

Social Protection for Those Who Are Left Behind as a Result of Migration: Myanmar Case Study and Proposed Recommendations for Consideration

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Abstract

With awareness of important roles of migration and its impacts, the objective of this article is to propose recommendations and considerations on social protection for migrants' families left behind taking Myanmar as a case study. Social protection plays critical roles in sustaining the living standards of families in the sending community while migration also brings economic and social risks to them. The article presents the migration situation, risks to families left behind, and social protection system which would be designed to reduce risks associated with migration to ensure quality migration which is beneficial to families left behind, and importantly in line with ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Vision 2025 in which the development and support of the social protection system in respond to vulnerability of economic and population at risk are focused. The ultimate goal is that migration or labour mobility in the ASEAN community would yield positive socioeconomic effects to the ASEAN community at all levels.

Keywords: Social protection, Migration, Families in the home community

Introduction

Migration has economic and social effects on families and communities left behind. Although remittances received by migrant families in the home community can help improve the overall living standard as they can also make use of the money to create other income-generating activities, migration may cause some risks to families and society in the home

community such as family relationships and economic and social ways of life of those who are left behind (Merkova, 2010; Ratha, Mohapatha & Scheja, 2011; Thein, 2017).

Studies on domestic and international migration reveal that economic factors play a major role, including poverty and limited employment opportunity in countries of origin as well as higher income in countries of destination (Testaverde, Moroz, Claire & Schmillen, 2017; The International Organization for Migration (IOM) & The Asian Research Center for Migration, 2013; The World Bank Myanmar, 2016). Important push factors in countries of origin are poverty of various types, limited opportunity, lower work compensation, not to mention other such risk factors as natural disasters and war. Thus, migration is a result of the desire to seek better opportunity and life elsewhere.

Of the migrant workers from various ASEAN countries in Thailand, most come from the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Kingdom of Cambodia, and Lao People’s Democratic Republic. A number of factors account for the current migration situation, ranging from their shared border with Thailand, the length of the border, domestic push factors and Thailand’s pull factors. Other support factors include the strength of worker networks in Thailand and less stringent law enforcement, thus making it easier for workers to cross over the border and live in Thailand with relative ease (Carden, 2014).

Table 1 Foreign worker statistics (all categories) (unit: person)

Year	Myanmar	Cambodian	Lao
2011	1,078,767	124,761	110,854
2013	717,167	95,472	34,491
2015	854,756	95,357	39,261
2016	934,271	258,460	105,603

Source: Foreign Workers Administration Office, Department of Employment

Most studies on migration impacts focus on destination countries rather than home community. They place greater value to the issue of remittances than to social impacts although in the social dimension the number of migrants has an impact on security. National identity and family security, especially in the case of circular migration, can give rise to family problems and weakening of social networks for migrants and their left-behind families. This is true, especially, for poor families whose members cannot accompany the migrants, while many households see the spouses, children and elderly left behind. Migrant parents play little or no role in child care, as this responsibility is transferred to other family members; in several instances, children have to take care of themselves. Such social costs cannot be made up by material or financial gains as a result of their leaving home for better employment. Despite greater advances in information technology that have made it possible to continue long-

distance relationships, these issues remain problematic social costs due to migration. In many cases, families in the home community undergo economic hardships if they receive no remittances or receive them on an irregular basis (Merkova, 2010; Sabates-Wheeler, 2003; Ratha, Mohapatha & Scheja, 2011, pp. 9-10).

As far as internal migration is concerned, the study by Seeley and Gardner (2007) on Bangladesh suggests that some of the significant impacts on the families in the home community can be seen in the lack of funding and lower standards of living as a result of the migration of the family heads. The study recommends that social protection measures be put in order to make it possible for the poor to maintain their standards of living. For instance, the measures could take the form of funding support to start a livelihood and access to the social welfare system. In the case of Myanmar, Ito (2015) finds that as a result of internal migration the rural population working age has lowered by 50%. In view of different opportunities for development, each area sees a different level of workforce loss, while experiencing social problems in a different way. Migration, spurred by economic necessities and supported by various social factors, invariably has social and economic impacts in the home community at family as well as community levels (Ito, 2015). Other studies on the effects of internal migration also reveal certain changes in the family structure. An unbalanced gender composition of either sex shows a greater propensity for migration and has an impact on community cohesion and children as well as on the elderly who are left behind. Problems concerning child behavior and education follow. All these factors deserve attention and measures to mitigate their impacts and should be part of the issue of international migration (May, 2015; The World Bank Myanmar, 2016).

For international migration, most studies on the impact focus on the remittance issue. A report published by the World Bank in 2011 states that for countries of origin remittances help to increase income and reduce poverty and improve education in general, thus most clearly reflecting the benefit of migration (Ratha, Mohapatha & Scheja, 2011). Evidently, most migrations arise from the desire to earn higher income and reduce poverty. Not only do such remittances affect the family and community, but they also play an important role in the GDP of the sending countries. For example, remittances feature as much as 10% in the case of the Philippines with its high migration level and 7.1% for Vietnam. The situation is no different for Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos. Yet, the sending of remittances is mostly done through informal channels, accounting for unclear-cut statistics. Even though the effects of migration are something of interest, there are still few studies on the subject in the countries of origin. Many observations have been made in recognition of the needs for more studies on the impacts of people left behind in the home community as opposed to interests in migrants in the destination community (Merkova, 2010).

Studies on the migration of Myanmar, Cambodian and Lao people to Thailand tend to focus on the country of destination, i.e. Thailand. The issues covered include the migration phenomenon, problems facing migrant workers, and calls for cooperation between sending and receiving countries to properly manage migration in such a way that it benefits both the countries of destination and migrants (Testaverde, Moroz, Claire & Schmillen, 2017). On the other hand, with regard to countries of origin, apart from the issue of remittances, there are few studies on households left behind and related social impacts, despite the fact that the reason for migration primarily lies in the country of origin and other internal contexts, including the role of the social protection system in providing basic necessities for the family in the home community before and after migration. Perhaps, the exception is Cambodia, as there are studies that attempt to explain the situation of the families left behind in the home community when their family members are left behind. There are all sorts of people who are left behind and who face risks at different levels, depending on their demographic profile and social status (Kingdom of Cambodia, Ministry of Planning, 2015).

In 2015 there were more than 3.5 million migrants, both legal and illegal, in Thailand. Of this number, 3 million were in the labor market, while 76% came from Myanmar. In other words, there were about 2.3 million people from Myanmar working in Thailand (The International Organization for Migration & The Asian Center Research for Migration, 2015, p. 1). According to the official statistics, the number of migrant workers was about 1.4 million, 70% of whom were Myanmar. The migration of unskilled and semi-skilled workers is expected to increase after the advent of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015. The International Labor Organization also expects to see more migration after 2015. In 2015 10% of the Myanmar population migrated to other countries to work (ILO, 2015, p.8). For Cambodian workers, studies conducted by USAID in 2016 indicate that limited employment opportunity, low wages and low education level of Cambodian labor prompted the workers to seek opportunity and migrate to Thailand (USAID, 2016). With regard to Laos, studies on the form of migration by Lao workers to Thailand in 2016 reveal that despite a clear increase of minimum wages in 2015 and despite the Lao government's intention to reduce poverty by half by the end of 2020 the tendency for them to migrate to Thailand for employment remains high (The International Organization for Migration & The Asian Center Research for Migration, 2016).

For Thailand, the Office of National Economic and Social Development Board estimates that the number of semi-skilled and unskilled workers that Thailand wants will increase to 3.6 million by 2021, while the demand for skilled workers will be much lower, i.e. 0.6 million (Chamratrithrong, Wathinee, Chamchan, Holomyong & Apipornchaisakul, 2012; NESDB, 2014, quoted in ILO, 2015).

The high number of workers of these three nationalities today and the trend in the future, coupled with Thailand's demand for workers, reflect how important it is to understand the context of the home community. This is especially true when it comes to the social protection system which directly and indirectly plays an important role in promoting migration. Such consideration will ease the impacts of migration on the families and the concerns of those in the receiving places, thus making migration go more smoothly.

This article proposes points for consideration on the role of social protection for those left behind as a result of migration. Importance is attached to social protection that supports the livelihoods of migrants' family members. The article covers a review of various theories of migration and studies of the subject, impacts of migration, approaches to social protection, and proposed measures of social protection of those left behind. The objective is to mitigate the impacts of migration, primarily using Myanmar as a case study due to the high percentage of labor migrants.

Migration and Studies on the Subject

A review of literature on migration shows that there are theories that have evolved as a result of attempts to account for the phenomenon. There are two levels of factors. In the first instance, attention is paid to determinants of migration and then to factors that support migration, i.e. the perpetuation of migration (Kurekova, 2011). These theories shed light on the situation in the home community leading to a decision to migrate. They, in short, can be called push and pull factors although this article will focus mainly on the situation in the home community.

Important approaches to determinants of migration are Neoclassical Theory of migration, Human Capital Theory, New Economics Theory of Migration, World System Theory, and Dual Labor Market Theory, while those accounting for perpetuation of migration are Network Theory and Migration Systems Theory.

In a nutshell, neoclassical theory explains migration in terms of economic considerations of benefits and costs based on differences in incomes between a sending country and a receiving country. The theory attaches importance to the analysis of migration at the macro- and micro-levels. From this develops Human Capital Theory that attempts to analyze the socio-demographic characteristics of migrants. For instance, older people are less likely to migrate than do their younger counterparts, and those with higher education levels are more likely to migrate than those less educated. Meanwhile, according to New Economics Theory, the decision to migrate is not made by an individual but by the household, while World System Theory and Dual Labor Market Theory provide a macro-picture related to the effects of globalization on creating demands for labor in the receiving locality. Labor demands depend on the production system, which could be capital-intensive

or labor-intensive, and this is linked to the dual nature of the labor market. Network Theory, on the other hand, argues that the factor that encourages migration is the existence of migrant networks. This theory explains the possibility of migration in spite of little differentials in wages between sending and receiving localities. Migration Systems Theory states that migration affects the sending and receiving ends, leading to the presence of “developmental spaces” in the sending and receiving areas. The development of all these theories reflects the importance and continuity of migration which can benefit both the countries of origin and destination if there is in place a management practice (Testaverde, Moroz, Claire, & Schmillen, 2017, p. 3).

The assumption of Migration Systems Theory leads to the consideration of the migratory movement in a more holistic manner, regarding the consequences both at the sending and receiving ends. It also embraces the issue from the developmental perspective. This theory is linked to policy-related studies on migration (Hickey, Narendra & Rainwater, 2013, pp. 7-8), which can be summarized into three groups:

The first group attaches importance to national migration policies, including laws, rules and regulations. The studies focus on migration management and administration.

The second group is concerned with migrants’ rights and treatment of migrants. Most studies focus on international migration and receiving countries. They attach importance to economic and social rights that migrants are entitled to.

The third group considers migration in a larger context, linking various development issues at international, regional, national and local levels, including such topics as internal population movements, community development, settlement, importance and role of remittances in relation to poverty reduction, provision of service and welfare for return migrants, diaspora management, and brain drain, as well as positive and negative effects on those “left behind” consisting mostly of children and the elderly.

In addition to the above considerations on migration from the development perspective, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has come up with various proposals in support of studies on the home community to ensure that the migration benefits the workers, their families, and countries of origin (Asia-Pacific RCM Thematic Working Group on International Migration including Human Trafficking, 2015).

With respect to the migration of Myanmar, Cambodian and Lao workers, there are studies along the line of the above-mentioned policy-related approach. In the case of Myanmar, a study prepared by the World Bank (The World Bank Myanmar, 2016, pp. 31-33) mentions causes of migration in three groups: 1) risk management to reduce poverty and

income uncertainty, 2) upward mobility with the expectation of higher earnings, better working conditions, and better way of life (often expressed by foreign migrant workers), and 3) unexpected fluctuation, such as political instability and natural disasters.

A study on Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand in 2013, based on the collection of data from 5,027 Myanmar workers in seven Thai provinces with the highest number of Myanmar workers (IOM & ACRM, 2013), had the following findings. Twenty-five percent of the people in the sample were unemployed prior to entering Thailand, 38.8% were employed on a daily basis in the agricultural and service sectors, and 40.2% were employed in other sectors. 32.4% were landed farmers, while 7.8% were self-employed. 64.3% of Myanmar migrant workers came from the rural areas. Interestingly, of all the samples, 59.8% said that there was nothing lacking in their life; in other words, it was adequate. 15.7% mentioned that they enjoyed a good or fairly good life. Only 23.9% said that life was not so good (IOM & ACRM, 2013, p. 9). The study also mentions that the migrants did not work near the border and therefore it was unlikely for them to bring family members with them. The finding shows that the home community encouraged migration, as the home economy had improved and the household enjoyed a better life.

Cambodian migrants are different. Their economic status is rather poor. Various studies clearly indicate that they want to move to work in Thailand. Those more likely to migrate are male workers, less than 25 years old, single, with financial problems or in debt. They tend to be hired hands in the farming sector and face a number of risks in their work (USAID, 2016). They also have little opportunity to improve their economic status in their country. In light of such poverty and limited employment opportunity, they are expected to continue to come to Thailand for work (Chaisuparakul, 2015).

Studies on Cambodian workers in Thailand indicate that the reason for their migration is not Thailand's pull factors but rather the push factor from home (IOM, 2010, p. 23). It is also found that in several instances the migrants did not regularly send remittances home. Such findings confirm the impacts of migration and the role of social protection on the life of their family in the home community.

In the Lao case, it is found that the majority of migrants are female, between 19 and 35 years old. More than 50% have primary education at the most. The numbers of those who are married and those who are single are more or less the same. More than half, i.e. 55.2%, have a family with 4-6 members, while the rest have more family members. Nearly one-fourth of the workers were unemployed before moving to Thailand. 41.9% are landed farmers, and 7.6% are hired farm hands. 7% are general hired hands on a daily basis. Most have a low income, the lowest monthly income being less than Kip 60,000 and the highest monthly income being more than Kip 1,800,000 or about Baht 255 to Baht 7,075. The main reasons

for migration are the desire for a higher income and inability to find employment (IOM & ARCM, 2016).

Studies on the impacts of migration on households in the home community deal with positive and negative aspects, e.g. May (2015); Ratha, Mohapatha and Scheja (2011); Sabastes-Wheeler and Waite (2003); and The World Bank Myanmar (2016). Besides this, there are also case studies on the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (Khan, Mahmood, Yasin & Shahbaz, 2010), Tajikistan (UNICEF, 2011), and Bangladesh (Seeley & Gardner, 2007) that confirm the importance of a social protection system being put in place to support the families left behind so that they can better manage risks due to migration. This is especially pertinent when the migrants play a significant role in the economy of the family. Studies on the impacts of migration in several countries reveal that apart from economic impacts of remittances not sent or sent irregularly there are other consequences to family relationships and to children. The consequences can be negative and positive. On the negative side, family ties weaken. Children show signs of deviant or aggressive behavior and do not want to stay in school, for they too want to move away. Women and children in some families find themselves in a vulnerable situation, as the heads of the family are far away. Some families face serious problems when no remittance was sent. Other heads of the family start a new family in the receiving community. On the positive side, it is found that children stay in school longer and family relationships are stronger, thanks to the role of the family social network (Ratha, Mohapatha & Scheja, 2011, pp. 9-10). This phenomenon reflects how important it is to pay attention to the life of the family members in the home community or left behind, as they are facing risks arising from migration. Such supports as funding, resources, or ability to generate income and manage resources, will ease the worry of the migrants and make life at the other end smoother. Thus, there is suggestion that care for those left behind will support the migrants in a significant way (Seeley & Gardner, 2007).

Social protection

On the whole, social protection is a form of welfare designed to manage socio-economic risks, to strengthen basic securities for vulnerable people and to free households from poverty. Social protection measures can take the form of money transfer and other in-kind assistantships or services to mitigate risks, reduce vulnerability, keep the family away from poverty traps and other socio-economic insecurities or from entering into poverty loops, or enable them to accumulate funds. In many cases, the social protection system does all these functions at the same time. The system also aims to manage risks or loss of life securities (possibly as a result of migration affecting income security). Generally speaking, the formal welfare system is organized by the State, consisting of social insurance and social assistance. In the latter case, it can take the form of money transfer to various target groups.

In several instances, civil society also has a role to play in creating the social protection system.

The literature review on social protection shows that under the concept of risk management, there are several definitions of “social protection”, depending on the mission of the agency concerned. Approaches to social protection by significant institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Labor Organization, are meant to sustain the quality of life of the people, especially the disadvantaged. As such, they attach importance to economic security and the role played by various sectors in social protection (Devereux & Sabastes-Wheeler, 2004, pp. 3-5).

The World Bank is one of the first agencies that proposed a social protection approach with the three strategies of risk prevention, mitigation and coping. These strategies are to be undertaken by the formal channel of the State (social policy), market (insurance in various forms), and informally by individuals, family, and community. They are designed to provide assistance for individuals, family and community in the management of risks and other types of insecurities, thus ensuring that households will enjoy consumption on a regular basis (Holzmann & Jørgensen, 2000; World Bank, 2001). Meanwhile, the International Labor Organization focuses on the living standard, employment, and representation of benefits, and human rights (Standing 1999, referenced in Unni, & Rani, 2003, p. 4). The security issues only touch upon economic aspects but do not consider such basic security issues as food, public health, education and housing (Unni & Rani, 2003, p. 5).

Another group of researchers, including Devereaux and Sabastes-Wheeler (2004), extends the perspective from types of service or assistance to initiatives to create what is known as “transformative social protection.” It consists of protection, prevention, promotion, and transformative elements. “Protection” aims to keep people away from any reduced standards of living through social assistance and social services. “Prevention” (operating like social safety nets) is provided through social insurance (including social security programs and pensions). “Promotion” is designed to raise the living standard and support mechanisms to cope with insecurity through such actions as enhancing incomes and livelihoods through microfinancing and school-lunch programs. “Transformative measures” refer to attempts to address social equity and exclusion, designed to support those who cannot get access to social protection measures or receive benefits from the existing social protection system. Inability to get access may be due to lack of awareness or social prejudices. Initiatives of this nature may take the form of social movements or legal measures (Narumol Nirathron, 2012). The social protection system may be considered in terms of types of measures or in terms of the objectives of the measures. The former often take the form of social insurance and social assistance, which include financial measures, social services, and other risk-coping

measures. The latter are more concerned with the functions of risk prevention, mitigation, coping and transformative elements (see Table below).

Table 2 Approaches to social protection

Social Risk Management		Transformative Social Protection
Before risks occur	Prevention: reduce risk opportunity for risk occurrence	Protection: relieve poverty or shortage, provide assistance to those who cannot help themselves. Tools: social assistance, social services
	Mitigation: reduce potential risk impacts.	Prevention: functions like social safety nets. Tools: social security, pensions
After risks occur	Coping: reduce risk impacts through short-term measures including immediate assistance, initiatives to sustain and upgrade consumption.	Protection: relieve poverty or shortage, provide assistance to those who cannot help themselves Tools: social assistance, social service
		Promotion: improve living standard and support other related mechanism Tools: social service, additional skills training, temporary employment, microfinancing, and others.
		Transformative: campaign for right protection, support group formation, legal measures

Source: Adapted from Narumol Nirathron (2012)

Based on various definitions of social protection above, social protection here refers to State and non-State measures to protect those vulnerable to potential economic and social risks and promotes access to essential services and economic opportunity. The objective is to reduce economic and social vulnerability of those who are left behind.

In this sense, social protection means measures related to the support of those in the home community or those left behind to sustain the consumption level or to reduce economic and social vulnerability. Its function is to transform the conditions that prevent the vulnerable from getting access to essential services. This definition is in line with the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection 2013. The declaration stresses the importance of the social protection system as a tool that guarantees a basic livelihood and encourages the States and the civil society sector to play a role in enhancing and supporting the social protection system. This is in line with the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 in which social protection is considered an important tool for the creation of an inclusive society under important changing situations like rising poverty, growth of migration in the ASEAN community and inability to get access to such essential social services as education and health care (Department of ASEAN Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016).

Social protection for those who are left behind: Myanmar case study and considerations

Families that are left behind face a lots of economic risks, e.g. potential loss of income when manpower is gone missing or when at the initial stage migrants are not in a position to send remittances to their families at home or send them on a regular basis (Ratha, Mohapatha & Scheja, 2011, p. 21). Social problems also follow: attitude/behavior of children and teenagers and burden of elderly care (Thein, 2017). In some instances, the socio-economic situations can be compounded, for example, when women left behind encounter limited access to credit service or vocational training as a result of gender prejudice (Seeley & Gardner, 2007).

In view of such risks, social protection for those left behind needs to include the design of measures that serve to mitigate and cope with the impacts, as well as playing a role in protecting, promoting and transforming the social protection system which is in capable of supporting the risk-managing mechanism and minimizing the vulnerability of the migrant households in the country of origin. This will serve to reduce the concerns of the migrant workers (Seeley & Gardner, 2007). This will be even more so in view of increased migration with the advent of the ASEAN Community. The ASEAN Community Vision 2025, therefore, attaches considerable importance to the social protection system to reduce risks and vulnerability of important target groups of migrants, women, children, and the elderly, as well other groups of vulnerable people (Department of ASEAN Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016). The extent of the clarity of proposed considerations on social protection of those left behind, therefore, very much depends on the studies on migration impacts, especially impacts on the households. In the areas where there are more migrants and/or people left behind, the community is also affected. So far, there is little dissemination of the findings of

such studies. The proposals on the social protection system, thus, are based on the existing information, together with the information on social protection of the country of origin. The Myanmar case may shed some light on social protection measures for those left behind.

Nishino and Koehler (2011), presented an overall picture of the vulnerability in Myanmar, mentioning that most of the poor in that country lived in rural areas, with no land of their own, and were employed as general hired hands. The transient poor numbered three times more than the chronic poor. This means that a lot of Myanmar people are vulnerable and could join the rank of the poor, if facing risks or shocks. The study classifies risks into various levels, ranging from health, social, economic to environmental risks. Social risks are manifested in crime, domestic violence, discriminatory practice, migration of the heads of the family, and exclusion within the family resulting from sexual orientation and disability. Economic risks, on the other hand, can be seen in such situations as unemployment, under-employment, landlessness, and debt.

In its Masterplan 2014, the Myanmar government mentions that social protection refers to policies, legal instruments, welfare, benefit and service programs for individuals and households to prevent and alleviate economic and social vulnerabilities, promote access to essential services, infrastructure, and economic opportunity, and facilitate the ability to better manage and cope with shocks or sudden loss of income. (Masterplan, 2014, p. 1, cited in Koehler, 2014. Myanmar's social protection system consists of programs for different age groups (Ong & Bista, 2015; The Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund, 2015). See Table 3.

Table 3 Myanmar's social protection

Target groups	Social protection
Young children	Shelters for orphans and twins, early childhood development programs, healthcare coupons for mother and child, allowances
Working age	Social security for government workers and formal labor, employment services for migrants, public work for vulnerable community
Older people	Pensions for government workers and formal labor, home for the elderly, self-help group
Every age group	Care for people with disabilities, disaster financial assistance

Source: Ong and Bista (2015); The Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (2015)

The study that attempts to explain the impacts on those left behind in the Myanmar case (The World Bank, 2016) mentions that clear positive impacts are seen in the benefits of

the remittances, as they are used to elevate the economic status of the household, support the access to basic consumption, and help older children to continue with their schooling. Though there are cases of economic hardship due to irregular remittances. On the social front, it is found that children become more mature. As they have no parents at hand, they are able to develop their own problem-solving skills. On the adverse side, it is evident that they develop a consumerism attitude, paying more attention to money and less attention to education. The family, as an institute, is weakened. All this may lead to other psychological problems. Other negative impacts on those left behind are children’s psychosocial well-being and attitude. Children become more individualistic and do not value the relationship with their parents (Thein, 2017) . These impacts are similar to the experiences in many countries already mentioned.

The information on social protection in Table 3 reveals that the risk-preventing measures based on age groups do not directly “respond” to the migration impact. Admittedly, in many ways they can help reduce livelihood risks. Migration-caused risks need clear management measures.

Given the limited studies on the impacts of migration on the people who are left behind, a framework for analysis may follow the framework of social risk management and the transformative social protection as presented in Table 2. Approaches to address the risks from migration are coping strategies as well as protection, promotion and transformative measures as presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Approaches to social protection for people who are left behind

Social Risk Management	Transformative Social Protection
<p>Coping:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce risk impacts due to irregular remittances through short-term measures such as immediate assistance. 2. Initiatives to upgrade consumption, e.g. training, creation of savings funds, community welfare schemes. 3. Initiatives to maintain livelihoods, e.g. self-help groups, community welfare schemes, community enterprises. 	<p>Protection:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relieve poverty or shortage, provide assistance 2. Counseling services for families and children. 3. Community-based initiatives to look after children.
	<p>Promotion:</p> <p>Community-based schemes to reduce social impacts of migration</p>
	<p>Transformative:</p> <p>Public awareness campaign about the impacts of migration on the left-behinds</p>

In view of the number of migrants and impacts that follow, while taking into consideration approaches to migration and development, in-depth studies on migration impacts should give a clearer picture of the situation and provide a way to design a social protection system that not only responds to the basic needs but also extends to support other development initiatives.

Conclusion

This article is an attempt to support more studies on migration-caused risks and design of a social protection system to reduce existing and potential risks using Myanmar as a case study. Due to different socio-economic status of the migrants, their families face different kinds of risk. Being under the same social protection system does not mean that the migrant household can equally manage the risks. The case of Myanmar is used to illustrate the social protection system which can be designed to address the risks from migration. The limited information on the existing social protection system and its access, as well as limited information on migration risks, reflects the need for further study to better understand the existing risks and the role of the social protection able to reduce such risks, and to develop the social protection system that can properly respond to migration risks. All this aims to support the presence of the social protection system as envisaged in the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Blueprint 2025.

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