



COVID-19 Pandemic: Implications of Public Health Emergency on Migration and Repatriation in Pakistan

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Abstract

The study sheds light on the current global situation posed by a pandemic; COVID 19 and the impact it has brought to a country like Pakistan in terms of repatriation of its migrants. The data gathered for the study were qualitative with an exploratory research design. Content analysis has been used as the primary method and tool for analysis of data that has been gathered from the latest news, updates, articles, blogs, press briefings and articles published on the pandemic and its implications on migrants across the globe and specifically Pakistan over the past six months. The study highlights the effects of these global alterations on human mobility in our local context and efforts made by the Government and its allied institutions in easing out the issues pertaining to the repatriation of returnee migrants. The findings suggest that the reintegration of returnees in the local economy and socio-cultural context will be the next challenge.

Key Words: COVID-19, Migration, Repatriation, Developing World, Pakistan, Returnee Migrants, Pandemics.

Introduction

A pandemic is the global outbreak of a disease (Hickok, 2020). It refers to a geographical spread of a disease that encompasses a country or even the entire world (CDC, 2012). Pandemic is a type of epidemic that may spread over several countries or continents, affecting a large or exceptionally high proportion of the population (Torrey, 2020). Emerging viral infections continue to pose a major threat to global public health (Shou, Jiang Gao & Gao, 2020). The most contemporary is the case of Corona pandemic. SARS-CoV-2 that causes COVID-19 has halted the world activities as we know it. The effects of a pandemic are not restricted to or contained within one social facet and nor is there a timeline to reverse the chaos it has created. Though the institution of medicine and healthcare are hit the worse, the damage and pressure faced by the social institutions like the Government, economy and family are equally calamitous. The coping mechanisms exercised to contain the disease included abrupt alteration of all the usual ways of life; internationally, nationally and locally through a substantial reduction by quarantining infected individuals and their family members, workplace distancing, and school closure (Koo, et al., 2020).

It is true that the governments barely have any options, especially in the developing world where the pandemic has not fully hit yet. Countries like Pakistan have minimal infrastructure and are barely coping with their normal state-level issues. There are nearly no social, economic or health safety nets for the general public. Along with that to make matters worse, most of the population includes people who are barely educated, low-skilled and have jobs that physically require them to leave their houses to earn a living. Adding a pandemic to this overall equation will have the most frightening outcome to date. In a country like Pakistan, only public health interventions can be relied on (Nadkarni, 2020) since evaluation, decision-making and interventions during all stages of the pandemic life cycle require reliable, specific, and timely data on human behaviour, especially

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mobility that can possibly be generated once the masses are fully aware of the repercussions of this pandemic on general public health (Oliver, Lepri, Sterly, & ..., 2020).

People are generally on the move in the globalizing world where migration is not a new phenomenon. However, in the case of global emergencies such as pandemics, the dynamics of migration are often unprecedented. The preparation and implementation of effective return migration and reintegration policies in Pakistan are currently very difficult due to unavailability and scarcity of a sound evidence base database (Zeeshan & Sultana, 2020). Fundamentally the paper wants to highlight the effects of these global alterations on human mobility in reference to Pakistan posed by the current pandemic. Before the pandemic hit the world, particularly in Pakistan, “60,000 individuals were under the process of applying for jobs abroad, out of which 20,000 individuals were planning to enter Saudi Arabia”. The onset of the outbreak justifiably led to strict laws of containment, leading to restrictions on travelling, migration bans and discontinuation of projects involving tourists. This obviously is an alarming situation for Pakistan as the “International Monetary Fund predicts the rate of unemployment to be 6.2 percent in 2020” (The News, 2020). In the past six months, the pandemic has spread across the globe through various sources. The paper gives an overview on the emergence of this infectious disease, its spread and declaration as a pandemic, steps taken by China to curb the disease, geographical spread, global implications on international migrations, challenges posed to the Pakistani immigrants and the responses and measure taken by the state in managing their repatriation.

Research Questions

1. How COVID-19 turned to a global Pandemic, and what measures were immediately taken in response to it?
2. How this pandemic affected the world in terms of global mobility with specific reference to Pakistani migrant workers?
3. What measures are taken by Pakistan in repatriating its returnees across the world?
4. What are the probable challenges and implications of the returning migrant workers in Pakistan?

Objectives

The objectives of the research are to study

1. Immediate or short term implications of a global health emergency; Covid-19.
2. The insinuation of the situation for Pakistani migrant workers working abroad.
3. The process of repatriation of Pakistanis returnees in the world halted by a pandemic.
4. The repercussions faced by the returning migrant workers.

Review of Literature

The review of literature is meant to shed light on the concepts and dimensions of the research topic from a diachronic perspective. Since the study is based on recent chaos caused by a global pandemic, the literature reviewed in this regard is taken from December 2019 till June 2020, which has been divided into different sections. The first section covers the spread of COVID-19 in China. The second section is based on WHO's declaration of COVID-19 as a pandemic and global emergency. The third section is based on the response of the global community to control this pandemic. However, the fourth section covers Pakistan's response to the global pandemic in reference to returnees.

The Spread of COVID 19 in China

The initial reports of a possible epidemic were registered in the Wuhan city of China, on December 31, 2019. They reported it as pneumonia whose etiology was unknown, inclusive of a cluster of 27 individuals, seven of which were in critical condition. The disease was linked to the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market, which provides a variety of fresh live fish and animals often captured from the wild for consumption (WCHC, 2020). Subsequently, these markets were completely closed down on “January 01, 2020”, as the samples from the area

were “tested to be positive for coronavirus”. The initial symptoms recorded in the cases included, “fever, dry cough, dyspnoea” while the “radiological results illustrated bilateral lung infiltrates” (ECDC, 2020).

Later the Chinese [CDC, on January 09 2020](#), declared the “novel coronavirus/SARS-CoV-2” as the causative agent behind “15 of the 59 cases of pneumonia” (News X, 2020). The end of “January of 2020, showed that three more countries; Thailand, Japan and South Korea had confirmed cases of the virus” (WHO, 2020). Since the virus was deduced to be spreading due to people travelling inside and out of the city at an unprecedented rate, the ‘city of Wuhan was put under lockdown, on January 23, 2020’ (Du Z, 2020). Until that time, the matter was evidently being hushed to limit and delay the expansion of the epidemic in China ([Tian et al., 2020](#)). However, the world was looking up to the World Health Organization in order to develop their own security plans, hence with the growing pressure it was finally declared “that the outbreak of novel coronavirus was a public health emergency of international concern” as per the International Health regulations of WHO (WHO, 2005) & (WHO, 2020). Following this statement, global politics turned their focus towards developing and implementing their security plans. These majorly included, “implementation of screening of all the passengers arriving from China” (Phelan, Katz, Gostin, 2020) and ‘suspension of flights from and to China’ by various airlines (Chinazzi et al., 2020). Moreover, the ‘process of repatriation of citizens living in Wuhan’ was also put into action ([CDC, 2020](#)).

Declaration of WHO on COVID 19 as a Pandemic

COVID-19 is a new, global health issue. However, since 1990s public-private partnerships are collaborating since the 1990s, as the World Health Organization called for mutual coordinated efforts among scientists, governments, NGOs, funders and industry. Nonetheless, researchers tend to focus how power, trust and governance determine their effectiveness, according to “[Managing and Preparing for Emerging Infectious Diseases: Avoiding a Catastrophe.](#)” ([AOM Insights, 2020](#)). Following the first statement given by the World Health Organization, there was a lot of confusion and uncertainty about the status of the disease among the global world. As the situation escalated and numerous countries around the world reported cases of the infection, ‘COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by WHO on March 11 2020’ (WHO, 2020). It was affirmed that at the end of 2019, a new type of virus called SARS-CoV-2 first emerged in the city of Wuhan in China, leading to the disease ([CDC, 2020](#)). Moreover, the source of the virus was also confirmed. It was stated that much like “MERS and SARS, this particular coronavirus had transferred from an animal to a human”, the type of animal was not specified but it was suggested that “bats” could be the source (Ji, Wei, Xiaofang, Junjie, & Xingguang, 2020). This confirmation raised a lot of debates about the operational wet markets throughout the world and the threats they pose to the general public.

Global Measures to Combat the Pandemic

A pandemic like COVID-19 presents the world with a brutal choice between economic and public health ([Azoulay & Jones, 2020](#)). Since the virus posed a global security threat, countries faced the challenge to plan and implement safety measures as fast as possible by building real-time COVID-19 early warning systems that can serve in surveillance of emerging infectious diseases ([Weingarten, Slotkin, & Alkire, 2020](#)). The process is obviously still ongoing, and increasingly countries are adopting different strategies in order to cope with the pandemic. Some of the extensive measures revolving around restricted mobility include complete lockdowns, travel restrictions and closing borders, cancelling flights and sealing airports and in some cases bars on asylum applications. These migration management tools have become crucial and are being turned to in hopes to keep the virus from entering their homeland and in later stages to deal with the pandemic. It is believed that such fast-changing policies will have both “short term and some permanent marks on the immigration systems” ([MPL, 2020](#)).

The freedom to activity is undoubtedly the foundation of all social and economic activities. With the above-mentioned restrictions coming into action due to COVID-19, we now realize more than ever about that the world’s connectedness. The stunted economy and immobility have affected all, leaving some more vulnerable than others. However, the most vulnerable sections of the communities have been hit the hardest and are

expected to be affected not only during, but after the pandemic is over too. However, it must be noted that this disparity has always been in existence and as evidenced in the past social and economic inequalities always rise during a crisis. This is where the role of the European Union can come into play. With the rise in the pandemic, the seasonal and care work risks have increased, and if the EU limits these risks, then their “attractiveness and effectiveness” can increase in the future. Moreover, it is important to “maintain a large, flexible, and experienced workforce in order to counterforce the troublesome effects on individuals and their rights”. The current reality is that the rights of the workers need to be protected not only in the short but also in the long term. As it is clear that, ‘vulnerable and insecure workers are the building blocks of EU economies, rather than accessories. ([Andriescu, 2020](#)).

Pakistan’s Response to Control Pandemic through Border Control

As a third world country, dealing with a pandemic has by far the most difficult situation the present Government has faced. The first action taken on March 21 as per the notification of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), in the line of containing the pandemic was ‘suspension of all international flights until April 04. This was later on extended to April 21, including the domestic flights too’. The foreign minister Mr Shah Mehmood Qureshi shared with the media that the Government had decided to ‘close all the borders of fifteen days’. Later resources show that on 29th March 29, it was announced that the borders would further “remain closed for another two weeks, as the number of people infected with the virus had surpassed 1,400” ([Al Jazeera, 2020](#)).

PIA a leading airline along with other major airlines of the country complied with the orders of the Government and suspended all their flights till “May 25, 2020”. Since the situation was aggravating by the day, domestic flights were also suspended, and the general public was requested to stay calm and cooperate. Moreover, in response to the suspension of general international and domestic flights, some special flights were planned in order to repatriate citizens to their home countries. These flights were approved by the Government and were assured to be working closely with relevant authorities, including the foreign governments’ ([PIA, 2020](#)).

Express Tribune reported that the National carrier PIA repatriates 20,000 Pakistanis from UAE, UK, Europe, and Australia by May 09, 2020 ([Express Tribune, 2020](#)). Apart from this, PIA has got approval for direct flights to and from the US for the first time which serves to repatriate stranded citizens of both countries through 12 special flights commencing from May 12 (Nation, 2020). Initially, 500 Pakistanis are expected to repatriate from the US through 1st three special flights of PIA (Khaleej Times, 2020).

Research Methodology

The research data was qualitative. The methodology of the paper was exploratory; since the study highlights the emerging challenges with reference to return migration posed by the global pandemic; COVID-19, which is rarely taken up by the local scholarship. Content analysis is used as the primary tool of data collection, which has been carried out through secondary sources. Out of the two general categories of Content Analysis; conceptual and relational, this paper has been written following the conceptual analysis. Conceptual analysis is carried out by taking into consideration the existence and frequency of concepts. The concepts searched in this regard are COVID-19, Pandemic; Return Migration, Repatriation in Pakistan. COVID-19 as a disease and pandemic as in global emergency has been taken into consideration from the CDC and WHO mainly. However, the global impact of return migration and repatriation efforts have been analysed by taking IOM and the data from the international and national news channels.

Results & Discussion

Pandemic like COVID-19 is believed to leave the human civilization with such an unprecedented emergency after the World War-II that will undoubtedly and remarkably affect the entire human society and the world economy ([Chakraborty & Maity, 2020](#)). Based on the argument of the paper; disruptions in the global migration will not only have short term but serious long-term impact. Measures taken to protect public health have threatened the global economy, necessitating economic stimulus in most countries, and reconfiguring the role of business in

society ([Brammer, Layla, & Linnenluecke, 2020](#)). No doubt the pandemic is a challenge, and implementation of short-term mobility restrictions is vital at this stage; however, it is important to keep under consideration their long-term repercussions. It is integral to find solutions for the effects of our present actions, i.e. to make sure people who are not being able to work now do not permanently lose jobs. If these challenges are not addressed sooner, they will lead to “increased global inequality, more economic stress, more vulnerability to forced migrant populations, and a rise in irregular migration” ([Yayboke, 2020](#)). The idea is to start “[Learning from the Future](#)” as described by Harvard Business Review for an updated version of scenario planning, focused particularly on long-term planning in a crisis which is yet to snowball ([Ignatius, 2020](#)). Below the paper will discuss various long-term impacts of restricted migration due to our present short-term decisions.

Economic inequality is a consequence of globalization. The global pandemic is resulting in widening disparity among the two worlds. Brain drain and poverty had already accelerated in the third world ([de la Croix & Docquier, 2012](#)). As discussed above in the past also, migrants have always worked as labors in richer, more developed countries to fuel their economies. At one end, it is seen as an opportunity by people belonging to the less developed countries to earn a better than what is being offered in their native place. However, these global economic prospects, at the same time, increase the disparity among the two worlds further. Before this global pandemic hit us, the world was already at the peak of global inequality. Statistics show that in “January 2020, 2,153 people were richer than the world’s poorest 4.6 billion people. While the 22 richest men in the world had more wealth than all the women combined in Africa”. In line with the similar implications, it is expected that due to this pandemic, “these big national shocks hit the disadvantaged segment of society the hardest” ([Pappas, 2020](#)). It is further suggested that the richest individuals will only be affected for the time being during these chaotic times. In the longer term, global inequality is expected to further rise due to its lasting impact on migration caused by a rippling effect which will further widen the gap between the rich and poor countries.

Apart from economic inequality, Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is considered as the greatest disruption to the movement of people since World War II ([Newland, 2020](#)). It is to be highlighted that short-term measures often tend to become a part of the regular practice. Hence it can be expected that even though travel bans, medical testing of migrants, closure of borders is a necessity of time it will become normalized and a standard in the future. Moreover, “a second or third wave of COVID-19” is expected to “originate from sub-Saharan Africa or the Middle East” which will further increase the number of individuals wanting to migrate to the European countries. Given the present situation, it can be expected that in the future, even though some of the migration paths will become available, the limitations will be strict. Leaders who are already xenophobic and are supporters of closed borders will use this pandemic as a means to support their ulterior motives. Since the inevitable death toll will increase in the future people will support these leaders too.

Developing countries are largely dependent upon their expatriates for foreign exchange. The COVID-19 crisis is feared to bring a decline in remittances to Pakistan due to a huge impact on the international job market. Many foreign countries have reported drastic declines in the economy, which is drastically shrinking the employment sector, especially for the ex-pats. Studies of migration often proceeded as if the phenomenon of return migration never occurred prior to 1960s. Prior to this global pandemic, except for global recession, migration was viewed as a one-way process beginning with “uprooting” at the point of origin and ending with “assimilation” into one’s adopted culture and country ([Peterson, 2013](#)). Also, not much has been written on return migration in terms of global emergencies.

Given the omnipresence and profoundness of crises such as the current pandemic spread of COVID-19, it is argued that more research is needed to unpack strategy-making in times of such crisis ([Wenzel, Stanske, & Lieberman, 2020](#)). The major portion of the population that is currently being affected by restrictive mobility is those who travel to and for work. The impact of which is widespread, including familial, economic and potential food security threats.

The first and foremost effect is on the family life of the migrant labors. The workers planning to migrate and join a certain job cannot do it in the current situation. While those who had joined but their families were involved in immigration and visa regimes will now have to face prolonged separation. The whole situation will increase

stress levels and anxiety due to disruption in familial life combined with stunted finances. In addition, since migrant workers cannot travel, jobs that were previously filled by them will now be removed.

The long-term impact on food security is also undeniable. The major threat is that the labor is unable to travel to the agricultural fields along with other broad-spectrum hindrances to the global food chain. This argument is strengthened by CSIS's Caitlin Welsh, that states that even though the "first world courtiers like United states have sufficient food supplies, however, if the present situation persists reorientation of agricultural production and value chains will take place."

Moreover, layoffs are an unavoidable effect of a pandemic, which will focus primarily on migrant workers, especially the ones with temporary visas. For these individuals, the economic uncertainty will be extremely high, not only in the country where they migrated to but also in their native country. For instance, in New Zealand alone, there are about '190,000 immigrants working on temporary visas. These individuals, when laid off, will have to either find a new job fulfilling the criteria of their visas in an already sinking economy before deportation or acquire another type of visa. If none of the above works, then they will have to go back to their native country amidst restricted flights, closed borders and probably a worse economy. Hence, all these scenarios are bound to have long-lasting effects not only on the migrants but their families and communities. Migrants have always been the engine of the global economy. However, this constant strain on them will only lead to increased global inequality.

The role of the labours migrating to the Gulf cannot be overestimated when it is evident that mostly the jobs in construction, sanitation and transportation are primarily undertaken by workers, mainly from South Asian countries. In the wake of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the majority of the migrant workers in the Gulf countries have been dismissed. In March, the Government of Saudi Arabia announced a relief package which would partly compensate for worker salaries. However, this relief only applied to Saudi citizens. In the UAE, a new law was passed which authorized businesses to slash wages momentarily or even permanently for non-citizen personnel. Hence, as a result of COVID-19, migrants in the Gulf States have been forced into lockdown in overcrowded, unhygienic environments with no income and powerless to return home owing to travel limitations ([Siddiq, 2020](#)).

Moreover, many Pakistani students all over the world are stranded, in hopes of assistance from the Pakistani Government. In the UK, for example, a nationwide lockdown was announced on March 23, and this led to the cancellation of flights and immobility. The students faced serious stress and anxiety. The high commission stated that these individuals would be provided the necessary support and a 'PIA flight PK-758 from London to Lahore was scheduled' on May 01. It was however cancelled with no prior or future notice, leaving them with an unclear future ([Geo News, 2020](#)). There still lies a room for well-coordinated efforts on the part of the state institutions to manage the displaced in repatriation.

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi stated that because of the termination of many businesses in the Gulf, many Pakistani workers had been dismissed. He particularly noted how overseas Pakistanis have always contributed significantly to the national economy and would not be abandoned during this challenging time. In his briefing, he also talked about how Pakistani missions and consulates abroad are supporting expatriates in every possible way such as through the provision of food, accommodation and other necessary demands. A Crisis Management Unit within the Ministry has also been formed for this purpose ([MOFA, 2020](#)).

Moreover, Moeed Yusuf, working as an assistant on the National Security Division and Strategic Policy Planning, shared the strategy with which Pakistani returnees will be dealt with. He stated that 'every Pakistani individual returning from abroad will be kept in quarantine for 48 hours, with the goal to impede the spread of the deadly virus.' Further, it was added that 'no exemptions will be made and returnees will be given a choice to quarantine themselves on their own in hotels or will be facilitated in the government centres'. Data shared by him, states that "15,000 Pakistanis have been bought back from different countries till now, while more than 100,000 Pakistanis are still unfortunately trapped in 88 different countries". The SAPM also shared that 'above 15,000 Pakistanis are trapped in Saudi Arabia still waiting to return to Pakistan. After the two-day quarantine, tests are conducted to ensure the status of

the virus in the individual. SAPM further stated that ‘they are conducting over 9,500 tests daily. Hence there is no guarantee that the tests will return in two days. The complaints of the people were registered and were requested to be patient’. ([Geo News, 2020](#)).

According to the plan authorized by the National Coordination Committee on COVID-19, stepwise repatriation will be carried out. 39748 Pakistanis have filed applications for returning home. Pakistanis in the United States and Canada have also requested they be brought back. This takes up the number of repatriates to 40,000 people ([Akram, 2020](#)). The latest phase of special flights took place from April 14-19. The UAE has the largest number of Pakistanis registered to come back. Currently, more than 40,000 people have registered with the Pakistan Consulate in Dubai for returning home. More than 25 per cent of these numbers are people who have become unemployed due to the pandemic ([Express Tribune, 2020](#)). It was reported that by May 13, at least 24,500 stranded Pakistanis got repatriated from various countries under the special repatriation operation ([APP, 2020](#)). An official from MOFA informed that the repatriation of stranded Pakistanis was being carried out in phases by giving priority to those who are laid off with expired visas. As of today, 75,000 nationals are repatriated who were stranded abroad due to the outbreak of COVID-19. The NCCO official said that a new policy had been formulated and now passengers will be tested at airports and allowed to go home if they do not have signs of COVID-19 ([Xinhua Net, 2020](#)). Coordination and information sharing between MOFA and the overseas ministry is carried out on a weekly basis to decide where the flights will be sent based on data provided by ambassadors in those countries. This data pertains to people registered with embassies and those who are stranded.

For a country with a population of over 200 million; Pakistan’s human capital is an extremely valuable resource, particularly when over 60% of its population comprises of youth. Insufficient employment opportunities and familial burdens have led a major portion of our youth to travel abroad to seek better economic opportunities. Reintegration of returnees is a process that includes helping the migrants returning from overseas “to resettle into the social and economic structure of their country of origin”. This process has been recognized as an integral part of the dynamics of labour migration. Data shows that “from 1971-2017 around 9.87 million Pakistani workers migrated overseas”. However, the process by which increasing rates of skilled return migration lead to economic growth in developing regions of the world is largely a mystery in empirical research ([Wang, 2018](#)). Nonetheless, the recent outbreak of coronavirus has affected the overall dynamics of migration. The Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Pakistanis stated that ‘foreign remittance have been negatively affected, reducing by half in only two months and is expected to go down from \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion every year if the current situation persists’ ([The News, 2020](#)).

A recent overview of the overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF) suggested that it is working to facilitate the Pakistani returnees and their reintegration. This pilot project is actively providing the returnees with a forum where they can receive guidance related to investment opportunities, the feasibility of projects, help to settle dues from employers abroad and re-employment prospects. Moreover, keeping in view the more vulnerable people, counselling will also be provided regarding overseas employment, rights and protection of migrants, skills development and vocational training programs in Pakistan ([OPF, 2020](#)).

Conclusion

In the current global scenario where the pandemic has nearly taken over the entire world, the economic wheel has come to a halt. The World Bank has called this epidemic a ‘perfect storm’ for the South Asian region and has estimated that regional growth for the South Asia region will fall to a range between 1.8 and 2.8 percent in 2020, down from 6.3 percent projected six months ago. In the given scenario, the Government of Pakistan needs to bring its diplomatic missions in motion, lobbying with the host countries to treat Pakistani workers generously, and minimise the chances of being laid-off as much as possible as per the suggestions forwarded by PIDE. The uncertain situation of the COVID-19 crisis leads to an extraordinary degree of uncertainty about the full global impact of the virus on the world economy. That said, labour is going to find it increasingly difficult to get work as businesses slow down and demand cripple. This would directly lead to massive unemployment. Unemployment has a high correlation with a country’s crime rate. Already, there are reports that the crime

rate in Punjab has increased significantly in the backdrop of government curfews. Furthermore, if high rates of unemployment persist, it could lead to a drop-in literacy rate and a rise in domestic violence as well. The Government needs to develop a health security strategy for migrants to safeguard the overall health of emigrants upon their return to Pakistan.

Recommendations

- In order to benefit from the people returning to their country, it is suggested that the home countries should develop policies that encourage them to invest and reintegrate the labor market.
- The economic package developed by the Prime Minister needs to be expanded in terms of including assistance for the returning workers.
- Since large scale production factories had partially come to a halt, it is the need of the time that the government and pertinent departments encourage the cottage industries by facilitating them. Facilitation can be in terms of registration, marketing and advice on how to improve their products and meet international standards. Need for sound policies, secure financial & legal environment to stimulate investment & other capital inflows.
- Even though Covid-19, has halted major projects in the Gulf, once activities resume, there will be a demand for a labour force. In this case, the Government of Pakistan should ensure that proper training is provided to the labour force to make them more competitive.
- Insurance policies should be intensified, and existing policies regarding overseas Pakistanis need to be widened to encompass emigrants. There should be policies in place that encourage returnees' investment and labour market reintegration, including the expansion of insurance policies.
- All concerned ministries should ensure that the overseas Pakistanis face minimal job loss. This can be achieved by engaging and cooperating with foreign governments so that those who people have already cleared the application process can still be provided for in the future.
- Since the data regarding the people returning and migrating back is sparse and conflicting, situational analysis and policy development is difficult. Hence, a database needs to be established for emigrants returning to Pakistan so that their families can easily be provided for.

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