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Labour migration as an alternative for asylum seekers facing protection issues: A Sri Lanka-based longitudinal study

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The Research Programme is intended to strengthen the evidence base on migration, trade, border management, compliance, law enforcement and national security to inform policy and operational deliberations. Research is framed in an open, inquiring manner that is objective and non-partisan. A particular focus of the Research Programme is placing Australia's experience in the broader global context.

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Executive summary

1. The migration-asylum nexus highlights the challenge of separating out the motives of 'migration for protection reasons, and migration for economic reasons'. Yet, while implied by the migration-asylum nexus, an underexplored area of research is the extent to which people intending to migrate or actually migrating had protection reasons, in addition to, non-protection reasons.

2. A key aim of this study is to empirically investigate if protection factors perpetuated by state actors (hereafter referred to as protection factors) are associated with undertaking labour migration. These protection factors are defined as "violence from members of the police, military or government", "arrest by the authorities for no reason", "blackmail by authorities", "paying a bribe to authorities" or "receiving serious threats from the police, military or government" which would arguably fit the definition of persecution under the 1951 Refugee Convention.

3. This study draws on a nationally representative longitudinal survey of 5229 households in Sri Lanka, undertaken in February-March 2014 and February-April 2015. It involved contacting, via telephone, people who migrated between February 2014 and April 2015. The 2014 data is drawn from a larger survey of 20,632 households undertaken at that time.

4. In 2015, 2032 households with labour migration aspiration (labour migration-aspiration households), where at least one household member would have liked to seek labour migration as per the 2014 survey, were re-surveyed. Of these households, 355 had at least one person undertaking labour migration, 629 household no longer wanted to migrate and 1011 households still had at least one person who intended to migrate. Of the 3072 'non-migration' households surveyed (where no one wanted to undertake migration) in 2014, 91 per cent still had that view in 2015, with only 25 people actually migrating.

5. Results show there are similarities between factors associated with migration intentions and actual migration. For example, similar to labour migration intentions, being male, being older, living in the ethnic minority, having good access to education and health and having lower mental health predicted actual labour migration.

6. Yet it was clear that for some, intentions may not be realistic. For example, while having friends residing overseas may increase the probability of having migration intentions, it did not significantly increase the probability of actual migration. In contrast, for those with family overseas, the probability of actually migrating was significantly higher.

7. Another example of intentions not being realistic is that people persecuted by authorities (in areas not severely affected by conflict) and people approached by a people smuggler had migration intentions, but they were not significantly likely to actually migrate.

8. The key protection factor that caused labour migration was violence from family members or fellow villagers. This highlights the importance of labour migration as not only an economic tool, but also a strategy to enhance safety.

9. Actual migration in 2015 to Middle Eastern countries was much higher than the preferences expressed in the 2014 survey. For example, of those with migration intentions in 2014, 20 per cent indicated a preference for Qatar while—by early 2015—35 per cent of migrants had actually migrated to Qatar.

10. The analysis found that people who lived outside areas severely affected by conflict, and who experienced violence from family members or fellow villagers, were significantly more likely to be mobile. In contrast, those in areas severely affected by conflict were more likely to be immobile despite citing persecution and protection factors.

11. Results suggest that those facing persecution from government authorities and violence from family members or fellow villagers do actively consider, and in some cases use, labour migration as an escape strategy. That labour migration—as opposed to seeking asylum—is considered an escape strategy is not strange in an environment of restricted options (Jayasuriya and McAuliffe 2013) where the resources needed for labour migration are estimated as being twenty times less than those needed to seek asylum (Van Hear 2014). In contrast, when considering people within areas severely affected by conflict, persecution did not appear to influence actual migration. This possibly reflects that people within areas severely affected by conflict were unlikely to have the same resources to remove themselves from their predicament, particularly through regular migration options.

12. From a policy perspective the results demonstrate that people needing to escape persecution and seeking other forms of protection may, if presented with the option, migrate to countries for work, rather than seeking asylum. These are not refugees who enter the labour market (Salt 1992), but people who *could be* refugees, and instead choose labour migration to a destination (usually in the Middle East) that may not be their preferred choice for asylum or work migration. Hence, if there are limited humanitarian options, one strategy could be for developed countries to assist vulnerable people to improve their vocational training/skills recognition which could better facilitate regular migration pathways.

The Irregular Migration Research Programme

In August 2012, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship established an Irregular Migration Research Programme (Research Programme) to identify and address the knowledge gaps in irregular migration research, with a particular focus on placing Australia's experience in a broader global and migration context. An underlying principle of the Research Programme is that the research be framed in an open, inquiring manner that is objective and non-partisan. The Department was renamed the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) following administrative arrangements announced on 18 September 2013.

The Research Programme was established as a multi-layered and integrated programme including in-house research and analysis, commissioned research, a small grants programme, a multi-year research partnership arrangement with the Australian National University and a series of occasional papers. An underlying principle of the Research Programme is that the research be framed in an open, inquiring manner that is objective and non-partisan.

The first occasional paper *Establishing an Evidence-Base for Future Policy Development on Irregular Migration to Australia* identified specific research gaps in the Australian context and made recommendations about how to fill these gaps, drawing on international experience.[1] In this paper, the authors highlighted the lack of research in Australia (and limited research internationally) on migrant decision making, recommending that further research be undertaken on decision making particularly as it relates to leaving origin countries and choosing a destination.

This occasional paper has been produced from research commissioned under the Collaborative Research Programme between DIBP and the Australian National University. The Collaborative Research Programme supports the broader Research Programme through the commissioning of research which offers insights into the drivers, determinants, and decision making of irregular migrants.

[1] Koser and McAuliffe (2013).

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Introduction

The concept of having protection and non-protection reasons for seeking migration gained traction in the academic literature only at the turn of the 21st century (Van Hear et al. 2009). This was largely due to the emergence of the migration-asylum nexus which argues that multiple factors underpin the desire for migration, be it as a refugee or another class of migrant (Castles 2004). Importantly, the nexus suggests that historically people take the migration route that provides them the greatest opportunity for success.

Yet while implied by the migration-asylum nexus[2], an underexplored area of research is whether people pursue labour migration for protection reasons. While protection factors are generally associated with asylum, they are not necessarily associated with labour migration. Hence, a key aim of this study is to empirically investigate if protection factors linked to the state (forthwith referred to as protection factors) are associated with undertaking labour migration. These protection factors are defined as "violence from members of the police, military or government", "arrest by the authorities for no reason", "blackmail by authorities", "paying a bribe to authorities" or "receiving serious threats from the police, military or government" which would arguably fit the definition of persecution under the 1951 Refugee Convention.

A large body of literature has investigated factors that can cause (in the case of longitudinal studies) or be associated with (in the case of cross-sectional studies) migration intentions (Heering et al. 2004; Becerra et al. 2010; Becerra 2012; Van Dalen et al. 2007) and actual migration (De Jong 2000; Heering et al. 2004; Van Dalen et al. 2007; Becerra et al. 2010; Becerra 2012; Creighton 2013). When using micro-level data, longitudinal studies (as opposed to cross-sectional studies) offer the best opportunity to consider factors that predict actual migration, as they can investigate the extent to which factors before the migration event actually caused the migration event. While longitudinal studies are rare, when they exist, they appear to focus on migration from origin country environments unaffected by conflicts (De Jong 2000; Creighton 2013). This limits the consideration of protection related factors in explaining migration.

The utility of this paper, therefore, is the focus on factors that result in labour migration intentions and actual labour migration from the viewpoint of Sri Lanka, a post-conflict country that recently enforced restrictions on irregular migration flows.[3] The data used in this study is drawn from a nationally representative longitudinal survey of 5229 households in Sri Lanka, undertaken in February-March 2014 and February-April 2015. This study includes our survey team contacting, via telephone, people who have actually migrated from Sri Lanka.[4] The 2014 data is drawn from a larger survey of 20,632 households.

While understanding the reasons for mobility is important, investigating reasons for mobility in isolation of reasons for immobility may not be ideal (Arango 2000). Van Hear (2014) argues that "the unfolding of migration studies … have led to the recognition that mobility and immobility need to be considered in conjunction with one another", with immobility itself a "phenomenon of significance that needs to be considered alongside mobility".

Immobility is, by definition, the opposite of mobility. Hence, reasons for immobility in 2015, among those who initially had migration intentions in 2014, are considered. Moreover, while there have been theoretical considerations and empirical forays exploring reasons for immobility (Hammar 1997; Carling 2002; Jónsson 2011; Van Hear 2014), there appears to be limited empirical evidence, drawn from longitudinal

[2] The 'migration-asylum' nexus recognises that many migrants and asylum seekers have multiple reasons for mobility and it is impossible to completely separate economic and human rights motivations (Castles 2003)
[3] The large spike in asylum seekers leaving Sri Lanka by boat in 2011 and 2012 was reduced significantly due in part to greater restrictions by the Sri Lankan government on people smuggling (Jayasuriya and McAuliffe 2013).
[4] Only nine were traced as migrating through irregular process.

data, on reasons for immobility among those who had migration intentions. This paper's particular contribution involves providing an insight into why potential labour migrants (those who actively wanted to migrate) change their minds and stay immobile.

Further, to be clear, this paper aims to make a largely empirical contribution, not a theoretical contribution. As such it will briefly discuss the relevant literature prior to detailing the Sri Lankan context, research design, methods, results and conclusion.

1. Literature

1.1 Association between protection factors and migration

A body of literature proposes that protection factors are associated with international migration (Morrison 1993; Apodaca 1998; Davenport, Moore and Poe 2003; Shellman and Stuart 2007; Bohra-Mishra and Massey 2009; Hatton 2009) and internal migration (Adhikari 2013; Czaika and Kis-Katos 2007). Others suggest a certain threshold of violence which needs to be reached prior to perpetuating flight (Morrison and May 1994; Czaika and Kis-Katos 2007; Bohra-Mishra and Massey 2009), the internal geographic scope of violence is more important than the intensity of violence (Melander and Öberg 2007) or state-sponsored violence is needed to encourage flight (Moore and Shellman 2006).

Academic literature has progressed from compartmentalising some people as seeking asylum for only protection-related issues (Kunz 1973) to acknowledging that asylum seekers may migrate for both protection and non-protection factors (Van Hear et al. 2009).

While acknowledging that multiple reasons for mobility transcend specific classes of migration, much of the literature on the 'migration-asylum nexus' considers refugees or asylum seekers. To illustrate, Van Hear et al. (2009:10) note that the UNHCR may be encouraged to consider applicants with mixed migration intentions who have been "impelled to leave their home countries … driven by a combination of fears, uncertainties, hopes and aspirations that are difficult to unravel". This focus on asylum seekers and refugees is reasonable in the context that the nexus was developed in part to counter the perception that asylum seekers were 'bogus' economic migrants (Van Hear et al. 2009), not those in need of protection.

Yet while asylum seekers may seek migration for both protection and non-protection factors (McAuliffe 2013), it is also feasible that people take labour migration pathway for protection and non-protection factors. Hence, it is hypothesised that protection factors are associated with both asylum seeking and labour migration.

2. Sri Lanka background

The population of Sri Lanka comprises an ethnic majority of Sinhalese (75%), and ethnic minorities of Sri Lankan Tamils (11%), Moors (9%), Indian Tamils (4%) and others (1%).

Sri Lanka is widely known as a country of emigration (Sriskandarajah 2002). Pre-1970s, this largely involved English speaking elites migrating to Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries (Gamburd 2010), however since 1976 there has been an increase in emigrants from Sri Lanka to Gulf countries, exceeding 90 per cent of total emigrants by 2013 (SLBFE 2013). The majority of these include unskilled, semi-skilled workers and maids (SLBFE 2013), with many sending remittances

back to Sri Lanka (Jayasuriya and McAuliffe 2013). Indeed, remittances accounted for approximately 50 per cent of Sri Lanka's export earnings in 2014 (MOFE 2015).

The Sri Lankan government has an entire Department of Immigration and Emigration and a Sri Lankan Foreign Employment Bureau to provide information to those wishing to undertake labour migration. Fees collected by Sri Lankan emigrants are used by the government to support family members remaining in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka also has many private operators facilitating labour migration while the governance of laws relating to labour migration is one of the key priorities of the International Labour Organization (ILO 2016).

While labour migration is the key form of Sri Lankan emigration, another important form of emigration was driven by the political situation in Sri Lanka, with the civil war that began in 1983 and concluded in 2009 between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, fighting to establish a separate Tamil homeland, and the Sri Lankan government. As a result of the war and its aftermath, by 2012 there were approximately 120,000 Sri Lankan refugees living in countries outside of Sri Lanka, with most living in India (Jayasuriya and McAuliffe 2013). Given that approximately 1.3 million Sri Lankans lived outside of Sri Lanka in 2013 (Hugo and Dissanayake 2014), the proportion of refugees represents approximately 10 per cent of all Sri Lankans living overseas.

In the political context, it is important to note that the President who ended the civil war (and whose government was accused of human rights violations) was replaced in January 2015 by another President considered more amenable to the concerns of ethnic minorities. As the first survey began in February 2014 and the second survey began in February 2015, the change in President was unlikely to impact the decisions of those who had already migrated. Further, the 2015 parliamentary elections, which resulted in a parliament considered more amenable to ethnic minority concerns was only elected after the 2015 survey, in August 2015.

Considering the multi-faceted reasons for migration (Castles 2003), it would be too simplistic to suggest that all people who migrated for political reasons did so as refugees while all people who migrated for economic reasons did so as labour migrants. It is quite conceivable that rational actors choose the most feasible migration option given their circumstances. Sri Lanka, with its history of both labour migration and asylum seeking, provides a suitable case-study to investigate whether protection factors influence asylum seeking and labour migration.

3. Data

3.1 Development of measures

The questionnaire development progressed through various stages. An initial questionnaire was developed collaboratively with inputs from migration experts and survey design experts.

The key outcome questions included focusing on the three steps to labour migration[5]:

- aspirations for labour migration (would you or a household member like to migrate for work, with a visa, in the next two years?)

[5] The focus was on regular labour migration; irregular migration is outside the scope of this paper.

- intentions for labour migration (are you or a household member planning to migrate for work, with a visa, in the next two years?)
- actual migration (have you or a household member migrated for work, with a visa, in the last year?).

Cognitive tests were undertaken to ensure that the translated versions of these and other questions were relevant, comprehended and appropriately interpreted, that respondents were able to retrieve the relevant memory (where applicable) and were able to respond. Similar questions were also asked about seeking asylum.

The focus of the questions was on the household, permitting the survey team to consider a wider range of people. To illustrate, if a household member wanted to migrate or had actually migrated, the details relating to that household member were collected. In 2015, this involved actually calling and interviewing the migrant.

The questionnaire also included co-variates that were considered by the literature to be associated with migration. These variables were sex, age, education, log of household expenditure, external networks, number of household members, being approached by a people smuggler in the past year, mental health[6] and internal migration[7] (De Jong 2000; Carling 2002; Robinson and Segrott 2002; Heering et al. 2004; Van Dalen et al. 2007; Becerra et al. 2010; King and Skeldon 2010; Becerra 2012; Ellis 2012; Abas et al. 2013; Adhikari 2013, Creighton 2013; Czaika and Vothknecht 2014). Given the ethnic nature of the Sri Lankan conflict, a variable for ethnic minority, which includes everyone except the Sinhalese (Tamils, Moors, Burghers) was also included.

Subsequently, through discussions with migration experts and Sri Lankan experts, 48 additional items that could be associated with migration intentions were developed. After focus group discussions, outlined in Appendix A, the following items were included in the questionnaire, with 'yes/no' response options.

Ongoing deprivations/adversity items/services

- Not having enough food to eat
- Difficulty in getting a job
- Lost a job
- Improved job opportunities in your area
- Positive assistance from the authorities (related to administrative duties, complaints, etc.)
- Good access to education
- Good access to health services in your community
- Professional service from the police in your community
- Robberies in your household or in the community
- Improved safety for yourself and family
- No permanent home to live

[6] Mental health was defined using the mental health inventory (MHI-5) which has previously been used to estimate mental health by researchers in Sri Lanka (de Mel *et al.* 2008; Jayasuriya 2014)
[7] Internal migration was defined as migrating from one district to the current district since a person was five years old.

Threats/Protection issues

- Physical violence from a family member
- Physical violence from members of the police, military or government
- Physical violence by people in your village
- Arrest by the authorities for no reason
- Blackmail by authorities
- Being forced to paying a bribe to authorities
- You being abducted
- You receiving serious threats from the police, military or government

Confirmation factor analysis resulted in one factor for persecution (physical violence from members of the police, military or government, arrest by the authorities for no reason, blackmail by authorities, being abducted, being forced to paying a bribe to authorities, receiving serious threats from the police, military or government) and another for violence from family or villagers (physical violence by family members and physical violence by people in your own village). Persecution would arguably involve factors that make respondents eligible for refugee status under the United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol.[8]

The final questionnaire was translated into Sinhala and Tamil by two people, back translated by two separate people, and underwent specialist review by an independent trilingual specialist. The validity of the questionnaire was tested through discussions with the survey team and individual and focus group interviews of people pre-identified as planning asylum seeking or labour migration.

3.2 Sampling

In February and March 2014—subsequent to a pilot survey of 1010 households—a nationally representative survey of 20,632 households was undertaken using probability proportion to size techniques across 18 out of 25 districts of Sri Lanka.[9] The detailed sampling approach, pilot testing, survey process and quality checks for the 2014 survey are outlined in Jayasuriya et al. (2016). Tablet devices were used to collect data. The 2015 survey followed a similar process to the 2014 survey with respect to the survey approach and focus on quality.

Of the 20,632 households surveyed in February and March 2014:

- 2760 had at least one person who stated they would like to undertake labour migration (indicating aspirations).
    - In 2015, the survey team managed a random sample of 2350 of the 2760 households and were able to re-survey 2032 households.[10]
- 721 households had people who wanted to seek asylum, but not labour migration.

[8] However, it is acknowledged that violence by people in your household / village would only represent persecution depending on the type of violence and the protections available.
[9] Districts surveyed included, Ampara, Badulla, Batticaloa, Colombo, Galle, Hambantota, Jaffna, Kalutara, Kandy, Kegalle, Kilinochchi, Polonnaruwa, Puttalam, Mannar, Mullaitivu, Nuwara Eliya, Trincomalee and Vavuniya.
[10] The 2032 household members interviewed were statistically similar to the households that could not be reached (the 2500 less 2064) across factors such as sex, age, marital status, education levels, number of household members and mental distress.

- 17,151 households did not include anyone who indicated that they wanted to undertake migration of any kind.
    - In 2015, of these households, 3500 people were randomly selected[11] for interview (including an equal number in each district) and were statistically similar[12] to the 17,151 households from which they were drawn. Of the 3500 households targeted, 3072 households were reached and able to be re-surveyed.[13]

All households re-surveyed had provided consent in the 2014 survey to be re-surveyed at a later date. Back-checking on selected questions were performed on five per cent of the sample, producing sound reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha>0{\cdot}80$).[14]

3.3 Descriptive statistics

In 2015, 2032 households with labour migration aspirations (where at least one household member would have liked to seek labour migration as per the 2014 survey) were re-surveyed. Of these households:

- 1040 households had at least one person who still wanted to migrate
- 629 households no longer wanted to migrate
- 355 households had at least one person who actually undertook labour migration
- Six households had at least one person who had undertaken irregular migration, and two households had at least one person wanting to undertake irregular migration.

Of the 3072 'non-migration' households surveyed (where no one wanted to undertake migration) in 2014, 2783 still held that view in 2015, with only 231 now stating they would like to migrate for work, 33 stating they would now like to seek asylum and 25 who had actually migrated.

Table 1, Appendix A, presents descriptive statistics relating to those with no migration aspirations for 2014 and 2015, and those who actually migrated in 2014.

The changes over time for those without migration aspirations (Column A versus Column C) across all characteristics are relatively small, with the most significant change being positive assistance by authorities (a 10 percentage point increase). However, the differences between results in Column C and Column E (those who had migrated in the 2015 survey) are striking. For example, those who live in households where no one intends to migrate, relative to the migrant, were likely to be:

- older (47 years vs 32 years), married (90 per cent vs 64 per cent), and not in an ethnic minority (27 per cent vs 79 per cent)
- more engaged in social activities (59 per cent vs 20 per cent)
- less likely to have friends overseas (7 per cent vs 19 per cent) or family overseas (26 per cent vs 73 per cent)
- less likely to have experienced difficulty finding a job (44 per cent vs 71 per cent)
- less likely to have experienced protection issues from a family member or an inhabitant of the same village (2 per cent vs 7 per cent).

[11] Random selection occurred across a district level such that all districts surveyed in 2014 were also surveyed in 2015.
[12] Across factors such as sex, age, marital status, education levels, number of household members and mental distress.
[13] The 3,072 households reached were statistically similar to the households that weren't reached (3,500 less 3,072) across factors such as sex, age, marital status, education levels, number of household members and mental distress.
[14] Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency, that is, how closely related a set of items are as a group.

Also striking is the difference between people in areas severely affected by conflict relative to other areas. To illustrate, in 2015 (Column C), approximately 83 per cent and 85 per cent of people overall stated that they have good access to education and health services respectively, compared to just four per cent in areas severely affected by conflict. Similarly, 86 per cent of people overall stated they experienced improved safety, compared to just four per cent of people in areas severely affected by conflict.

4. Methods

For all multivariate analysis, logit regressions with odds ratios are estimated. All variables that showed a significant bivariate association (using a liberal p value of 0·25) with the outcomes of interest (migration intentions, actual migration and immobility) were entered into logistic equations. Non-significant variables were removed based on adjusted Wald tests ($p<0·05$). The analysis was done using the complex survey design command in Stata, applying probability weights (to take into consideration variations in populations across districts, differing response rates at the village level, oversampling or under-sampling across households, sex, ethnic representation and the sampling approach for the second round survey) and stratification (by district) to calculate standard errors. Weighting ensured that the time-invariant characteristics of the second round sample (totalling 5229 households) were statistically similar to those of the first round sample (20,632 households).

Given the post-conflict nature of the country, and the differences in characteristics among people residing in areas severely affected by conflict and other areas, the analysis team also included an interaction term between a dummy for severely conflict-affected districts (Jaffna, Killinochchi, Mulativu and Mannar) and selected co-variates.

The outcome variables in the regression models were labour migration intentions15 (dummy which equals 1 for migration intentions, 0 otherwise), actual labour migration16 (dummy which equals 1 for actual migration, 0 otherwise) and immobility (among those who in 2014 had migration aspirations, dummy which equals 1 for those who have now decided against labour migration, 0 for those who have actually undertaken labour migration).

Some explanatory variables may be endogenous to the model (De Jong 2000; Creighton 2013; Czaika and Vothknecht 2014). For example, higher household income may encourage migration intentions/actual migration as a person may believe they have sufficient money to migrate, while migration intentions may also lead to higher household income as a person knows that to make the next step (to actually migrate) they will require a high household income. Hence, for labour migration intentions, two regression models are presented[17]: one that uses labour migration intentions from 2015 regressed against lagged variables (2014 data); and a second that applies fixed effects analysis (which were considered more appropriate than random effects regressions as per the Hausman test). Fixed effects models remove time in-variant unobservable and observable characteristics.

For actual labour migration, three regression models were run, with migration, migration to an OECD country and migration to a non-OECD country used as the dependent variables. All three regressions

[15] Migration intentions represents a stronger statement of resolve than migration aspirations (Creighton 2013) and literature has shown that intentions are strongly associated with actual migration (Gardner et al. 1985; De Jong 2000; Van Dalen & Jenkins 2008). Hence migration intentions were considered more useful for comparisons with actual migration.
[16] The dependent variable, actual migration, is also separated into actual migration to an OECD country and actual migration to a non-OECD country.
[17] This is undertaken for robustness purposes; the models should produce similar results.

involved data from people who actually migrated between 2014 and 2015. To account for endogeneity, the co-variates are based on information from 2014 data.

For immobility, among those with migration aspirations in 2014, the dummy equals 1 for those who decided not to migrate by 2015 and the dummy equals 0 for those who migrated between 2014 and 2015. Co-variates involve using data from the 2014 survey.

5. Results

This section considers (a) factors that predict labour migration intentions, (b) factors that predict actual labour migration and (c) factors that predict labour immobility.

5.1 Factors predicting labour migration intentions

Odds ratios of factors that predict labour migration intentions are presented in Table 2, Appendix A. The coefficients, and the significance of the coefficients, were largely similar between the lagged model and the fixed effects model, giving us some comfort in the results. The analysis of results with respect to migration intentions largely draws on the fixed effects model; an exception is time-invariant characteristics, which draw from the lagged model.

The odds of a person in the ethnic minority having labour migration intentions was 4.3 times greater than a person in the ethnic majority. Why would one ethnic group prefer migration over another ethnic group? One reason could be that a particular ethnic group is more disposed to migration relative to another ethnic group. A more plausible reason is that this perhaps reflects a legacy of the civil war, with multiple organisations alleging the ethnic minority had been discriminated and persecuted against by the former Sri Lankan government. It would be interesting to investigate if this changes after any positive actions by the new Sri Lankan government towards ethnic minority groups. Note, the relationship between being in a political party in an area severely affected by conflict and migration intentions was insignificant.

Violence, perpetuated by family members or fellow villagers, and persecution among people outside areas severely affected by conflict, increased the odds of labour migration intentions by multiples of 1.5 and 1.3 respectively. This demonstrates that people who faced persecution and other protection issues were actively considering labour migration options to ‘escape’ their situation. Conversely, those in areas severely affected by conflict who experienced violence from family members or those who experienced persecution were not significantly more or less likely than other people in the same areas to have migration intentions. This could possibly reflect the view that the situation in those areas are such that a large proportion of people want to migrate, regardless of whether they face persecution or not.

A household member being approached by a people smuggler increased the odds of labour migration intentions by a multiple of 2.3. While people smuggling has been linked to irregular migration (Koser 2011; Lee 2005; Van Liempt et al. 2006), there has been less focus on links between people smuggling and regular migration. Such a result may initially seem surprising, but it demonstrates that potential labour migrants actively consider irregular migration as an option, prior to or while also considering labour migration. This supports the multi-faceted nature of migration, with potential migrants assessing and reassessing different migration pathways and selecting the one that best suits their circumstances.

Similarly, it is possible people facing persecution may have considered labour migration as irregular migration options became more limited (Jayasuriya and McAuliffe 2013).[18]

Those with family or friends living overseas had 1.5 and 2.2 times greater odds, respectively, of migration intentions. Intuitively this appears reasonable, with former migrants who have successfully gained residency in a destination country being able to provide assistance to future potential irregular migrants. Literature routinely emphasises the importance of migrants' networks and the presence of family and/or friends in destinations countries for migration (Palloni et al. 2001; Massey et al. 1999; Davenport et al. 2003; Liu 2013; Adhikari 2013).

Those who have higher household food expenditure have 1.3 times greater odds of having migration intentions, albeit not in areas severely affected by conflict. Employment prospects were also important, with those who had difficulty securing a job having 1.7 times greater odds of migration. Those with good access to education and health services (outside areas severely affected by conflict) had, respectively, 1.5 times and 1.6 times greater odds of having migration intentions. This could be a proxy for wealth, with those who have access to good services being wealthier than those who do not have access to such services.

Better mental health[19] decreases the odds of having migration intentions by 1.3 times.[20] This result is consistent with studies that found low satisfaction or levels of happiness associated with migration intentions (Graham and Markowitz 2011; Chindarkar et al. 2014). Further, being involved in social activities reduced the odds of having migration intentions by 1.7 times.[21] It seems reasonable that people with strong community links were more likely to remain in Sri Lanka, and retain those links, as opposed to migrating overseas. Literature has demonstrated a more or less strong link between social networks and migration (Harpviken 2009; Adhikari 2013).

Consistent with literature, being male and having higher education increased the odds of having migration intentions (by 8.7 times and 1.4 times respectively) while being older slightly reduced the likelihood of having migration intentions (De Jong 2000; Carling 2002; Creighton 2013). The odds of having migration intentions increased by 1.1 times when having more household members, possibly due to the need to diversify household risk (Monsutti 2008).

5.2 Factors predicting actual labour migration

Odds ratios of factors predicting actual migration for labour to any country, to a non-OECD country and an OECD country are presented in Table 3, Appendix A.

There are similarities between factors associated with migration intentions (Table 2) and actual migration (Table 3). For example, the odds of actual labour migration increased by the following factors:

- 5.4 times for being male
- 3.6 times when living in the ethnic minority
- 2.1 times when having good access to health services
- 1.8 times when having good access to education
- 1.2 times when having lower mental health

[18] This includes greater anti-people smuggling activities by the Sri Lankan government and Navy in conjunction with turn-back and third-country relocation policies in key source countries, such as Australia.
[19] Investigated using the Harvard Trauma Index.
[20] Based on an odds ratio of 0.76.
[21] Based on an odds ratio of 0.63.

- 1.1 times for being younger.

This was similar to the odds for labour migration intentions.

Yet it was clear that, for some, migration intentions were not realistic. For example, while having friends residing overseas may increase the probability of having migration intentions, it did not significantly increase the probability of actual migration. In contrast, for those with family overseas, the odds of actually migrating were 5.3 times higher.[22]

Another example of intentions not being realistic is that those who experienced persecution from authorities (in areas not severely affected by conflict) and those who had been approached by a people smuggler, had migration intentions, but they were not significantly likely to actually migrate. One possible reason is due to the increasing restrictions on irregular migration from Sri Lanka; moreover, regardless of whether a people smuggler approached a potential irregular migrant or not, the ability for actual irregular migration from Sri Lanka has reduced considerably, due in part to enhanced disruption by Sri Lankan government authorities and the anti-people smuggling policies of countries such as Australia (Jayasuriya and McAuliffe 2013). Additionally, the odds of people who experienced persecution from the authorities (in areas severely affected by conflict) actually undertaking labour migration reduced by 5.9 times[23] possibly suggesting that they view such an option as less practical than people inside severely affected conflict zones, who may have not faced persecution.

The key factor causing labour migration, apart from being male (odds increasing by 5.4 times) and having family overseas (odds increasing by 5.3 times), was violence from family members or fellow villagers (odds increasing by 4.5 times)[24]. This highlights the importance of labour migration as a strategy to enhance safety as well as an economic tool. In unreported regressions, interaction between being female and facing violence from family members or fellow villagers and actual migration was also strong. This illustrated the gender dimensions to protection and labour migration.

There were some differences with respect to the factors that influence labour migration to an OECD country relative to a non-OECD country. For example, as seems reasonable, a higher education level increased the odds of migrating to an OECD country by 1.3 times while this relationship did not exist when migrating to a non-OECD country. Being approached by a people smuggler reduced the probability of labour migration to an OECD country (or more intuitively, not being approached by a people smuggler increased the probability of labour migration to an OECD country). This suggests that people smugglers generally do not target those who are capable of migration to an OECD country through regular processes.

Other key differences were that the odds of the ethnic minority travelling to a non-OECD country were 6.3 times greater than travelling to an OECD country (in fact they were not significantly more or less likely than the ethnic majority to travel to an OECD country). Interestingly, while non-OECD countries were previously considered the destination for the majority Sinhalese ethnic group (Sriskandarajah 2002), the data from this study shows they also seem to be a labour migration option for ethnic minority Sri Lankans.

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[22] The fact that family in destination countries predicts actual migration, while having friends predicts actual migration only to OECD countries and even then to relatively small degree, points to the importance of stronger ties in the migration process. This is in contrast to recent literature advocating the importance of weaker ties over stronger ties for migrants (Collyer 2005; Garip 2008; Liu 2013). The results are not necessarily contradictory to Garip (2008) and Liu (2012), but perhaps reflects that the importance of strong and weak international networks may vary among immigrants from different countries.

[23] Based on an odds ratio of 0.17.

[24] Note, such people are not likely to meet the definition of requiring protection under the Refugee Convention, and may, on the basis of domestic violence alone, be ineligible to seek asylum.

5.3 Reasons for labour immobility among those who initially had migration intentions

Of the households with labour migration aspirations in 2014, 629 no longer had anyone in the household who wanted to undertake labour migration in 2015. Reasons for labour immobility, among those who initially had migration intentions, are presented in Table 4, Appendix A.

This table shows the key reasons for immobility among those who initially had migration intentions in areas severely affected by conflict were persecution and protection factors at Odds Ratio (OR) 9.90 and OR 9.50 respectively. In contrast, people who live outside areas severely affected by conflict, and experienced violence from family members or fellow villagers, were significantly more likely to be mobile (OR 0.24). Hence it appears that people who live in areas severely affected by conflict, and who face violence of some kind, find it more difficult to migrate than people in other areas of the country. This presents an additional dimension to Carling's (2002) constraints on mobility; physical danger may be a factor constraining not only those who attempt irregular migration, but also those who attempt to find regular migration pathways. Other reasons for immobility were older age, lower access to good education, and not having family living overseas.

It may appear unusual that household expenditure was not significantly associated with immobility. It is assumed that poorer households are more likely to be immobile as they cannot afford to migrate. However, these results are reasonable in the context that the majority of people who actually migrated (79%) did so to Middle Eastern countries, which rely on cheap labour and are likely to attract people from poorer households (Van Hear 2014).

An unusual result is that internal migration created international immobility. This is in contrast to literature which has shown that internal migration is linked to international migration (Skeldon 2006; King and Skeldon 2010; Ellis 2012). In the context of Sri Lanka, a great deal of internal migration was due to the war—a quarter of respondents in areas severely affected by conflict had experienced internal migration, compared to 16 per cent in other areas—and this could have influenced the result.[25]

6. Conclusion

This study represents possibly the first longitudinal study on migration intentions, actual migration, and immobility undertaken in a post-conflict country.

It is clear that using labour migration as an escape route does not uniformly apply to people living inside areas severely affected by conflict relative to those outside areas severely affected by conflict. Results suggest that those facing persecution from government authorities and violence from family members or fellow villagers do actively consider, and in some cases use, labour migration as an escape strategy. That labour migration, as opposed to seeking asylum, is considered an escape strategy is not strange in an environment of restricted asylum seeking options (Jayasuriya and McAuliffe 2013) and where resources needed for labour migration are estimated at twenty times less than those needed to seek asylum (Van Hear 2014). In contrast, when considering people within areas severely affected by conflict, persecution did not appear to influence actual migration. This possibly reflects that fact those within areas severely affected by conflict were unlikely to have the same resources to actually remove themselves from their

[25] Indeed, in unreported regressions, the bivariate relationship between internal migration and immobility was negative (among people outside areas severely affected by conflict).

predicament, particularly through regular migration options. Furthermore, people in areas severely affected by conflict who had been approached by a people smuggler actively considered labour migration options as well, highlighting that rational actors consider migration pathways that best suit their circumstances. These results support the convergence of factors influencing different types of migration (Koser 2011).

Among those who initially had migration intentions, the most important drivers for immobility within areas severely affected by conflict (by a large margin) were persecution and violence from family members or village inhabitants. Thus, those who experienced persecution and violence from these sources, particularly in areas severely affected by conflict, appear to be involuntarily immobile.

From a policy perspective this paper demonstrates that people needing to escape persecution, and seeking other forms of protection may, if presented with the option, migrate to countries for work through regular pathways, rather than to other countries for asylum via irregular pathways. These are not refugees who enter the labour market (Salt 1992), but people who *could be* refugees, and instead choose regular labour migration pathways in a destination country (usually the Middle East) that may not be their preferred choice. Hence, a possible option is to explore the feasibility of encouraging low-skilled labour migration for potential asylum seekers—and even refugees waiting in UN camps—to Middle Eastern countries. An alternative strategy could be for developed countries to assist vulnerable people to improve their vocational skills and work with key destination countries to improve recognition rates, which could guide them into regular migration pathways. However, it is noted that it is unlikely that developed countries would recruit low-skilled workers on any significant scale, especially if labour-intensive and low paying service industries, such as cleaning, are already filled by irregular migrants (Salt 1992).

The finding that having networks overseas is a key determinant of labour migration is not surprising, and with limited exceptions (Krissman 2005) is supported by literature (Palloni et al. 2001; Collyer 2005; Garip 2008; Liu 2013). What is interesting is the magnitude of its importance; having networks overseas represents the *most* important factor (after being male) linked with actual migration and it is a key reason for immobility for people without those connections.

Members of ethnic minority groups were significantly more likely to migrate to a non-OECD country relative to the ethnic majority group. This represents a different trend to the past, where non-OECD countries, particularly those in the Middle East, were considered to be a place where the ethnic majority had migrated (Jayasuriya and McAuliffe 2013).

Some limitations to this study need to be acknowledged. First, while techniques were employed to increase the likelihood of people honestly answering questions relating to protection[26], it is possible that this was not always the case. However, such issues are also experienced by multiple researchers who investigate sensitive questions using quantitative data (Adhikari 2013). Second, despite best efforts, and similar to all other studies on the determinants of migration, it is clear that there may be omitted variables in the factors that predict migration intentions and/or actual migration.[27] Third, the second round survey was undertaken only one year after the first round survey; surveys over further years would better highlight whether the changed political situation influences migration decisions and, possibly, return migration.

[26] The tablet device was presented to people for them to enter sensitive information, such as that relating to protection concerns. This has been known to increase the likelihood of obtaining accurate information (Jewkes *et al.* 2009).
[27] One such example is cognitive migration, or "the narrative imagining of oneself inhabiting a foreign destination prior to the actual physical move" (Koikkalainen and Kyle 2015).

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Appendix A

Table 1: Descriptive statistics (weighted)

	No migration aspirations (2014 survey)		No migration aspirations (2015 survey)*		Migrated? (2015 survey)**	
	Mean/ Percentage	SD	Mean/ Percentage	SD	Mean/ Percentage	SD
Column	A	B	C	D	E	F
Basic socio-economic characteristics						
Male	43%	0.01	43%	0.01	82%	0.03
Age	46	4.10	47	4.26	32	0.68
Married	91%	0.01	90%	0.01	64%	0.04
Ethnic minority	27%	0.02	27%	0.02	79%	0.04
Education and access to education						
Education level						
None	2%		2%		1%	
Primary	31%		30%		29%	
Secondary	63%		64%		67%	
Tertiary	3%		4%		3%	
Good access to education	82%	0.01	83%	0.01	78%	0.03
Conflictmost*Good access to education	4%	0.00	4%	0.00	5%	0.01
Health						
Mental health (depressed)	6%	0.01	5%	0.01	11%	0.01
Good access to health services	83%	0.01	85%	0.01	80%	0.03
Conflictmost*Good access to health services	4%	0.00	4%	0.00	6%	0.01
Employment						
Improved job opportunities	35%	0.02	42%	0.02	22%	0.04
Difficulty finding a job	38%	0.02	44%	0.02	71%	0.04
Social and political engagement						
Engagement in social activities	62%	0.02	59%	0.02	20%	0.03
Involvement in politics	11%	0.01	8%	0.01	4%	0.02
Location						
Conflictmost	5%	0.00	5%	0.00	6%	0.01
Internal migration	13%	0.01	13%	0.01	11%	0.01

Table 1: Descriptive statistics (weighted)

	No migration aspirations (2014 survey)		No migration aspirations (2015 survey)*		Migrated? (2015 survey)**	
	Mean/ Percentage	SD	Mean/ Percentage	SD	Mean/ Percentage	SD
Column	A	B	C	D	E	F
Household level information						
Number of household members	420%	0.04	4.34	0.04	4.81	0.13
Family overseas	25%	0.01	26%	0.07	73%	0.03
Friends overseas	6%	0.03	7%	0.01	19%	0.03
Positive actions by the government						
Positive assistance from government	54%	0.02	64%	0.02	54%	0.04
Conflictmost*Positive assistance from government	2%	0.00	3%	0.00	4%	0.01
Improved safety	85%	0.01	86%	0.02	79%	0.03
Conflictmost*Improved safety	4%	0.00	4%	0.00	5%	0.01
People smuggling and protection issues^						
Previously approached by a people smuggler	1%	0.00	1%	0.00	3%	0.01
Protection issues from authorities	1%	0.00	1%	0.00	3%	0.01
Conflictmost*Protection issues from authorities	1%	0.00	1%	0.00	0%	0.00
Protection issues from family and village people	2%	0.00	2%	0.01	7%	0.01
Conflictmost*Protection issues from family and village people	1%	0.00	1%	0.00	0%	0.00
Observations	17, 151		3,072		355	

Aspirations normally includes people with intentions. However for the purposes of this presentation, the data in Table 1 does not include those with intentions

^ These represent the weighted results. Unweighted results have a higher number of people who faced protection issues from the authorities and protection issues from family and village people.
Conflictmost represents severe conflict affected areas comprising the districts of Jaffna, Killinochchi, Mullativu and Mannar.

* Refers to those surveyed in 2014, who in 2015 had no migration aspirations.
** Refers to those who migrated between 2014 and 2015.

Table 2: Factors predicting labour migration intentions

	Migration intentions (2015 survey)	Migration intentions (Fixed Effects)
Column	A	B
Basic socio-economic characteristics		
Male	8.71***	
	(1.28)	
Older	0.94***	
	(0.01)	
L.Married	1.10	
	(0.20)	
Ethnic minority	4.27***	
	(1.04)	
Education and access to education		
L.Education level	1.39**	1.41***
	(0.17)	(0.16)
L.Good access to education	1.69**	1.57*
	(0.38)	(0.39)
L.Conflictmost*Education	0.59	0.67
	(0.25)	(0.25)
Health		
L.Mental health	0.67***	0.76***
	(0.05)	(0.05)
L.Good access to health services	2.00**	1.50*
	(0.59)	(0.37)
L.Conflictmost*Good access to health services	0.52	0.57
	(0.21)	(0.22)
Employment		
L.Improved job opportunities	0.96	0.81
	(0.15)	(0.12)
L.Work full time	0.71**	0.82*
	(0.12)	(0.16)
L.Difficulty finding a job	1.72***	1.71***
	(0.28)	(0.24)
Social and political engagement		
L.Engagement in social activities	0.65***	0.63***
	(0.10)	(0.09)
L.Involvement in politics	1.15	1.42
	(0.42)	(0.72)
Location		
Conflictmost	3.83**	
	(2.30)	
L.Internal migration	1.22	1.06
	(0.21)	(0.16)

Table 2: Factors predicting labour migration intentions

	Migration intentions (2015 survey)	Migration intentions (Fixed Effects)
Column	A	B
Household level information		
L.Weekly food expenditure	1.28*	1.28**
	(0.17)	(0.13)
L.Conflictmost*Weekly food expenditure	1.12	1.04
	(0.21)	(0.14)
L.Number of household members	1.14***	1.11***
	(0.05)	(0.04)
L.Family overseas	1.99***	1.45***
	(0.28)	(0.18)
L.Friends overseas	1.46**	2.20***
	(0.25)	(0.37)
Positive actions by the government		
L.Positive assistance from government	1.02	1.14
	(0.16)	(0.17)
L.Conflictmost*Positive assistance from government	0.87	0.82
	(0.22)	(0.21)
L.Improved safety	1.27	1.38
	(0.33)	(0.32)
L.Conflictmost*Improved safety	0.63	1.33
	(0.28)	(0.51)
People smuggling and protection concerns		
L.Previously approached by a people smuggler	1.77**	2.31***
	(0.48)	(0.74)
L.Protection issues from authorities	3.68**	1.48**
	(2.03)	(0.59)
L.Conflictmost*Protection issues from authorities	0.11	0.74
	(0.08)	(0.42)
L.Protection issues from family and village people	1.03**	1.25**
	(0.56)	(0.55)
L.Conflictmost*Protection issues from family and village people	2.41	4.65
	(2.28)	(3.23)
Observations	4,679	4,694

"L." represents 2014 data for Column (A) and all other variables are time-invariant. For Column (B), which applies a fixed effects model, data is sourced from 2014 and 2015 surveys. Ordered logit regressions with Odds Ratios are presented. The data in parenthesis represents standard errors. Conflictmost represents severe conflict affected areas comprising the districts of Jaffna, Killinochchi, Mulativu and Mannar.

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 3: Factors predicting actual labour migration

	Migrate	Migrate (OECD country)	Migrate (non-OECD country)
Column	A	B	C
Basic socio-economic characteristics			
Male	5.43***	5.63***	5.15***
	(1.35)	(2.22)	(1.53)
Older	0.94***	0.95***	0.94***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
L.Married	1.16	2.01	1.17
	(0.27)	(0.90)	(0.34)
Ethnic minority	3.56***	1.03	6.31***
	(1.09)	(0.55)	(2.64)
Education and access to education			
L.Education level	0.91	1.33*	0.93
	(0.14)	(0.24)	(0.16)
L.Good access to education	1.80**	1.52	1.78*
	(0.45)	(0.66)	(0.53)
L.Conflictmost*Education	0.80	0.67	0.47
	(0.47)	(0.54)	(0.35)
Health			
L.Mental health	0.82**	0.81*	0.83**
	(0.07)	(0.10)	(0.08)
L.Good access to health services	2.05**	12.68***	1.74
	(0.67)	(10.82)	(0.60)
L.Conflictmost*Good access to health services	0.59	0.07**	1.13
	(0.33)	(0.08)	(0.88)
Employment			
L.Improved job opportunities	0.72	0.56	0.74
	(0.15)	(0.21)	(0.16)
L.Work full time	0.53**	0.13***	0.76
	(0.16)	(0.09)	(0.24)
L.Difficulty finding a job	1.35	1.38	1.23
	(0.25)	(0.54)	(0.24)
Social and political engagement			
L.Engagement in social activities	0.82	0.94	0.77
	(0.17)	(0.40)	(0.19)
L.Involvement in politics	1.00	1.40	0.16**
	(0.56)	(1.16)	(0.13)
Location			
Conflictmost	0.28	5.97	0.29
	(0.28)	(9.18)	(0.37)
L.Internal migration	0.98	0.79	0.82

Table 3: Factors predicting actual labour migration

	Migrate	Migrate (OECD country)	Migrate (non-OECD country)
Column	A	B	C
	(0.25)	(0.39)	(0.23)
Household level information			
L.log(Weekly food expenditure)	1.01	1.04**	1.04
	(0.16)	(0.25)	(0.17)
L.Conflictmost*log(Weekly food expenditure)	1.60	1.76	1.20
	(0.43)	(0.70)	(0.39)
L.Number of household members	1.05	0.93	1.06
	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.06)
L.Family overseas	5.30***	20.31***	4.41***
	(0.97)	(12.57)	(0.91)
L.Friends overseas	1.25	2.19**	0.89
	(0.27)	(0.84)	(0.22)
Positive actions by the government			
L.Positive assistance from government	0.62***	0.60	0.57***
	(0.11)	(0.22)	(0.11)
L.Conflictmost*Positive assistance from government	0.73	0.95	0.32***
	(0.33)	(0.60)	(0.13)
L.Improved safety	1.62	1.69	1.59
	(0.51)	(0.97)	(0.61)
L.Conflictmost*Improved safety	0.71	0.60	1.39
	(0.44)	(0.60)	(1.05)
People smuggling and protection concerns			
L.Previously approached by a people smuggler	0.49	0.04	0.71
	(0.43)	(0.06)	(0.60)
L.Protection issues from authorities	0.86	1.91	0.78
	(0.43)	(1.70)	(0.37)
L.Conflictmost*Protection issues from authorities	0.17*	0.05**	0.20
	(0.16)	(0.07)	(0.22)
L.Protection issues from family and village people	4.51***	6.32***	2.97**
	(1.92)	(4.42)	(1.34)
L.Conflictmost*Protection issues from family and village people	0.34		0.75
	(0.32)		(0.80)
Observations	5,024	4,722	4,943

"L." represents 2014 data. Ordered logit regressions with Odds Ratios are presented. Conflictmost represents severe conflict affected areas comprising the districts of Jaffna, Killinochchi, Mulativu and Mannar.

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4: Factors predicting immobility among those who initially had migration intentions

	Immobility
Column	A
Basic socio-economic characteristics	
Male	1.02
	(0.25)
Older	1.05***
	(0.01)
L.Married	0.68
	(0.16)
Ethnic minority	0.79
	(0.26)
Education and access to education	
L.Education level	1.33
	(0.21)
L.Good access to education	0.37***
	(0.13)
L.Conflictmost*Education	1.60
	(1.12)
Health	
L.Mental health	1.12
	(0.12)
L.Good access to health services	0.71
	(0.30)
L.Conflictmost*Good access to health services	1.15
	(0.72)
Employment	
L.Improved job opportunities	1.43
	(0.35)
L.Work full time	0.92
	(0.30)
L.Difficulty finding a job	0.87
	(0.19)
Social and political engagement	
L.Engagement in social activities	1.22
	(0.27)
L.Involvement in politics	2.37
	(1.32)
Location	
Conflictmost	10.79
	(16.12)
Internal migration	2.18**
	(0.72)

Table 4: Factors predicting immobility among those who initially had migration intentions

	Immobility
Column	A
Household level information	
L.log(Weekly food expenditure)	0.97
	(0.18)
L.Conflictmost*log(Weekly food expenditure)	0.57
	(0.22)
L.Number of household members	1.04
	(0.07)
Family overseas	0.19***
	(0.04)
Friends overseas	1.49
	(0.46)
Positive actions by the government	
Positive assistance from government	1.37
	(0.27)
L.Conflictmost*Positive assistance from government	1.01
	(0.46)
L.Improved safety	0.96
	(0.35)
L.Conflictmost*Improved safety	0.83
	(0.64)
People smuggling and protection concerns	
L.Previously approached by a people smuggler	1.94
	(1.26)
L.Protection issues from authorities	0.86
	(0.27)
L.Conflictmost*Protection issues from authorities	9.90**
	(9.17)
L.Potections issues from family and village people	0.24**
	(0.14)
L.Conflictmost*Potection issues from family and village people	9.50*
	(11.21)
Observations	938

Dependent variable is dummy where 1 represents people who intended to migrate in 2014, but in 2015 no longer want to migrate, and 0 represents those who migrated between the 2014 and 2015 surveys. "L." represents 2014 data and all other variables are time-invariant. Ordered logit regressions with Odds Ratios are presented. Conflictmost represents severe conflict affected areas comprising the districts of Jaffna, Killinochchi, Mulativu and Mannar.

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.