

## Jesuits put children of migrants in spotlight

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The Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific (JCAP) has published a book seeking to provide better understanding of what happens to children left behind by their migrant worker parents.



In *Left-behind Children and the Idea of the Family*, the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific's (JCAP) migration network features five articles with country-specific perspectives — and tries to address the issues these children and their families face.

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Most literature concentrates on migrant workers themselves and often overlooks their children, JCAP said.

Migration is a major political, economic, social and cultural concern in Asia Pacific. China, Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia are among the world's top 25 suppliers of migrants, while Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand are among the top 25 countries in the world with the highest immigration rates.

"Migration has created the notion of transnational families, in which activities that are associated with parent-child relationships are now organised across national boundaries," said Father Benny Hari Juliawan, JCAP Secretary for Social Ministries and Coordinator for Migration and editor of the book.

The collection of articles in the book shows the changing nature of many families in Asia given the surge in people migrating for work. While families are quick to find new ways albeit with struggles, governments have been slow in adapting to the new environment.

"Their main concern is still overwhelmingly economic and limited to facilitating the flow of labour demand and supply across borders," said Father Juliawan. "This publication hopefully sheds light on different, more human, dimensions of migration, and encourages appropriate attitudes and policies."

