# Covid-19: Impact of the global crisis on Asian migrant workers and their families

**A survey-based Analysis with a gender perspective**

## Foreword

International migration and remittance have increasingly become more significant due to the effects of globalization, global economic and demographic imbalances and climate change. Remittances to developing countries constitute the second largest source of foreign exchange income and are also the most stable of all financial flows. This money is vital for local communities and economies. The disruption caused by coronavirus could have a significant impact on these remittance flows. As the coronavirus pandemic hits job and wages in many sectors of the global economy that depend on migrants a slowdown in the amount of money these workers send back to home their families looks increasingly likely. These international remittances will be crucial in transmitting the unfolding economy crisis in richer countries to poorer countries they will fundamentally shape how , and the pace at which , the world recovers from coronavirus. Remittances shelter a large number of poor and vulnerable household underpinning the survival strategies of over I billion people in 2019,and estimated 200 million people in the global migrant workforce sent home US$551 billion supported up to 800 million households living in low and middle income countries.

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| WHO | world health organization |
| GDP | gross domestic product |
| UNICEF | united nation international children education fund |
| HIV | human immunity virus |
| PHC | primary health care |
| CHC | community health center |
| GNP | gross national product |
| ILO | International labor organization |
| IOM | International organization for migrants |
| MSP | Minimum support price |
| APC | Agriculture price commission |
| SAG | significantly affected group |
| ASHA | Accredited social health activists |
| PFA | prevention of food adulteration |
| CDP | community development program |

# Executive summary

The study found that the effects of the crisis differ across countries and sectors among other factors, and that the impact could adversely affect economic growth and poverty reduction in the sending countries. The effects are also influenced by migrants characteristics such as countries of origin and destination levels of education occupation and length of stay abroad .how did a health crisis to translate to an economic crisis? why did the spread the coronavirus bring the global economy to its knees? The answer lie in two method by which coronavirus stifled economic activities .first the spread of the virus encouraged social distancing which led to the shutdown of financial markets corporate offices business and events. Second the exponential rate at which the virus was spreading and the heightened uncertainty about how bad the situation could get led to fight to safety in consumption and investments among consumer's investors and international red partners. We focus on the period from the start of the 2020 through March when the corona virus began spreading into other countries and markets. We draw on real world observation in assessing the restrictive measures monetary policy measures international travel restrictions severely affected the level of economic activities and the closing, opening lowest and highest stock price of major stock market indices. Higher fiscal policy spending had a positive impact on the level of economic avtivities.

**Keywords-**covid-19, corona virus, sars-cov-2, outbreak, social distancing, pandemic, financial crisis, global recession, public health, spillovers, monetary policy, fiscal policy, liquidity provision, central banks.

# Introduction

## 1.1 Background

In 2019, there was anxiety about the impact of a Us-china trade war , the us presidential elections and Brexit on the world economy . on account of these the IMF had predicted moderated global growth of 3.4% but COVID-19 the diseases caused by SARS-COV-2 a novel strain of coronavirus from the SARS species changed the outlook unexpectedly due to fear and uncertainty and to national assessment that firms profit are likely to be lower due the impact of COVID -19 global stock market erased US$6 trillion in wealth in one week from 24th to 28th February . the s and p 500 index lost over $5 trillion in value in the same week in the us while the s and p 500 largest 10 companies experienced a combined loss of over $1.4 trillion although some these were recovered in the subsequent week. Some of the loss of value was due to rational assessment by investors that firms profits would decline due to impact of the coronavirus .

The international air Transportation stated that the air travel industry would lose US$113 billion if the covid-19 outbreak was not quickly contained. The IMF downgraded its growth projection for the global economy as the covid-19 outbreak threw its earlier projection into serious doubt. The tourism industry was affected as the travel opportunity for Chinese tourists who usually spend billions annually, were severely curtailed. there were increased flight cancellations , cancelled local and international events worth over $200billion. The flow of goods through global supply chain vastly reduced significantly given that china was the world largest manufacture and exporter. And the Chinese government ordered the closure of major factories in the country. Countries like Iran, Italy and fiancé issued stay at home national wide policies to control the spread of virus , which had already caused multiple deaths and was putting pressure on the national public healthcare infrastructure . Such stay at home policies planted the seeds of recession in developed countries and there was a general consensus among economist that the coronavirus pandemic would plunged the world into a global recession . the international monetary fund in march stated that it expected a global recession that be a least as the bad as the 2007-08 global financial crisis followed by a recovery in 2021. In this paper how the coronavirus outbreak led to spillovers into major sectors of the global economy, and how fast policy response by several governments either triggered and prolonged the recession while trying to save the lives of citizens . we also investigate the effect of social distancing policies on the level of economic activities and stock index prices.

The discussions in this paper contribute to the financial crisis literature. this paper contributes to the literature by showing that non financial factors and or non economic factors can trigger both a financial and economic meltdown in unprecedented ways. The implication for financial stability is that future stress testing of the resilience of the financial system should take into account human health factors as an important element in their stress testing exercise.

## 1.2 Objectives and structure of the report

The result of the first study brought of the need to systematically analyze the impacts of the crisis from a gender perspective to this end the second study examined how men and women migrant workers and their household members were affected differently by the crisis. The main objective of this study are to examine the impact of the crisis on migrants worker and their families by using all available information including from the 2010 and 2012 surveys and by considering the gender dimension explicitly in particular the study seeks to achieve the following

- Examine the dynamics of the impact of the crisis on migrant workers and migrants households by looking at the gender dimensions. it compares the impact 1 year after the crisis with the impact after 3 years , looking at how men and women workers and households members the experience the impact.
- analyze the impact of the crisis on migrants worker and households with emphasis on gender differences. the affected factor include remittance behavior. earnings working conditions return migration and intention to migrate the study further examine the impacts of the crisis on migrants households in the home country covering income expenditure saving investment and also intention to migrate.
- Identify the coping mechanism adopted by migrant workers and households in facing the crisis using a gender lens. the coping mechanism is different kind of adjust of living conditions and expenditure by migrants workers and family memmbers.
- how have the crisis and countinuing recession affected migrants workers earning working condition returning and intention to migrate .amd how havwe the impact been different for men and women. in particular how have the crisis and continuing recession affected remittances and are three gender differences related differences in the remittances behavior.
- What are differences between the immediate and longer term impacts. ? have the impact changed in the second period ?
- How have men and women migrants' worker and their families coped with the impacts?
- What kind of assistance did the receive to cope with the impacts?

the chapter also incorporates results of focus group and roundtable discussions with there main group in two counties the head and member of migrants households returning migrants and key informants'. the discussion were conducted to complement and substainate the information obtained from the households surveys. especially on gender related issues therefore the chapter highlights the difference in opinion and perceptions relate to gender and migration which can shed light on roles attitudes behavior and values concerning men and women migrants worker and migrants hiuseholds memebers.provides reflections on policy response of home and host governments in relation to more gender responsive labor migration policies. the chapter emphasizes that policy response should address all stages of the migration process, take account of the factors behind the particularly vulnerability of women migrant workers to discrimination exploitation and abuse and weigh short term response to the crisis against the longer that the impact of the crisis has been uneven across countries and group of migrants to specific country and gender related circumstances.

# 2. Impact of the crisis on migrant's workers and their families

as the covid-19 pandemic continues to have widespread impact on workforces globally immigrants workers are among those bearing thr brunt of the crisis. human rights group and construction associations have warned that migrants workers are disproportinately at risk form the impact of the pandemic due to inadequate and crowed living conditions lockdown and harsh containment.meausers limited to access to healthcare and basic services , poor working conditions and explotative labour system. this section will features the latest news on the impact if the covid-19 outbreak in relation to migrant workers.

## 2.1 Impact on Economic Growth

while there is no way to tell exactly what the economic damage from the global covid 19 novel corona virus pandemic will be . There are widespread agreements among economists that it will have severe negative impact on the global economy. early estimates predicated that should the virus become a global pandemic ,most major economics will lose at least 2.4% of the value their gross domestic product over 2020. leading economists to already reduce their 2020 forecasts of global economic growth down from around 3.0 percent to 2.4 percent to put this number in perspective global gdp was estimated at around 86.6 trillion us dollars in lost economic output. However these predictions were made prior to covid-19 becoming a gloal pandemic. the economic they operate that are not consumers to purchase the goods and service available i global economy. this dynamic can be clearly seen in heavily affected such as a travel industry and tourism. to slow the spread of the virus countries placed restrictions on travel meaning that many people cannot purchase flights for holidays or business trips. this reduction is consumer demand causes airlines to lose planned revenue meaning they then need to cut their expenses by reducing the number the flights they operate . Without governed assistance airlines will also need to reduce to lay off staff to further cut posts. the same dynamic applies to another industry for example with falling demand for oil and new cars as daily commutes social events and holidays are no longer possible. as combines start cutting staff to make up for last revenue. the worry is that this will a create a downward economic spiral when these newly unemployed workers can no longer afford to purchase unaffected goods and services. to use an examle in increase un employment will compound the reduction in sales that occurred from thr closure of shop fronts

## 2.2 Impact on domestic labor market

te track of employment creation has not been very impressive at least since the 2000s . Economic growth has not been able to deliver jobs. for example in 2000 the gdp growth had risen to 7 percent but employment growth decreased to less than 1 percent . Additionally between 2012 and 2018. India lost 6.1 million jobs the 6.1% rise in unemployment to 45 year old high hit the headlines just before the 2019 general elections. the corona virus pandemic comes as huge shock to the labour market in India denting the employment scenario and threatening the survival of millions of worker and their families. According to the latest survey of the center for monitoring Indian economy the overall rate unemployment has increased from 8.4% to 23.8% in the week ending 29 march. in absolute terms the number of unemployed people has risen from 32 million. the corresponding figures for urban and rural area 30 percent and 21 percent. If we consider the occupational structure, we find that around 40 million urban informal workers are committed in ten highly susceptible occupations including small shops salespersons laborers in construction, manufacturing and transport domestic helpers housekeeping painter's street vendor's garbage collectors restaurant servic workers. and market and stall salespersons. These workers are worse hit during the lockdown and consequently their families. we gate a sense of the magnitude of the cisis by looking at the shame of formal and informal employment. going by the data released in the periodic labour force survey of 2017-18 more than 90 percent of the workers are from the informal sectors. Only less than 10 percent are workers from the formal sector who can switch to work from home mode in this pandemic. for most informal workers its a daily hand to mouth existence. These workers have little to no saving to eke out a living through a prolong lockdown. Lack of job security paid leave or job contact makes them vulnerable to vagaries of the labour market. The informal sector leads to a state of destitution hunger starvation and even death if not protected with an immediate social safety net. Migrant's workers make up a major part of the part of employment force in India in the unorganized sector. it is difficult to estimate thr total number if migrants worker in India.

## 2.3 Impact on remittances

the novel corona virus punched the entire world economy. Each sector is fighting a battle of survival from thid deadly virus. People can't travel so the money. in a recent report world bank has projected that remittances are expected to fall by approx 23 per cent in 2020 to $64 billion in India. According to world travel and tourism council the covid19 pandemic could slash 50 million jobs worldwide in the travel and tourism industry reflecting a 12-14% reduction in job. International travel could be adversely impact by up to 25% this year equivalent to a loss three months of travelling 2019 total remittances around the globe was $573 billion. indie was the top recipient of remittance at the same time with $83 billion that is approx 12-14% of the world total remittance. as per world bank report on remittance it is projected that this year India will receive $64 billion and face a loss of $19 billion which is a huge amount. in india remittance plays a crucial role in economy. Every year a huge part of Indian population migrate to some other country for employment and their money transfers contribute in indian economy. According to a recent report by the World Bank, global remittances are projected to face a sharp fall about 20 per cent due to the economic crisis due to novel coronavirus lockdown. it is said that the projected fall is because of a decline in the wages and employment of migrants workers. World bank said,, the economic crisis induced by covid-19 could be long deep and pervasive when viewed through a migration lens. lockdown travel bans ansd social distancing have brought global economic activities to a near standstil.host countries face additional challenges in many sectors such as health and agriculture that depend on the availability of migrants worker. Migrants face the risk of contagion and also the possible loss of employment wages and health insurance coverage .this migration and development brief provides a prognosis of how this event might affect global trends in international economic migration and remittances in 2020 and 2021.

# 3 Global spillover

## 2.4 spillovers to the travel industry

The corona virus outbreak let the governments of many countries to impose restrictions on non essential travel to countries affected by covid-19 , indefinitely suspending tourism travel work visas and immigrant visas. Some countries placed a complete travel ban of inward or outward travel shutting down all airports in the country. at the height of the corona virus pandemic most airplanes flew almost empty due to mass passenger i the demand for all forms of travel which forced some airlines to temporarily suspended operations such as baltic,lot polish airlines, la compatible and Scandinavian airlines. such travel restrictions cost the tourism industry alone a loss oo over $200 billion globally excluding other loss of revenue for tourism travel and were forecast to cost the aviation industry a total loss of $113 billion according to iata.

## 2.5 spillovers to the hospitality industry

Restaurant businesses have been affected the pandemic mainly through the government announced stay at home policy and social distancing movement restriction imposed by the government in many countries. this led to rapid shutdowns in cities and states to control the spread of the coronavirus which threw many restaurants and hotel across the country into sudden shock. Hotels across the country into sudden shock hotels across the world witnessed booking cancellations worth billions of dollars and the hotel industry sought a $150bn bailout. Restaurant executives criticized the government for imposing the stay at home and social distancing policy which destroyed many small restaurant and pub business in small cities. They argued that governments announcements of stay at home policies or social distancing policies was an indirect way of telling people not come to the pubs hotel and restaurants which was way of silently destroyed the hospitality industry the pandemic. multiple hotel in the us uk and in some euro pen countries announced the temporary suspension of normal operations which puts the estimated lord of job to 24.3 million globally and 3.9 million the us alone due to the decline in hotel occupancy during the pandemic period.

## 2.6 spillovers to the sports industry

The sports industry was severely affected during the coronavirus outbreak. in the football segment major european football leagues in England Scotland announced thr immediate suspension of football matches for 6 weeks until 30th april. the turkish super league was the last major european league to suspend its match. in formula one the Monaco grams prix as cancelled. the Tokyo summer Olympic and Paralympics games were also postponed. in the hockey segment the 2020 hockey games in England was postponed. in rugby games the pro14 final scheduled foe 2th to 3rd and 16th to 17th may were postponed. the major league rugby was canclled for the remainder of the 2020 season. in the baseball segment all major baseball league season games were called off in México and Puerto rico.in the snooker segment , the world snooker championship to be held in Sheffield from 18th april to 4th may. was postponed in the swimming segment the 2020 european aquatics championship scheduled for 11th to 24th in hungry was postponed untill august/ in the golf segment the lpga tour was rescheduled for 1oth to 13th september 2020.

## 2.7 spillovers to the oil- dependent countries

Early in 2020 the price of oil fell due to the oil price war between Russia and saudi Arabia. the coronavirus pandemic worsened the situation through the reduction in the demand for oil. the imposed travel restrictions during the pandemic which led to reduction in the movement of people and goods resulted in a fall in demand for aviation fuel coal and other energy products which subsequently led to a fall in oil price due to low demand. the corona virus crisis also affected a widge range of energy markets such as the coal gas and renewable energy markets but its impact on oil markets was more severe because it stopped the movement of people and goods, which led to a drastic decline in the demand for transport fuels. When saudi Arabia later supplied excess oil to the world the market was flooded with too much oil, exceeding demand during thr covid-19 pandemic and subsequently leading to a fall in oil price. the effect of the pandemic on oil dependent countries was severe. the global decline in oil price combined with the low demand for oil products in the international market led to a significant shortfall in oil revenue to oil dependent countries . Which increases current account deficits and worsened the balance of payment position of many oil dependent countries such as Venezuela Angola and Nigeria? these countries also faced increasing pressure on their foreign exchange reserves which subsequently led to the devaluation of local currencies against the dollar. Countries like kenya Nigeria and south africa experienced a reduction in the price of petrol in the local gas stations. Natioanl budgets were also affected. the sustained decline in global oil price due to the covid-19 pandemic meant that the current natioanl budge.

## 2.8 spillovers to the financial sector: Bank and fetch

the macroeconomic slowdown led to a rise in nonperforming loans in the banking sector by 250 basis points. private sector bamks had the highest exposure to credit risk during the outbreak nonperforming loans arose from loans issued to small and medium sacle enterprises airlines hotels tour operators restaurants retail construction and real estate business . during the pandemic there was a general decline in the volume of bank transactions a deadline in card payments and a fall in the use of atm cash machines worldwide . this led to fewer fees collected by banks which negatively affected banks profit fin tech business were also affected. some fin tech business witnessed very low patronage by consumers leading to loss of revenue and profits which negatively affected the equity investment of venture capitalists that existing and new fetch firms. this amde many venture capitalists begin to hoard new equity which led to the drying up of financing for some fetch business. on the other hand the lockdown due to the coronavirus outbreak resulted in higher demand for sorts of online services such as online shopping.

## 2.9 spillovers to the health sector

in many countries the services of public hospitals grew in high demand but the majority of thr testing equipment were in private hospitals. China temporarily closed all hospital in the central city of Wuhan the epicenter of a coronavirus outbreak. Irons hospital struggled to cope with the coronavirus outbreak. in Spain the Spanish government nationalized all private hospitals and healthcare providers as the virus was spreading very rapidly. Singapore had sufficient healthcare facilities and workers to cope with the growing number of covid-19 patients.

# 4. Reflection on gender –responsive policies for migrant worker

## 3.1 Response to the crisis: destination country government………

The major countries of destination of Indonesian and Filipino labor migrants responded to the crisis with changes in attitude towards the use of foreign labor. Faced with economic slowdown and reduced overall labour demand they tightened their general immigration policies introduced policies to encourage return to countries of origin discouraged overseas recruitment and intensified efforts to curb irregular migration. Some countries seized the opportunity brought about by the crisis to make policy changes that they had already long been considering , while others implemented measures at short term adjustment to their circumstance . the Singapore government urged companies to avoid layoff by finding means to cut costs but in case of unavoidable retrenchment to lay off foreigners first.

## 3.2 Response to the crisis: origin country governments: origin country governments

The policy responses of the government of Indonesia and the Philippines to the crisis can be distinguished in terms of the macroeconomic policies intended to stimulate the economy the social protection policies to assist those most affected by the crisis and the labor migration policies to specifically target migrant's workers. The bulk of macroeconomic and social protection policies lacked gender responsive in that they did not specifically take into account the differential impact of the crisis on women and men and did not target by sex those most seriously affected and vulnerable . the labor migration policies to respond to the crisis have essentially been of three types countries of origin such as Indonesia and the Philippines stepped up protection of the rights of their migrants workers , including measures to prevent discrimination.

## 3.3 Gender –responsive labor migration policies:

The gender –responsive labor migration policies described below aim not only to address the impact of the global crisis but also to promote longer term effective management of labor migration for the benefit of both men and women migrants worker their families and the sending and receiving countries.

Gender responsive labor migration policies must take account of at least three key sets of considerations.

- Women migrant workers are at greater risk of discrimination, exploration and abuse than their male counterparts.
- Vulnerabilities at every stage of the migration process should be addressed
- The aim should be to create win win situations that maximize the benefits and minimize the negative impact of migration on countries of origin and destination and on the migrants themselves and their families.
- Mainstream gender equality considerations throughout and seek to change traditional gender norms in both sending and receiving countries

# 5 Fast policies response: issues

## 3.4 A difficult decision

Policy makers in government and central banks were faced with two majors decisions , which is to save the people before saving the economy or save the economy before saving the people one choice had to be made because it was difficult to achieve both at the same time . you can not save the people and the economy at the same time because to save the people during the outbreak you have to tell them to stay at home in order to control the spread of coronavirus which means economic activities will have to stop or reduce significantly which will trigger an economic slowdown. Policy makers in many countries felt it was better to save the people before saving the economy and as a result the economy was allowed to suffer in some countries.

## 3.5 contradictory and conflicting policy responses

During the coronavirus pandemic , many of the fast policy response were insufficient even though the policies were formulated with good intentions. Monetary policy for instance helped to claim financial markets but it did not stop the recession .central bank responded to the coronavirus outbreak by changing monetary policies variables such as lowering interest rates and increasing money supply to crucial sectors of the economy but monetary policy alone could not induce demand when there was a general flight to safety among consumers and investors not many people were buying anything or making new investment . it became clear to many economists that monetary policy is not a vaccine , it cannot cure a recession. The expansionary monetary policies adopted in many countries during the outbreak encouraged economic activities but economic agent were unable to engage in economic activities because governments had imposed social distancing restrictions amid fear of contacting the coronavirus during the outbreak.

### 3.6 using broad fiscal expenditure and sector priority

Some countries used a broad federal fiscal stimulus package to mitigate the effect of covid-19 on the economy during the outbreak. Determining which sector will receive part of the stimulus package and which sectors will not receive the stimulus package became a political issues in some countries like the uk and us as it stirred up debates as to whether the government considered the entertainment sector ,responsibility sector and the circular economy to be less important and significant to the economy and ineligible to receive some funding from the federal stimulus package compared to banking sector , manufacture education pharmaceutical and the aviation sectors which were considered to be significant contributors to the economy. Some members of excluded sectors protested because they felt that the government did not consider other sectors as significant contributors to the economy.

# 6. Conclusion and policy implication:

We analyzed the coronavirus outbreak and the spillover to the global economy which triggered the global recession in 2020. Policy makers in many countries were under pressure to respond to the coronavirus outbreak, as a result many governments made fast policy decisions that had for reaching positive and negative effects on their respective economy many countries plunged into a recession social distancing policy and lockdown restrictions were imposed many countries, and there have been argument that such social policies can trigger a recession. our findings in section 5 showed that a 30 day social distancing policy or lockdown restrictions hurts the economy through a reduction in the level of general economic activities and through its negative effect on stock prices. Law makers in many countries experienced was a reflection of the difficult choice that policy makers had to make in choosing whether to save the economy before saving the people or to save the people before saving the economy many countries choose the latter. There were criticism that the police were too fast premature or insufficient and that the policies contradicted one another in some area foe instance the accommodative monetary policy encouraged economic agents to engage in economic activities from taking place. On the bright side the coronavirus –induced public health crisis created an opportunity to fix the economic system and the financial system with the planned federal stimulus package.

Our study has some limitations. The main limitations of this research paper are the short period of analysis due to limited dataset. A longer study period may capture the socioeconomic consequences of governments' policies during the corona virus crisis. Also as future events studies on spillovers could be extended to two directions. First future studies can examine the impact on government policy on the informal economy. Second it would important to explore how bank and financial institutions react to economic policy developments during the coronavirus crisis.

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