

# **SESSION 6: DIASPORAS, DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNANCE: THE INDIAN EXPERIENCE**

**Dr. Gadadhara Mohapatra**

*Assistant Professor of Sociology, IIPA*

Formerly at Tripura Central University, Agartala

M.A., M.Phil, & Ph.D. (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi)

Postdoc(Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany)

UGC-NET, DTS & DoT, DoPT, GOI



**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, NEW DELHI**

# **Session 6: Diasporas, Development and Governance: The Indian Experience**

## **Objectives**

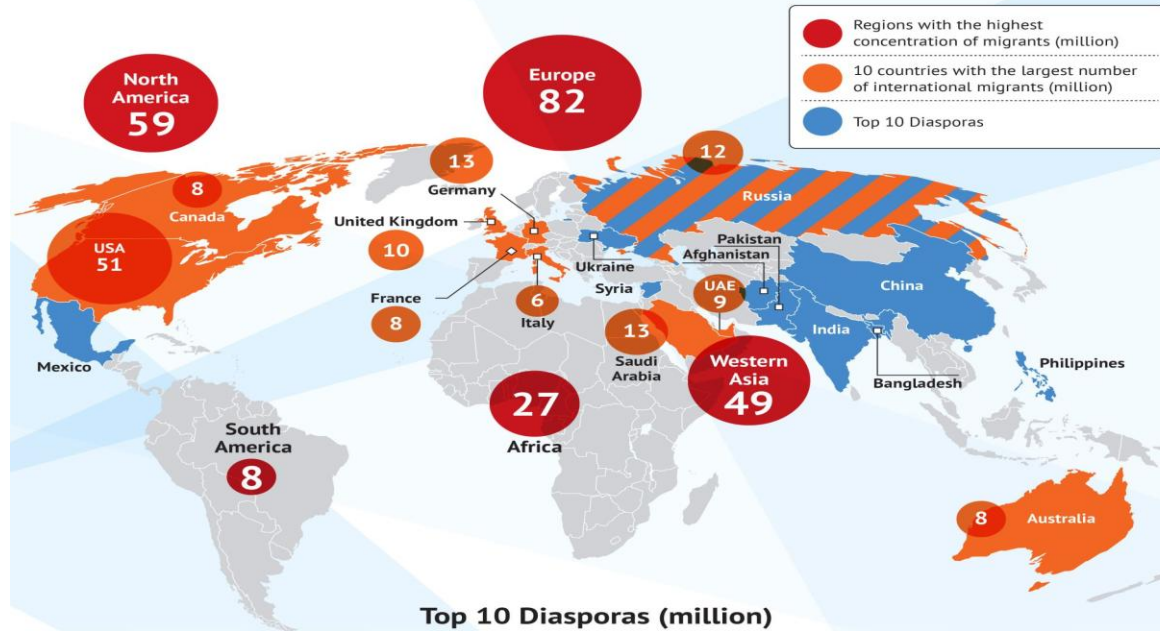
1. This session will allow us to examine the relationship between migration, development and diaspora engagement from a governance perspective.
2. It will help us to understand Indian governments approach towards its diaspora.
3. It will help us in charting out expectations of home nation from Diaspora and vice versa.

## ▪ **Outline**

- Global Migration
- Size of Indian Diaspora
- Indian Diaspora as ‘Soft Power’
- Government Policies Engaging Diaspora
- Economic & Social Benefits of Migration
- Diaspora’s Expectations from India and vice-versa
- Emerging Issues and Challenges
- Way Forward

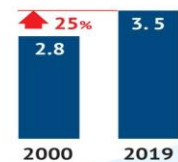
# Global Migration

The number of international migrants globally reached an estimated 272 million in 2019, outpacing growth rate of the world's population



Number of migrants in the world (million)

% of migrants to the world's population



One out of every seven international migrants was under the age of 20



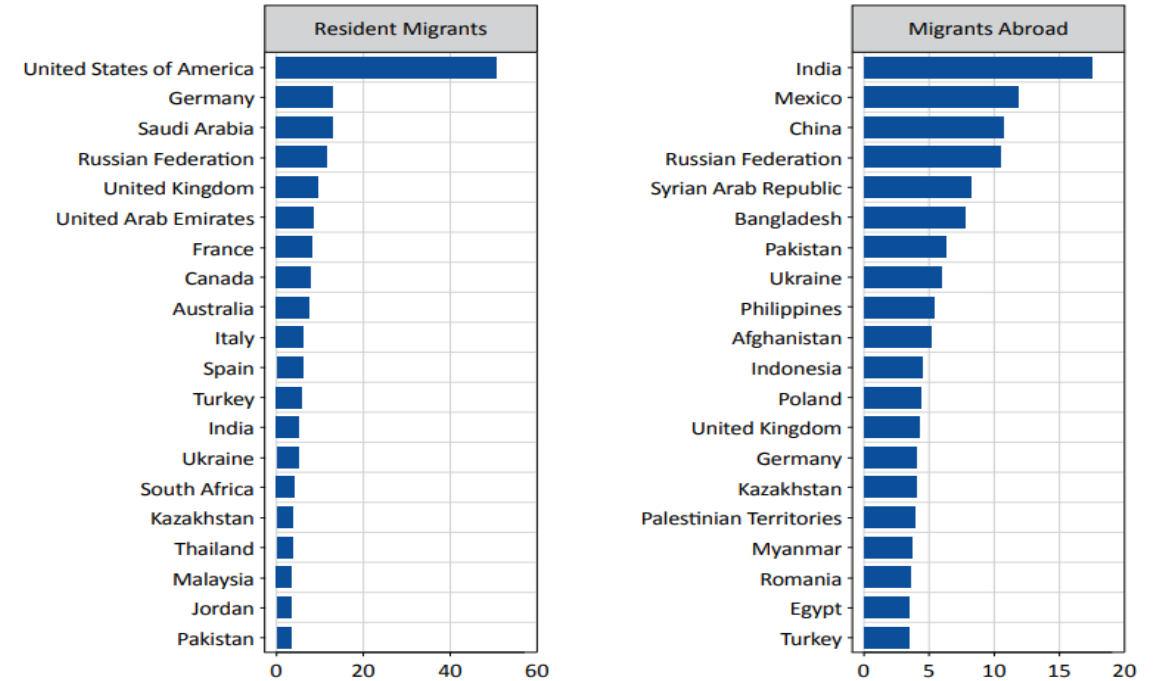
Three out of every four international migrants are of working age (20-64 years)



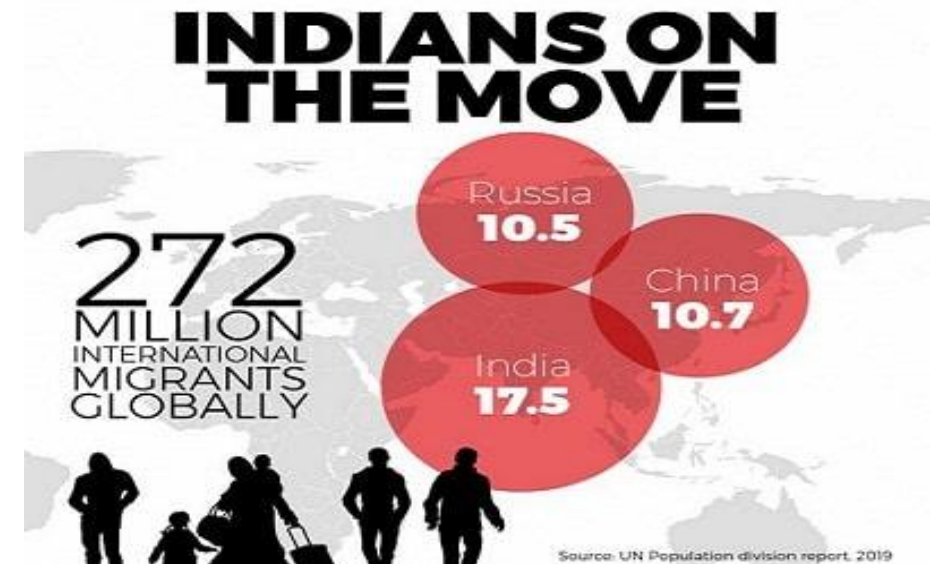
## ■ Size of Indian Diaspora

- As per IOM's latest, 'Global Migration Report 2020', the total number of international migrants in 2019 is estimated at 272 million.
- India continues to be the largest country of origin of international migrants with a 17.5 million-strong diaspora across the world.
- Migrants from Mexico constituted the second largest "diaspora" (12 million), followed by China (11 million), the Russian Federation (10 million) and the Syrian Arab Republic (8 million).
- India also received the highest remittance of \$78.6 billion from Indians living abroad.

Figure 3. Top 20 destinations (left) and origins (right) of international migrants in 2019 (millions)



Source: UN DESA, 2019a (accessed 18 September 2019).



## ▪ **Indian Diaspora as Soft Power**

- Diaspora is now considered to be a vehicle for disseminating soft power prerogatives on the world.
- They have not only become an important non-state actor of the diplomatic channel but also are able to shape and influence its outcome.
- The basis of India's soft power is clearly visible in terms of culture, language, skills, Bollywood, food, yoga, its democratic character, neutrality, and non-interference.

## ▪ **Government Initiatives**

- Government's initiatives towards the diaspora are two-pronged.
- Firstly, non-residents are provided with consular services, protection and outreach activities.
- At the same time, policies are created to encourage the diaspora to contribute in India's growth through philanthropy, knowledge transfers, and investments in development projects.



## ▪ **Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana**

- There is a MOU between the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) for implementation of the Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PKVY).
- The objective of the Scheme is to institutionalize the process of skill development of emigrant Indian workers.



- Indian Government has also launched Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC) under which 100 scholarships per annum are granted to Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) and Non Resident Indians (NRI) students for undergraduate courses.
- Know India Program' (KIP) is a flagship initiative for Diaspora engagement which familiarizes Indian-origin youth (18-30 years) with their Indian roots and contemporary India.

- Under Minimum Referral Wages (MRW), applicable to Emigration Check Required (ECR) countries, India has increased the minimum wages of Indian workers employed as industrial workers, domestic servants, cleaners and labourers.
- E-migrate system requires all foreign employers to register in the database. It ensures the welfare and check on exploitation met to emigrants.

- Indian government has also started *Madad Portal* to take timely and speedy action on grievances addressed by people living abroad.
- In words of our prime minister, Indian diaspora are our '*Rashtradoots*'. He addressed Indian diaspora in different parts of the world from Madison Square, New York to Kigali, Rawanda.

- GoI has given several incentives to NRIs for investing their funds in India. They are exempt from several taxes and other charges. NRI seats are reserved in all the medical, engineering and other professional colleges.
- The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill 2017 the provision would help non-resident Indians (NRIs) to participate in the electoral process. It extends the facility of 'proxy voting' to overseas Indians, on the lines of service voters.

# **Government Policies Engaging Diaspora**

## **1- Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD)**

- celebrated every year on 9<sup>th</sup> January since 2003 to recognize the contribution of Overseas India Community in the development of country.
- During this event, Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Awards are given to honor the overseas Indians.

## 2- Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF)

it was set up in 2009 with the objective of helping Indian diaspora at the time of emergency due to natural disaster or any conflicting situation.

Three major areas—

- Assisting Indian Diaspora in distress situation
- Support for Community welfare programs / activities-
- Improvement in consular services

## **3-India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDF-OI)**

- This trust started by government in 2008 to engage diaspora in philanthropy and facilitate India's social and developmental efforts.
- IDF has collected about 88 projects from 15 states.
- On 31<sup>st</sup> July 2016, an online payment gateway was started by Ministry



## **4-Scholarship Program for Diaspora Children**

- Initiated in 2006-07 to promote India as a center of higher education.
- PIOs and NRIs can get higher education in India with a scholarship of up to US \$4000 per annum

## **5-Global Indian Network of Knowledge (GLOBAL-INK)**

- An electronic portal for knowledge collaboration with the objective of leveraging the expertise, knowledge and skills of overseas Indians, scientist, physicist, environmentalist and technologist from all over the world.

## ▪ **Economic Benefits of Migration**

- Manpower Migration from India is not only helping to reduce the situation of unemployment but also earn foreign exchange.
- This migration has also reduced poverty and brought prosperity in migrating regions.
- The Gulf money has also improved the income level of the migrants households considerably.

## ▪ **Social Benefits of Migration**

- Migrants projecting India's image abroad in the right perspective.
- A visible change in their attitude towards education is witnessed.
- Social mobility in migrants families.
- A family which was looked down in the past is now welcomed in the social functions.
- A poverty stricken and desolated villages are suddenly becoming prosperous.
- A sizeable proportion of houseless population is now having own houses.

## ▪ **Diaspora's Expectations from India**

- Diasporic Indians expect that they could make use of India's good offices to solve its problems.
- The Indian diaspora would like to see the homeland politically empowered and it fights against racial discrimination against Indians abroad.
- GoI should help in ensuring safety and security for the diaspora.
- Indian Diaspora would like to access to huge Indian market/India as investment destination.

- Diasporic Indians would like to avail facilities such as OCI, seats at university in India.
- Diasporic Indians anticipate emotional support, rooting, sense of belongingness from the homeland.
- They would like to access to inexpensive labor in India
- GoI should play a proactive role in solving the problems of immigration, visa, etc.

## ▪ **Expectations from Diaspora**

- India expects that diasporic citizens play bigger voice in the diasporic world
- Diasporic citizens should extend possible support for United Nations Security Council(UNSC) seat for India.
- India would like to access to talent, high technology, defense equipment, investments through diasporic citizens.
- It expects to access the commercial bases in the overseas.
- India would like to spread soft power, i.e., Bollywood, Indian cuisine in the overseas.

- India expects friendly alliances from the diasporic Indians (e.g. Mauritius)
- Diasporic Indians should play a greater role in spreading Indian language, arts in the overseas and diasporic Indians also send remittances.
- India seek the diasporic Indians help in stopping deals with other inimical countries.
- India expects knowledge pool & cultural influence with diaspora.
- Diasporic Indians should cooperate with the homeland to contain terrorism, fundamentalism economic offenses through networking.
- Diasporic Indians should cooperate in improving Maritime & strategic interests of India.



## ▪ **Emerging Issues and Challenges**

- Outside India
- Rising incidence of hate speech and crimes against Indian Diaspora by the locals due to racism, communalism emboldened by coming of nationalist and ultra nationalist governments to power in many countries.
- Increasing anti-globalization: Fear of losing jobs and educational opportunities to outsiders has resulted in stricter visa rules in many countries including USA, Australia etc.

- Sectarian crisis, increasing terrorist activities and war in the Middle East countries (Yemen, Oman, Libya, Syria etc) leave our diaspora vulnerable to attacks.
- Adverse local laws to encourage more employment from locals such as Nitaqat Law of Saudi Arabia (mandates one local to be hired in place of 10 migrants) has adversely affected prospects of the Indian working class in Saudi Arabia.

## ▪ **Within India**

- Out-migration results in substantial drop in the supply of professionals for running institutions and organisations in India.
- Remittances are not always used for beneficial purposes. For instance, India faced problems due to foreign funding for extremist movements like the Khalistan movement.
- The NRIs are not allowed to set up their firms directly in India due to which India is not able to take the advantage of their entrepreneurial skills.

## • **Way Forward**

- India should formalise a rotation program wherein top NRI scientists, engineers, doctors, managers and professionals serve Indian public sector organizations for a brief period, lending their expertise, similar to VAJRA Scheme.
- India should aggressively court NRIs to invest in India — especially for projects which focus on rural development — by offering attractive interest rates on deposits.
- India can open a separate Minister-of-State level department for NRI administration- similar to the Veterans' Administration in the US.

- With this I come to an end of the session on Diaspora, Governance and Development and leave you with few questions which you will find easy.
- Thanks for watching the video.

## ▪ Quiz Question

**1. According to place of birth of migrants, which country is the lead country of origin in international migration?**

- a. India
- b. Mexico
- c. China
- d. The Russian Federation
- e. The Syrian Arab Republic

**2. Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) was set up for-**

- a. Assisting Indian Diaspora in distress situation
- b. Support for Community welfare programs / activities-
- c. Improvement in consular services-
- d. All of them

**3. As per latest IOMs report, which country is one among the top destination for migration in the world?**

- a. Europe
- b. North America
- c. China
- d. United Arab Emirates

# Readings

- Chikanda, Abel, Crush, Jonathan, Walton-Roberts, Margaret (Eds.) (2016), *Diasporas, Development and Governance*. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Sahoo, Sadananda and B.K. Pattanaik (eds) (2014), *Global Diasporas and Development: Socioeconomic, Cultural, and Policy Perspectives*, New Delhi: Springer.
- World Migration Report 2020.





**Thank you**