Households were also asked to report the positive gains experienced as a result of migration, recognising that migration is often undertaken as a strategy to improve economic security and living standards. These

gains span income, asset creation, skills, education, and future aspirations. The table below presents the distribution of reported gains across states, expressed as row percentages, showing how each benefit is geographically concentrated.

Table 4.57: Gains experienced due to migration

	Jharkhand	Odisha	Madhya Pradesh	Rajasthan	Chhattisgarh
More household income	19.9%	20.3%	20.1%	20.2%	19.5%
Ability to repay debt / meet emergencies	27.5%	26.8%	16.2%	29.0%	0.5%
Improved housing / assets bought	36.4%	24.9%	21.5%	11.3%	5.9%
Exposure to new ideas / lifestyle	23.3%	27.4%	21.8%	6.2%	21.3%
Children's education improved	25.2%	19.3%	21.2%	27.5%	6.9%
New skills or learning acquired	12.5%	27.1%	31.6%	1.4%	27.4%
Prospect of permanent migration	14.8%	65.5%	5.6%	2.1%	12.0%
Other (Specify)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Increased household income is a near-universal gain across all five states, with a remarkably even distribution, underscoring income augmentation as the primary and shared motivation for migration irrespective of origin context.

Beyond income, the nature of secondary gains varies sharply by state. Jharkhand and Rajasthan show a stronger association between migration and debt repayment or emergency coping, suggesting migration is closely tied to financial stress management in these states. In contrast, this gain is almost absent in Chhattisgarh, indicating different household financial structures or borrowing patterns.

Asset creation and housing improvements are most strongly concentrated in Jharkhand and Odisha, pointing to migration being used as a medium-term accumulation strategy rather than merely for consumption smoothing. Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh show much lower shares, implying more short-term or subsistence-oriented migration outcomes.

Exposure to new ideas and lifestyles is reported most frequently by households from Odisha, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh, while Rajasthan lags significantly, suggesting differences in destination types, sectoral employment, or duration of migration.

Gains related to skills and learning are heavily concentrated in Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh, indicating that migration from these states is more likely to be linked with skill acquisition or experiential learning. Rajasthan's negligible share suggests limited upskilling opportunities or greater concentration in low-skill, repetitive work.

Finally, the prospect of permanent migration is overwhelmingly concentrated among Odisha-origin households, highlighting a stronger orientation towards long-term settlement among migrants from this state. In contrast, households from Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh largely view migration as temporary or cyclical rather than a pathway to permanent relocation.

SECTION 12: PERCEPTIONS AND LIFE EVALUATION

4.58 Whether Overall Household Well-being Has Improved after Migration

Households were asked to assess their overall well-being after migration compared to the period before migration, capturing whether migration has translated into tangible improvements in living conditions. Responses reflect perceived changes in economic security, consumption stability, and overall household welfare. The table below presents state-wise row percentages, enabling a direct comparison of post-migration well-being outcomes.

Table 4.58: whether overall household well-being has improved after migration

	Much better	Somewhat better	No change	DK/CS
Odisha	56.3%	42.5%	1.2%	—
Rajasthan	48.8%	49.6%	1.2%	0.4%
Jharkhand	69.1%	24.7%	6.2%	—
Madhya Pradesh	85.8%	14.2%	—	—
Chhattisgarh	1.7%	95.0%	2.9%	0.4%

Across the sample, migration is overwhelmingly associated with improved household well-being, with over 97% of households reporting either “much better” or “somewhat better” outcomes. However, the intensity of perceived improvement varies markedly across states.

Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand stand out, with a very high share of households reporting their well-being as “much better” (85.8% and 69.1% respectively). This suggests that migration from these states is yielding substantial economic or livelihood gains, rather than marginal improvements, possibly linked to better-paying destinations or stronger remittance flows.

In Odisha and Rajasthan, perceptions are more evenly split between “much better” and “somewhat better,” indicating moderate but meaningful welfare gains. Migration in these states appears to function more as a stabilising strategy, improving conditions without always producing a dramatic upward shift in well-being.

Chhattisgarh presents a distinct pattern, with the vast majority of households (95.0%) reporting being “somewhat better”, but very few indicating “much better.” This points to migration playing a consumption-smoothing or risk-coping role, helping households manage basic needs rather than enabling strong upward mobility.

Reports of no change or uncertainty are minimal across all states, reinforcing the finding that migration, despite its social costs, continues to be perceived by households as a net positive livelihood strategy, albeit with varying depth of benefit depending on the state context.

4.59 How accepted is migration as part of the life cycle in this community?

Migration is not only an economic decision but also a socially embedded practice, shaped by community norms, expectations, and collective experience. To understand this social dimension, households were asked how migration is perceived within their community—whether it is seen as a normal part of the life cycle, positively valued, or socially resisted. The table below presents state-wise row percentages, allowing comparison of how social acceptance of migration varies across origin contexts.

Table 4.59: How accepted is migration as part of the life cycle in this community?

	Neutral	Accepted	Seen positively / preferred	Strongly disliked	Disliked	DK/CS
Odisha	23.1%	74.5%	0.8%	1.2%	0.4%	—
Rajasthan	27.9%	17.2%	45.5%	0.8%	1.2%	7.4%
Jharkhand	86.8%	7.0%	0.4%	5.8%	—	—
Madhya Pradesh	75.8%	10.8%	2.1%	0.4%	10.8%	—

Chhattisgarh	1.3%	31.8%	2.1%	34.7%	29.3%	0.8%
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Community perceptions of migration show strong inter-state contrasts, revealing that migration is socially normalised in some contexts while actively resisted in others.

Odisha and Rajasthan display the highest levels of positive social acceptance, though in different ways. In Odisha, migration is largely “accepted” as a routine livelihood strategy (74.5%), suggesting it has become institutionalised within community life. Rajasthan goes a step further, with nearly half of households (45.5%) viewing migration positively or as a preferred pathway, indicating strong aspirational value attached to migration outcomes.

In contrast, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh are characterised by high neutrality (86.8% and 75.8% respectively). This suggests that migration in these states is neither celebrated nor strongly opposed, but rather treated as a pragmatic necessity. The limited proportion reporting positive perceptions implies migration is seen more as a compulsion driven by constraints, not a socially desirable choice.

Chhattisgarh stands out sharply as the only state where negative perceptions dominate. Nearly two-thirds of households report migration as either strongly disliked (34.7%) or disliked (29.3%), pointing to deep social resistance. This likely reflects the social costs of migration, including family separation, community disruption, or adverse destination experiences, outweighing perceived economic benefits at the community level.

SECTION 13: LOSS/GAIN INTENSITY AND CULTURAL AFFINITY

4.60 Emotional and Cultural Losses Associated with Migration

Migration affects households not only through economic and caregiving disruptions but also through deeper emotional and cultural losses that shape community life, family cohesion, and individual identity. Respondents were asked to identify the emotional or cultural losses felt most strongly due to migration. The table below presents the state-wise distribution of reported losses, expressed as row percentages within each state, so that the full range of emotional impacts reported in each state sums to 100 percent.

Table 4.60: emotional and cultural losses associated with migration

Emotional / cultural loss	Odisha	Rajasthan	Jharkhand	Madhya Pradesh	Chhattisgarh
Loss of cultural rituals / celebrations	51.8%	34.9%	39.4%	36.7%	30.4%
Weakening of family ties	14.9%	21.0%	29.0%	22.1%	25.6%
Loss of identity / roots	4.7%	19.1%	19.1%	9.7%	12.7%
Reduced community participation	28.7%	25.0%	11.4%	31.4%	25.0%
No major emotional or cultural loss	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	6.3%

Across states, the most frequently reported emotional loss relates to the disruption of cultural rituals and celebrations, underscoring how migration weakens participation in festivals, ceremonies, and collective traditions that are central to rural social life. This is particularly pronounced in Odisha, where over half of all reported emotional losses relate to cultural rituals, suggesting a strong dependence on seasonal and communal practices that are directly affected by prolonged absence. In Jharkhand and Rajasthan, cultural disruption remains significant but is more evenly distributed across multiple dimensions of loss.

The weakening of family ties emerges as a major concern in Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, where roughly one-quarter to one-third of emotional impacts relate to strained family relationships. This aligns with earlier findings on children being left behind and greater caregiving burdens on spouses or elderly relatives, indicating that migration in these states has deeper implications for household cohesion. In contrast, Odisha reports relatively lower family-tie erosion, with emotional loss more concentrated around cultural participation rather than interpersonal relationships.

Feelings of loss of identity or roots are most visible in Rajasthan and Jharkhand, where nearly one-fifth of reported emotional losses relate to identity dislocation. This points to migration experiences that are not only economically driven but also culturally alienating, especially in destination contexts where language, social norms, or occupational status differ sharply from the place of origin. Madhya Pradesh shows comparatively lower identity-related loss, suggesting that migration pathways may be more familiar or socially embedded.

Reduced community participation is a dominant theme in Madhya Pradesh and Odisha, reflecting how repeated or long-term migration weakens collective engagement in village institutions, self-help groups, and informal governance spaces. In Jharkhand, this dimension is less prominent relative to family and identity-related losses, indicating that the emotional costs of migration there are felt more intensely within the household than at the community level.

Finally, the small share of respondents in Chhattisgarh reporting no major emotional or cultural loss suggests a degree of normalization of migration in certain contexts, possibly where migration has become routinized over generations. However, even in such settings, the majority continue to report significant emotional impacts, reinforcing that migration, while economically beneficial for many households, carries substantial and unevenly distributed social and cultural costs across states.

SECTION 14: INTERGENERATIONAL TIES TO THE VILLAGE AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

4.61 Whether family members want children to retain strong ties to the village (culture, roots, identity)

Understanding whether migrant households wish their children to retain strong ties to the village provides insight into how migration reshapes long-term identity, belonging, and intergenerational aspirations. Respondents were asked whether they wanted their children to maintain connections to their village of origin, its culture, roots, and identity, or whether adaptation to destination settings was preferred. The table below presents state-wise responses expressed as row percentages.

Table 4.61: Do family members want children to retain strong ties to the village?

	Yes — very much (%)	Yes — somewhat (%)	No — prefer children adapt to destination (%)	DK/CS (%)
Odisha	95.5	3.2	1.2	0.0
Rajasthan	88.9	5.7	4.5	0.8
Jharkhand	85.6	12.8	1.2	0.4
Madhya Pradesh	97.5	1.7	0.0	0.8
Chhattisgarh	21.8	41.8	0.0	36.4

Across most states, there is an overwhelming preference for children to retain strong ties to the village, indicating that migration is largely viewed as an economic strategy rather than a cultural or identity shift.

This sentiment is strongest in Madhya Pradesh and Odisha, where over 95 percent of respondents report that they want children to remain deeply connected to their village roots. In these states, migration appears to coexist with a strong commitment to cultural continuity, suggesting that households see the village as a permanent anchor even when livelihoods are pursued elsewhere.

Jharkhand and Rajasthan also show high levels of attachment to village identity, though with slightly greater openness to partial adaptation. Around 10–13 percent of households in these states indicate that children should retain ties only “somewhat,” reflecting a more balanced outlook where cultural continuity is valued but pragmatic adaptation to destination contexts is also acknowledged. Notably, Rajasthan shows the highest proportion—though still small—of households preferring children to adapt fully to destination settings, pointing to longer or more entrenched migration pathways in certain communities.

Chhattisgarh stands out as a clear outlier. Only about one-fifth of respondents express a strong desire for children to retain village ties, while a large share report either partial attachment or uncertainty. The high proportion of “don’t know / can’t say” responses suggests ambivalence or unresolved aspirations regarding children’s future identity. This pattern aligns with earlier findings from Chhattisgarh showing weaker acceptance of migration as a positive life-cycle event and greater emotional strain, indicating that prolonged or distress-driven migration may be loosening intergenerational cultural anchors.

Overall, the findings highlight that even in contexts of high migration, cultural identity and village belonging remain central to household aspirations, particularly in Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Rajasthan. Migration is largely instrumental rather than transformative in identity terms. Where this attachment weakens, as seen in Chhattisgarh, it appears to be associated with greater uncertainty, stress, and disruption, underscoring the need for policies that support not only economic security but also cultural and social continuity for migrant families.

SECTION 15: PROTECTION, GRIEVANCES AND URGENCY

4.62 Whether Household has Sought Redress for Migrant Issues in the last 12 months

This table presents state-wise responses on whether households sought any formal redress for migrant-related issues in the past year.

Table 4.62: In the last 12 months, has the household sought redress for migrant issues?

	No (%)	Yes — employer/agent (%)	Yes — police (%)
Odisha	98.8	1.2	0.0
Rajasthan	100.0	0.0	0.0
Jharkhand	95.1	2.9	2.1
Madhya Pradesh	100.0	0.0	0.0
Chhattisgarh	99.6	0.0	0.4

Across all five states, the data shows an overwhelmingly low incidence of households seeking formal redress for migrant-related issues in the preceding twelve months. In Odisha, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh, virtually all households reported not approaching any grievance or redress mechanism, indicating either a low level of reported disputes or, more plausibly, significant barriers to grievance reporting and access to redress systems.

Jharkhand stands out marginally from the other states, with a small but notable proportion of households reporting having approached employers or agents (2.9%) and, to a lesser extent, the police (2.1%). This

suggests relatively higher exposure to adverse migration experiences or slightly greater awareness or willingness to pursue formal channels, though absolute levels remain very low. Chhattisgarh records almost no engagement with redress mechanisms, with only a negligible proportion approaching the police.

Overall, the pattern points to a structural gap between migrant vulnerabilities and the use of formal grievance-redress pathways. The near-absence of engagement with employers, agents, or law-enforcement institutions across states underscores the need for stronger, more accessible migrant support systems, clearer grievance-handling mechanisms, and proactive outreach to ensure that migrant households are both aware of and able to use available redress options.

4.63 Any indicators of trafficking, forced labour, or document confiscation reported?

This table presents state-wise responses on whether households reported any indicators of trafficking, forced labour, or confiscation of documents in relation to migration.

Table 4.63: Any indicators of trafficking, forced labour, or document confiscation reported?

	No (%)	Yes (%)
Odisha	100.0	0.0
Rajasthan	99.6	0.4
Jharkhand	100.0	0.0
Madhya Pradesh	100.0	0.0
Chhattisgarh	99.6	0.4
Group Total	99.8	0.2

Reported indicators of trafficking, forced labour, or document confiscation are extremely rare across all surveyed states. In Odisha, Jharkhand, and Madhya Pradesh, no households reported experiencing or observing such indicators, suggesting either very low prevalence or limited detection and reporting within these communities. Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh each recorded a marginal proportion of households (0.4%) reporting such indicators, highlighting isolated cases rather than widespread patterns.

At the aggregate level, only 0.2 percent of households reported any indicators of trafficking or forced labour, underscoring that such extreme forms of exploitation are not commonly reported within the survey sample. However, the near-universal reporting of “No” should be interpreted cautiously. Given the well-documented challenges around awareness, fear of retaliation, normalisation of exploitative practices, and lack of trust in formal systems, underreporting is a plausible concern. The findings therefore point to the importance of continued vigilance, targeted awareness efforts, and stronger monitoring mechanisms, particularly in high-migration corridors, to ensure that severe forms of labour exploitation are identified and addressed when they do occur.

Chapter 5

Way Forward

5.0 Annexure: Intervention Framework + Theory of Change (FY 2026–27 to FY 2030–31)

5.1 Programme Frame (What the CSR programme is solving)

Seasonal and temporal migration is a repeated household livelihood strategy in several rural geographies, shaped by unstable income, limited local work availability, and exposure to shocks such as debt and health expenditure. While migration helps households access earnings, a significant share is distress-led. The programme therefore prioritises reducing distress/temporal migration by strengthening origin-side livelihoods, while ensuring basic protection and entitlement continuity for households that continue to migrate.

5.2 Theory of Change (ToC)

If vulnerable high-migration households in origin areas gain access to **market-linked livelihood opportunities**, **job-linked skilling/employment pathways**, and **basic resilience supports** that reduce debt and shock vulnerability, then household income stability will increase and distress-driven migration will reduce in frequency and duration. For households that continue to migrate, if they are supported through **safe migration systems**, **worker support mechanisms**, and **portable entitlement facilitation at destination**, then income losses, service exclusion, and adverse outcomes of migration will decline, improving overall household wellbeing across the migration cycle.

5.3 Intervention Framework (3-Pillar Structure)

Pillar 1 (FLAGSHIP): Distress Migration Reduction through Livelihood Stabilisation at Origin

Objective: Increase stable local income so migration becomes a choice, not compulsion.

Approach: Implement 2–3 high-viability livelihood pathways per origin cluster, aligned to market demand.

Core intervention components

- Market-linked livelihood strengthening (micro-enterprises, value addition, aggregation)
- Job-linked skilling to local/semi-local employment (avoid training-only models)
- Entrepreneurship enablement for repeat-migration households (especially women/left-behind members)

Key outputs

- Households supported with viable livelihood pathways
- Enterprise/job linkages established
- Local income cycles strengthened beyond seasonal dependence

Primary outcomes

- Reduced distress migration (frequency/duration)
- Higher stability of income at origin
- Improved household economic resilience

Pillar 2 (ENABLER): Household Risk Buffering and Resilience at Origin

Objective: Prevent shocks (debt/health/lean season stress) from triggering distress migration.

Approach: Provide limited but targeted household resilience support for high-risk migrant families.

Core intervention components

- Debt and financial counselling for vulnerable households
- Linkage to formal finance and safer credit options (bank/SHG pathways)
- Scheme and entitlement access facilitation at origin (convergence-driven, not parallel systems)

Key outputs

- Households linked to safer credit and financial planning support
- Reduced dependence on distress borrowing
- Improved scheme access where applicable

Primary outcomes

- Lower shock-driven migration triggers
- Improved capacity to manage lean periods without distress migration

Pillar 3 (PROTECTION LAYER): Safer Migration and Destination Continuity Systems

Objective: Reduce harm for continuing migrants and improve service/entitlement access at destination.

Approach: Implement selective destination cluster support, aligned to major migration corridors.

Core intervention components

- Safe migration and worker support through helpdesks/referrals
- Entitlement portability facilitation (especially food security portability)
- Service navigation for migrant families and children (where present at destination clusters)

Key outputs

- Migrants supported with referrals and problem-solving pathways
- Improved awareness and usage of portability entitlements
- Better continuity of basic services during migration cycles

Primary outcomes

- Reduced exclusion at destination
- Higher uptake of portability mechanisms
- Improved safety and dignity of migration for continuing households

5.4 Roles and Delivery Model

- **CSR Foundation:** Programme governance, corridor prioritisation, outcome monitoring, performance management, partner contracting.
- **CSO Partners:** Implementation delivery (origin livelihoods, destination helpdesks), household tracking, mobilisation, convergence facilitation.
- **Government Departments:** Skilling and placement pipelines, rural livelihoods convergence, portability systems, public services.
- **Market Actors:** Buyer linkages, aggregation support, placement partnerships and demand alignment.

5.5 3–5 Year Implementation Cycle

- **Year 1:** Corridor selection + pilots; validate livelihood pathways and destination support model; establish baseline migration metrics.
- **Years 2–3:** Scale within selected corridors; strengthen market/job linkages; institutionalise portability facilitation.
- **Years 4–5:** Consolidation and sustainability; embed systems with partners/government; outcome evaluation focused on migration reduction.

5.6 Outcome Measurement (Minimal, High-Value KPIs)

Migration Outcomes

- % households reporting seasonal migration (last 12 months)
- Average duration of migration (months)
- Frequency of migration episodes per year
- % households reporting distress-driven migration

Livelihood Outcomes

- Months of stable local income availability (per year)
- Enterprise continuity/survival rate (where supported)
- Placement retention rate (3-month / 6-month)

Protection and Continuity Outcomes

- Portability awareness and usage among migrants
- % households receiving worker support/referrals
- Service continuity indicators for migrant families (where applicable)

5.6 Logframe (summary matrix)

Pillar	Core Objective	Key Activities (CSR-funded)	Primary Partners	3–5 Year Outcome KPIs
P1: Livelihood Stabilisation at Origin (Flagship)	Reduce distress migration by increasing stable local income	Market linkages for 2–3 livelihood pathways per cluster; skilling-to-job placement; entrepreneurship enablement with mentoring + credit facilitation	CSOs + SRLM/NRLM + Skill Depts + employers/buyers	% households with reduced migration duration; % households with stable local income ≥6 months/year; job placement retention (3/6 months); enterprise survival rate
P2: Household Resilience (Origin Enabler)	Prevent shocks (debt/health) from driving distress migration	Debt counselling; financial planning; formal credit linkage; scheme convergence handholding	CSOs + Banks/SHG platforms + local administration	% reduction in high-cost borrowing; % households linked to formal finance; reduced distress-trigger incidents
P3: Protection + Portability (Destination & Corridor)	Reduce exclusion at destination and improve service continuity	ONORC portability facilitation; migration helpdesks/referrals; worker grievance linkages; child service continuity support where needed	CSOs + Food & Civil Supplies + Labour Dept + ULBs	% increase in ONORC awareness & usage; % migrants receiving support/referral; reduction in “no attempt/not aware” portability gap

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