

MIGRANT SERVICE : JMS & JMMEX

JMS: Jesuit Migrant Ministry

The rise of unemployment, failure of monsoon, low wages and political instability induce migration of the common people. The migrants from the Northern states of India moving to the Southern states of India are escalating. According to Census 2011 of India, 77.5 lakhs of migrant workers have moved to Kerala and Tamil Nadu as labourers. These migrant workers experience a lot of vulnerable situations, face an unjust labour market and become victims of structural violence in the work sites, dwelling places and public spaces being strangers to the host state. The precarious conditions of the migrant workers pose a responsibility to Jesuit Migrants Service (JMS) to reach out to the Internal Migrants in Kancheepuram, Tiruvallur and Chennai districts of Tamil Nadu, India, with the motto of 'To Be and To Accompany'.



JMMEx: Jesuit Migrant Ministry External

Started in 2015, aiming to serve rescued overseas migrant labourers from 255 rural villages in four districts: Cuddalore, Kallakurichi, Tiruvannamalai, and Villupuram in the northern part of Tamil Nadu. The Jesuit Migrant Ministry External conducted an extensive field study across four districts to understand and identify social issues that have been overlooked by existing NGOs. The study concluded that no organization is specifically focused on assisting migrants stranded overseas. Migration, caused by economic hardship and lack of opportunities, often lands them in exploitation, abuse and lack of documentation leading them to lose their fundamental rights in the nation. To avoid such traps JMMEx creates awareness, provides livelihoods, and advocacy, rescues stranded migrants and, rebuilds their lives from vulnerable working and living conditions overseas to dignified ones.



→ **Children:** We focus on combating bonded labour, preventing child marriage, rescuing migrant children, promoting moral ethics, improving health and hygiene, and protecting against sexual harassment and assault.

→ **Youth and Migrant Women:** We emphasize psychological well-being through counselling, the importance of higher education, family planning,

addressing suicidal tendencies and health-related deaths, and tackling sexual harassment.

➔ **Migrant Workers and Tribals:** We advocate for their rights and entitlements, safe and non-hazardous employment, shelter and rehabilitation, awareness of labour laws, legal aid, and compensation for workplace accidents. We also address issues of caste-based discrimination and promote health and hygiene awareness.

Our key interventions include facilitating safe entry, conducting rescue and death interventions, and organizing awareness campaigns. We provide shelters for homeless migrants, healthcare services, and empowerment programs for migrant women, emphasizing entrepreneurship and self-sufficiency.

➔ **Awareness:** We actively engage with grassroots communities prone to migration, many of whom are unaware of safe migration practices and legal rights. These individuals, often uneducated and marginalized, are vulnerable to exploitation by middlemen who facilitate unsafe migration for profit.

To address this, JMM conducts awareness programs aimed at educating potential migrants about the risks and responsibilities of migration. These programs provide crucial information on legal documentation, employment contracts, and migrants' rights in host countries. By fostering informed decision-making, these sessions empower individuals to pursue dignified opportunities abroad while minimizing the risks of exploitation and trafficking.

Rescue: In situations where migrants face extreme exploitation, undertakes rescue operations to protect and rehabilitate victims. Many migrants, especially those without proper documentation, fall into situations of bonded labour, wage theft, and physical abuse, often unable to escape due to confiscated passports or lack of financial resources. The ministry works with legal aid organizations, government bodies, and networks like Childline India to rescue these individuals. Efforts extend to freeing child labourers, addressing human trafficking, and intervening in cases of forced labour. Through these initiatives, restore dignity and safety to affected migrants while ensuring they receive legal and

psychological support.

➔ **Shelter:** To address the immediate needs of internal migrants, JMS has collaborated with Greater Chennai Corporation and established shelter homes in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. These facilities provide a safe space for migrants who arrive from other states seeking work but struggle to find employment or housing. The shelter homes offer secure accommodation, nutritious meals, and medical care for those in need. This initiative particularly supports vulnerable individuals, including those with severe health issues, ensuring they have a stable environment while they rebuild their lives.

➔ **Rehabilitation:** JMM's rehabilitation programs focus on the long-term recovery and empowerment of rescued migrants. Many returns are burdened by debts incurred during unsafe migration, leaving them financially vulnerable and at risk of further exploitation. JMM addresses this by providing skills training, livelihood opportunities, and access to Women's Self-Help Groups (WSHGs). These programs include entrepreneurial training in soap-making, detergent production, and livestock management, enabling

migrants to establish sustainable income sources. By promoting financial independence and resilience, JMM ensures migrants can rebuild their lives with dignity and stability.



Possible collaboration:

- ➔ Partner with labour departments, migration boards, and ministries of external affairs to ensure access to accurate information and promote legal migration pathways.
- ➔ Collaborate on campaigns that educate vulnerable communities about their rights and safe migration practices.
- ➔ Focuses on livelihood programs and human rights advocacy.
- ➔ Partner for sustainable livelihood and reintegration programs.
- ➔ Educating the migrants on labour rights and alternative livelihoods.
- ➔ Collaboration on vocational training and livelihood diversification.
- ➔ Improving shelter homes by providing essentials and necessary materials.
- ➔ Engaging Shelter home members on special occasions.
- ➔ Networking and collaboration in rescue.

