

# A Journey of Transformation

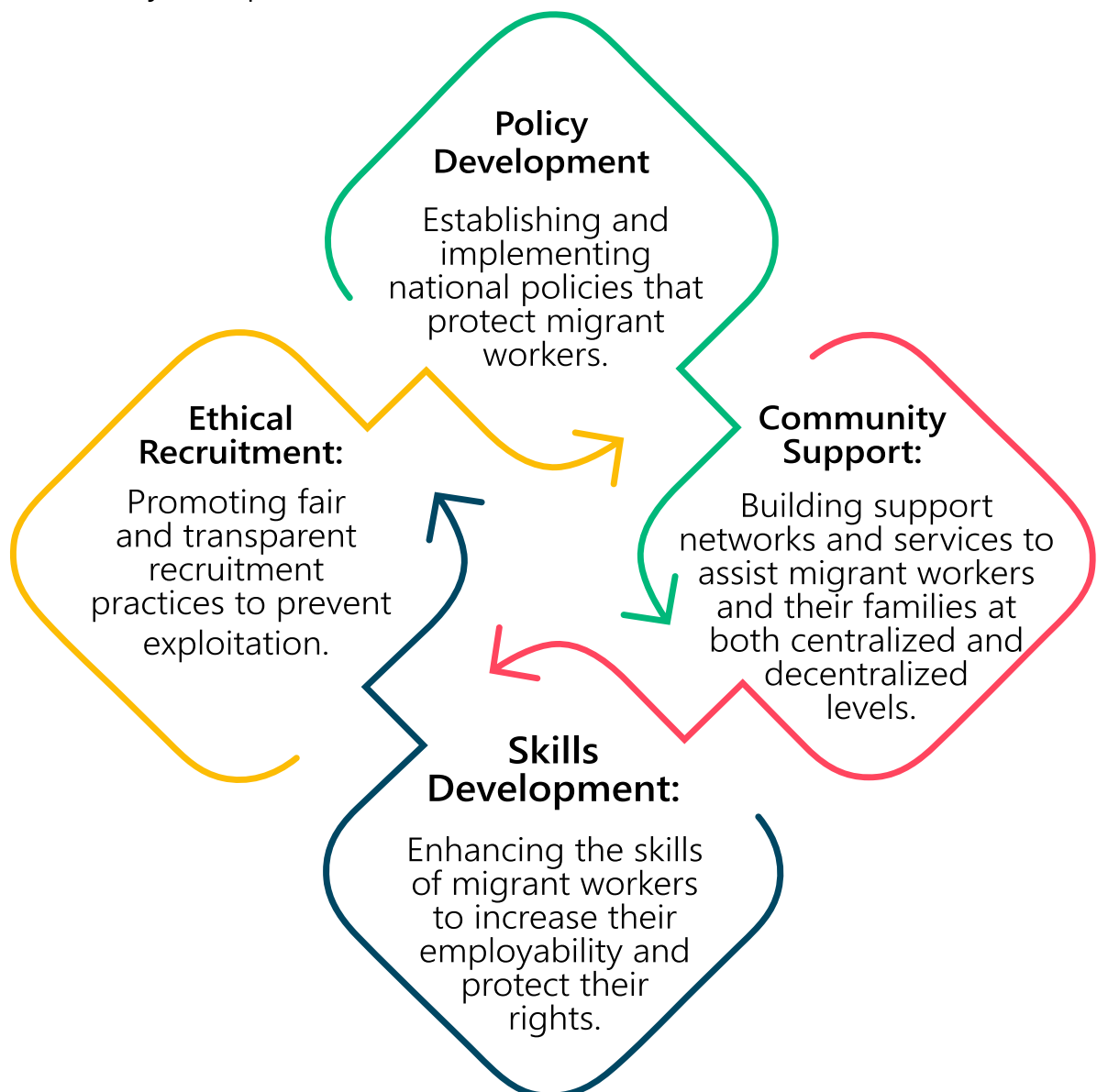
Safe Labour Migration Programme  
2010-2024



Switzerland has long been recognized for its significant contributions to migration and development, consistently demonstrating a strong commitment to advancing these critical areas. In 2010, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) launched the Safe Labour Migration Programme (SLMP) for Sri Lanka, embodying this dedication. By fostering collaboration across multiple stakeholders and embracing innovative approaches, the program has significantly reshaped labor migration in Sri Lanka, ensuring that it is not only safe and equitable but also mutually beneficial for migrants, employers, and the wider community.

## About the programme

The Safe Labour Migration Programme is a comprehensive initiative designed to reform labor migration in Sri Lanka. It encompasses several key components:



## Key Achievements:

The the programme has led to significant reforms and direct impacts:

- **Policy Reforms:** Shaping national policies that safeguard migrant workers' rights, influencing broader migration policies in the region.
- **Ethical Recruitment:** Over 1,000 agencies have adopted ethical practices, reducing exploitation.
- **Community Outreach:** The programme has provided support to over 250,000 families through Migrant Service Hubs and community initiatives.
- **Skills Development:** Thousands of migrant workers have enhanced their employability, supported by well-coordinated efforts across all levels of governance.
- **Orientation & Training:** **127,000+** prospective migrant workers oriented, including legal aid and psychosocial support.
- **Training Development Officers:** **70%** trained, strengthening migrant worker support systems.
- **COVID-19 Support:** Aid provided to **6,000+** affected families via Migrant Worker Societies.
- **Grievance Resolution:** **95%** of grievances successfully resolved.
- **Guidance & Skill Development:** **1,100+** migrant workers received guidance and certification.
- **Migration Info Centres:** Established in divisional secretariats for accessible migration information.
- **Community Engagement:** Activated **158** Migrant Workers Societies with **3,400+** active members.



## Laying the Foundation

PHASE 1

2010-2013

### **Objective:**

Establish a robust framework for labor migration.

- Developed foundational policies in collaboration with International Labour Organization (ILO) and Helvetas.
- Launched National and community-level interventions to address migration challenges.
- Introduced the concept of ethical recruitment, setting the stage for future reforms.





## Building Momentum

### PHASE 2 2013-2016

#### **Objective:**

Expand outreach and strengthen recruitment practices.

- Engaged with local civil society organisations to initiate and strengthen migration support services at the grassroots level.
- Sensitized over 1,000 licensed recruitment agencies on ethical practices.
- Developed and implemented a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for recruitment, influencing national and regional policies.



## Expanding Impact

### PHASE 3 2016-2020

#### **Objective:**

Broaden support networks and enhance migrant services.

- Established Migrant Service Centers nationwide, reaching over 250,000 families.
- Promoted a multistakeholder approach involving government, Civil society organisations (CSO), and international partners.





## Consolidation and Innovation

### PHASE 4 2021-2024

#### Objective:

Embed SLMP's lessons into national frameworks and innovate for the future.

- Secured Cabinet approval for the National Policy and Action Plan on Migration for Employment in Sri Lanka (2023).
- Introduced the Skills Passport and e-RPL platforms, benefiting over 6,400 workers.
- Introduced the Emergency Evacuation and Response Plan (EERP) and a digital emergency platform, enhancing protection for migrant workers.
- Continued focus on skills development, fair recruitment practices, and strengthening coordination at all levels.
- Integrated the South Asia Qualification Referencing Framework (SAQRF) into national policy.

# SDC has assisted 13 districts out of 25 in Sri Lanka through the Safe Labour Migration Programme



**Awareness on safe migration measures**  
 •Male participants: 1,454  
 •Female participants: 5,532  
 •Total participants: 6,986



**Grievances cases referred**  
 •Male participants: 101  
 •Female participants: 512  
 •Total participants: 613



**Grievances cases resolved**  
 •Male participants: 36  
 •Female participants: 170  
 •Total participants: 206



**Migrant Worker Societies active**  
 •Events: 130  
 •Male participants: 20  
 •Female participants: 148  
 •Total participants: 168



**Self Help Groups active**  
 •Events: 367  
 •Male participants: 70  
 •Female participants: 642  
 •Total participants: 712



**Natural leaders identified**  
 •Male participants: 24  
 •Female participants: 446  
 •Total participants: 470



**Skills development initiatives**  
 •Male participants: 108  
 •Female participants: 369  
 •Total participants: 477



**149** Businesses/income generation initiated



**42** Migrant rights and advocacy campaigns



**17** Migrant services hubs and divisional forums created





The Safe Labour Migration Programme is a testament to Switzerland's leadership and innovation in migration and development. Through collaboration, ethical practices, and a commitment to the welfare of migrant workers, the programme has set a new standard for labor migration in Sri Lanka. As we continue to build on these successes, we look forward to securing a brighter future for all migrant workers and their families.



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**Embassy of Switzerland to Sri Lanka  
and the Maldives**