An Assessment of Principal Regional Consultative Processes on Migration

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An Assessment of Principal Regional Consultative Processes on Migration

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

APC	–	Intergovernmental Asia-Pacific Consultations on Refugees, Displaced Persons and Migrants
ASEAN	–	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	–	African Union
EU	–	European Union
EUROPOL	–	European Policy Office
FRONTEX	–	European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union
GCC	–	Gulf Cooperation Council
GCIM	–	Global Commission on International Migration
GFMD	–	Global Forum on Migration and Development
ICPD (PoA)	–	International Conference on Population and Development (Programme of Action)
IGAD	–	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IGAD-RCP	–	Intergovernmental Authority on Development Regional Consultative Process on Migration
IGC	–	Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees
ILO	–	International Labour Organization
INTERPOL	–	International Criminal Police Organization
IOM	–	International Organization for Migration
MERCOSUR	–	Common Market of the South
MIDSA	–	Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa
MIDWA	–	Migration Dialogue for West Africa
MTM	–	Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue
NGO	–	Non-governmental organization
RCM	–	Regional Conference on Migration (Puebla Process)
RCP	–	Regional Consultative Process on Migration
SACM	–	South American Conference on Migration
SADC	–	Southern African Development Community
SAR	–	Special Administrative Region of China
UN	–	United Nations
UNDP	–	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	–	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNODC	–	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USA	–	United States of America
WTO	–	World Trade Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The present report assesses fourteen Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCPs) spanning most regions of the globe. It is based on over eighty interviews with government officials, NGOs, and secretariats, as well as on official documents and the secondary scholarly literature.

Aim: The goal of the report is to assess the role of RCPs in migration governance. Migration governance is understood as a process made up of distinct phases: (i) agenda setting and issue definition, (ii) consensus building and position convergence, and (iii) changes to migration policy and practice. This study is, therefore, as interested in the "how" of the process through which states think about, debate and address migration issues as it is in the "what" of the final outcome of the process in terms of laws, policies and practices.

Argument: The report argues that RCPs can play a role, though a complementary one, during all phases by (i) building trust between states and increasing understanding of migration issues, (ii) breaking down divides between states and between different government departments within states, creating networks and facilitating a harmonization of positions across regions and (iii) building capacity and effecting changes in concrete laws, policies or practices governing how migration is managed at the national and regional level.

Lessons learned: The extent to which RCPs affect migration governance will be a function of their size and institutional arrangements, leadership, membership, funding and, above all, state ownership. Where they fail it may be a function of (a) one or more of these factors or (b) broader state failure.

Conclusion: RCPs are nested within a wider constellation of mechanisms, actors, agreements, and efforts in the realm of migration governance at the regional and international level. The future of RCPs may follow one of three trajectories: (a) remaining regions- and ends-specific, (b) as a stepping stone to a truly global governance migration regime, or, most likely, (c) remaining informal, non-binding processes but becoming ones that attend more closely to incentivizing cooperation and, therefore, finding a middle way between ad-hoc discussions and supranational migration governance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Although the importance of migration in international relations is generally recognized, there is currently no single overarching regime governing migration at the global level, as there is with respect to refugees or trade. To be sure, there is a large body of law relevant to migrants and the conditions of migration, referred to collectively as "International Migration Law"[1], including international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law, consular and diplomatic law, crime control, and law of the sea, among others (Betts in press). There is, however, no single regime unifying these disparate elements. The 1990 United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families is the most comprehensive instrument, but its history is instructive: it took ten years to negotiate, another ten plus to secure the necessary ratifications for it to enter into force, and today there is still no major destination country for migrants that is party. This experience underscores the priority governments around the world, and most particularly major industrialized destination countries, place on retaining sovereign discretion over the numbers and groups of non-nationals entering their territory and conditions under which they enter. The experience in the World Trade Organization (WTO) with the effort to liberalize the movement of persons as providers of services on a temporary basis in countries other than their own – Mode 4 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services – is similar. Only a very modest degree of liberalization has occurred to date and then only for the most highly-skilled (intra-corporate transferees, executives and managers).

The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo and its Programme of Action (PoA) – Chapter 10 – marked the first consensus treatment of migration at the global level. Subsequent efforts every two years in the UN General Assembly to call for the convening of a global conference on migration were met with vigorous opposition, primarily from major destination countries for migrants, for fear that such a conference would split along North/South lines, further polarizing attitudes to what was already considered a sensitive subject and in fact constituting a step backwards from the ICPD PoA.

It is against this backdrop that, motivated most broadly by the recognition that few if any states can unilaterally manage migration, Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCPs) emerged in many regions of the world, most significantly in the middle to late 1990s. RCPs are inter-state fora for addressing migration. As most migration has historically taken place in a regional or inter-regional context, smaller, informal gatherings of states with an interest in common migration patterns were formed to provide a venue and opportunity to come together, understand each others'

perspectives, and identify common solutions. The shared language that was developed, and the recognition that today most states are simultaneously countries of origin, transit and destination to varying degrees, helped pave the way for subsequent successful global efforts on migration, most ambitiously the Berne Initiative, 2001-2005, the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM), 2003-2005, which was quickly followed in 2006 by the UN General Assembly-hosted High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, and by the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), which by late 2009 had held three meetings. In the light of these developments and in view of questions raised most notably in the context of the GCIM and GFMD regarding the output and impacts of RCPs, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) commissioned this assessment.

RCPs defined

RCPs are repeated, regional meetings of states dedicated to discussing migration. They vary greatly in their composition, history, purpose and organizational frameworks, but they do share the following principal characteristics:

1. They are informal and non-binding. Informality is understood here in value-neutral terms, whereby participants are not put in a negotiating position to defend national interests or political positions (the "party line"). Informality helps break down barriers to cooperation, such as an absence of trust between states, fears of political or financial costs, adversarial international relationships, or a lack of understanding of the perspectives and concerns of others. As international relations theorist Charles Lipson put it, "informality is best understood as a device for minimizing the impediments to cooperation" (Lipson 1991:500). Informality, however, should not be confused with laxness or casualness, or the absence of procedures that govern the way in which an RCP operates, as indeed many RCPs have formal modalities on various organizational aspects, such as the functioning of the secretariat or chairmanship, rules surrounding confidentiality, and mechanisms regarding meeting cycles and membership. The processes are non-binding in that states do not negotiate binding rules and are not obligated to implement any changes following meetings.
2. In contrast to many other regional bodies, which may take up migration as one of many themes of discussion, RCPs stand out because they were purposefully created to deal with migration issues only.
3. The definition of what is considered "regional" is flexible – it usually depends on what is logical in light of the scope of the migration issue that

is to be addressed. “Regional” may also be used figuratively rather than geographically, as in the case when a group of states which primarily define themselves as countries of destination come together based on their like-mindedness and common location on the “migration map” as opposed to a geographic connection in the strictest sense.

4. They are processes, not one-off events, and as such have to meet more than once.
5. Most RCPs are not officially associated with formal regional institutions. This, however, does not mean that RCPs operate in a vacuum. Instead, they are often embedded in their regional contexts and interact with regional bodies, associations and integration processes in complex ways. RCPs, and above all those that have emerged within the last decade, should be seen as a reflection and reinforcement of a trend towards greater political and economic regionalization across the globe. In recent years, regional organizations and economic integration processes such as the European Union (EU), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the African Union (AU), the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) and the South African Development Community (SADC), to name but a few, have added migration to their agendas, providing yet another venue for inter-state cooperation on this topic. Inter-regional dialogues on the subject are also taking place with increasing frequency, such as those between Europe and Africa.

2. ASSESSING WHAT AND HOW?

The governance process

This paper seeks to assess the effect of RCPs on migration governance. Migration governance is an essential but (as is generally the case when "governance" is discussed) slippery concept.[2] Governance is often narrowly defined as statutory outputs, particularly a new or revised law. The passage of a law, however, is only a final product of governance. This study suggests that it is more useful to conceive of governance as a process that starts at the perception and definition of a migration issue and may culminate in the laws, policies, practices and procedures through which governments respond to migration phenomena. Such a process will consist of different stages and incorporate a variety of actors at various levels of decision-making. Therefore, this study is as interested in the "how" of the process through which states think about, debate and address migration issues as it is in the "what" of the final outcome of the process in terms of laws, policies and practices.[3]

The phases of the governance process that can be identified are:

i. *agenda setting* (the development of sufficient common ground among states that they are prepared to talk about migration in a regional context) and *issue definition* (an understanding of different types of migration and the issues at stake in them and the emergence of a common set of terms and concepts used to understand migration);
ii. *consensus building* through communication (often to the point where communication and coordination with other states becomes a more natural part of the governance process) and, eventually, *position convergence* (on a particular aspect of migration, or an issue of particular concern); and
iii. *changes in concrete laws, policies or practices* governing how migration is managed at the national and regional level.

It is coherent – indeed essential – to consider whether RCPs had an influence (that is, effected a change) during any of these phases. Put another way, RCPs can have an effect on phases (i) and (ii) without always and necessarily having an effect on the migration policy outputs (phase iii). In other cases, RCPs may affect all three phases.

The governance process thus described can take place entirely within the national sphere. The state (understood as the executive constrained by the legislature and the courts) is the principal actor in migration governance and for the purpose of this

study, we view governments as the main unit of analysis.[4] However, as this study considers processes that are by definition supra-national, the focus is placed primarily on interaction and cooperation *between* states, rather than on processes taking place *within* states. In the same way, in addition to the impacts of RCPs on national level migration governance, the outcomes at the regional level will receive special attention.

Why such a broad analytical framework? The study considers fourteen RCPs with different histories, created for different reasons and working towards variable, albeit comparable, goals. In turn, these RCPs are made up of countries with multiple languages, cultures, institutions, aims, and migration experiences. It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to strike a perfect balance between remaining sensitive to these differences, on the one hand, and saying something general (and hopefully generally useful), on the other. Too narrow a framework of analysis would therefore risk setting the bar too high (for instance, the creation of an international body with binding powers over migration). Some RCPs would inevitably fail to attain such a goal, and those involved in them could legitimately object that they are being judged by a standard they had never intended to meet in the first place. At the other extreme, if the standard is set too low, then a simple meeting or even the promise to hold one eventually could constitute a success. The correct standard lies somewhere in the middle.

Methodology and caveats

This assessment is an attempt to isolate and explain change, namely the effect of RCPs on migration governance. It is therefore attempting to explain causality. As is well known in the social sciences,[5] isolating causal factors is extremely difficult, and ranking them is even more so. This is because explaining the cause (in formal terms, the independent variable) of the effect (the dependent variable) requires proving the importance of one factor over a large range of possible factors. This is also the case here: the factors feeding into the migration governance process are always multiple and isolating the effect of a single one of them – i.e. the RCP – is tricky. In other words, under conditions of multi-causality, iron-clad certainties are unlikely to be achieved.

If we wanted, for instance, to specify precisely the role of traffickers in driving migration flows over the last two decades, the only way to do this conclusively would be to "remove" traffickers from the world and rerun migration history without them. We would then know how important traffickers are relative to individual initiative, family networks, wealth differentials, underground economies, labour market demand in destination countries and the other factors that influence migration flows. Similarly, we can only truly understand the exact role of RCPs over the last two decades if we rerun migration history without them. It (obviously) cannot be done.

The lesson here is that causal inferences need to be drawn cautiously. In conceiving this study, it was assumed that the closest approximation to a historical rerun was speaking with those who are directly involved in migration governance and have participated and are participating in the major RCPs. Accordingly, over 80 interviews were conducted, principally with representatives from government, but also from international organizations, NGOs and academia.[6] All individuals are or were intimately involved in the creation and/or operation of the RCPs under study, or were observers of such processes. They were identified through RCP secretariats where they exist, through international organizations[7], and through the "snowballing" technique (asking interviewees to suggest the names of other individuals who might be willing to participate in the study). One limitation of this method is that the quality of the data essentially depends on the quality (and quantity) of interviews conducted: in some cases and regions it was easier to identify and contact willing interview partners than in others. The number of interviews per RCP also varied with the size of the process at hand. In general, the researchers tried to offset the limitations of this methodology a) by giving priority to obtaining interviews with persons offering a variety of perspectives (e.g. small and large states, countries of origin and destination within the same process) and b) by supplementing interviews with other sources, such as documents produced by the RCPs themselves.

Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured fashion: that is, the interview was based on a standard set of questions which covered the major lines of research of this assessment, but the conversations varied according to the knowledge, experience and background of each individual and were adapted to the particularities of each RCP. The semi-structured format also allowed the interviewer to explore important issues that arose as the conversation developed and which had not been anticipated. Interviewees were informed of the main topics of the interview by email beforehand. With a few exceptions, the interviews were held over the phone and lasted from thirty minutes to one hour. Interviews are treated as confidential and were conducted in English, French, Spanish or German depending on the interviewee's preference.

Complementing the interviews, the researchers also examined publicly available documentation – such as declarations, plans of action, and reports – produced by the RCPs themselves, as well as secondary literature on RCPs (see for example Klekowski von Koppenfels 2001; Hansen 2004; Thouez 2006; Koehler in press; Channac 2007; Betts in press;) and theoretical accounts of international cooperation that, though not necessarily directly relevant, have implications for understanding international cooperation on migration (Keohane and Nye 1974; Slaughter 2000; Koehler, Hansen, and Money forthcoming).

Which RCPs?

RCPs have proliferated over the last two decades and it would be impossible to examine all of them. They were chosen for their range (covering most of the globe); their life spans (including the oldest and newest RCPs); size (ranging from the smallest to largest); and histories (which contrast, showing how different RCPs were formed for different reasons and to meet different challenges). There are, to be sure, other RCPs worthy of study. The fact that they were not included does not imply that the report's author views them as less relevant; it was simply a matter of space and scope limitations. For this study, the following fourteen RCPs were selected:

- The Budapest Process
- The Cross-Border Cooperation Process (Söderköping Process)
- The Regional Conference on Migration (RCM, Puebla Process)
- The South American Conference on Migration (SACM)
- The Regional Ministerial Conference on Migration in the Western Mediterranean (5 + 5 Dialogue)
- The Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue (MTM)
- The Migration Dialogue for West Africa (MIDWA)
- The Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA)
- The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Regional Consultative Process on Migration (IGAD-RCP)
- The Intergovernmental Asia-Pacific Consultations on Refugees, Displaced Persons and Migrants (APC)
- The Ministerial Consultations on Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin in Asia (Colombo Process)
- The Ministerial Consultations on Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin and Destination in Asia (Abu Dhabi Dialogue)
- The Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (Bali Process)
- The Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC)

3. THE EFFECTS OF RCPS ON THE MIGRATION GOVERNANCE PROCESS

Through RCPs, the number of ministerial meetings, training seminars, conferences, and workshops on migration has increased exponentially over the last two decades. It is hard to think of a single issue related to migration that has not been the subject of an RCP-enabled meeting. Given how politically sensitive migration can be, the fact that these meetings have occurred is noteworthy. In itself, it does not, however, provide any evidence for an impact on migration governance. Activity does not equal impact; a meeting can just be a meeting; and no RCP should be evaluated according to the number of meetings it held. The important question is whether RCPs contribute to overcoming the impediments to cooperation thrown up by this particularly difficult area: an absence of trust between states (and even between government departments within states), fears of political or financial costs, adversarial international relationships, or a lack of understanding of the perspectives and concerns of others.

If these obstacles are overcome by RCPs, there is a *prima facie* case for suggesting that RCPs contribute to migration governance. Recall that, according to the model of migration governance outlined above, there are three distinct phases in the migration governance process: (i) agenda setting and issue definition, (ii) consensus building and position convergence, and (iii) changes in law, policy and practice at the national and regional levels. RCPs can, but certainly do not always, have an effect on all three counts. It is to these phases that the report now turns.

(i) Agenda setting & issue definition

Building trust

Trust is the belief among two or more actors that they can speak freely with each other and the confidence on the part of one that the others will be true to their words. The importance of trust cannot be overemphasized; it is the very basis of what social scientists call "collective action" (Axelrod 1984; Olson 1965) but which is really simply cooperating and working together. Trust is required at all levels; between friends, neighbours, associations, political parties, and states; indeed, it is especially the mainstay of international cooperation. In the absence of trust, there is no cooperation.

To understand this, it is necessary to think of the mechanisms behind trust building: the benefit of informality, i.e. the creation of a depoliticized setting, is essential here. As soon as a setting is formal, as soon as it is aimed at negotiating a treaty or reaching

some other binding agreement, a specific dynamic is set in motion: people come with prepared statements, they have clear boundaries defining what they are willing to give and what they are not, and they are throughout guarded in their statements. In an informal process, by contrast, participants do not have to come with a prepared position; actors can share concerns, information, goals and proposals and expect that others will do the same. Under conditions of informality, participants can speak freely and honestly, and they (almost always) do not have to fear that their words will cost them. The vast majority of respondents in this study cited informality as a, if not the, crucial characteristic in oiling the RCP mechanism. Indeed, much of the important discussion occurs outside the scheduled meetings, in the corridors and over coffee or breakfast.[8] That said, as several non-state observers of RCPs pointed out, one might also question whether there can ever be such a thing as "absolute informality" in an inter-state setting. Perhaps in some political, and indeed cultural, contexts more than others, state officials may have internalized a certain diplomatic formality to such a degree that they will never completely "let their guard down".

In addition, repeated interaction is key. When two actors meet, they share information and opinions and often make promises to each other. They will only trust each other, and meet again, if the information/opinions shared are treated appropriately (not, for instance, reported to the press), and when the commitments entered into are respected. When they are, the actors will meet again and, all things being equal, be still more open in their discussions. A virtuous circle of interaction = trust = increased interaction = more trust can ensue. The regular and *repeated* meetings of RCPs are structurally predisposed to the creation and maintenance of trust. In fact, a number of respondents used terms such as "family" or "friendships" to describe the relationships that have developed during the course of their state's participation in a certain RCP. Interestingly, this was not only the case among the like-minded groups of states, but also under the more challenging circumstances when an RCP consists of states with rather divergent migration experiences.

Increasing understanding of migration

The exchange of information and the improvement of the understanding of migration issues are the stated objectives of every single RCP included in this study and it is the area in which RCPs have produced one of the strongest impacts on the migration governance process. This learning process takes both unstructured and structured forms. In the first, questions and comments made during discussions allow one country to understand the concerns of another – this is particularly relevant in migration where perspectives on the issue often differ starkly: for example, what is "repatriation" for one state is "deportation" for another. At the same time, a state may discover through these conversations that it is not alone in facing a certain challenge

and that other governments have dealt with it before. In many RCPs a good deal of the time is devoted to exchanges between officials on law and policy reforms, approaches, measures and programmes addressing different migration issues, and lessons learned. This represents a major value added of RCPs: instead of "reinventing the wheel", a state benefits from the experiences of other countries and can evaluate how an approach tried elsewhere might fit into its own policy or legal landscape on migration. The examples are too numerous to list entirely, but one illustrates the point. In RCM, a representative from El Salvador spoke at one meeting about how the country uses its consular system to organize and connect its migrant communities abroad. The conversation was illuminating for the Costa Rican representatives who concluded that this might also prove useful for their own country. In other cases, where either a particular representative of a country or the country's political and administrative establishment itself knows little about migration, the RCP can bring them up to speed very quickly. Respondents from many countries testified that they had learned a great deal about the "nuts and bolts" of migration through their respective RCPs.

In its second, structured, form, a number of RCPs have systematized the way in which they gather, store, disseminate and publish information and statistics on migration and migration policy. The IGC has a very large, secure database which compares information on migration, asylum, return, and (to a lesser degree) integration; the quality and range of data match that offered by the EU and Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). In addition, the process's secretariat responds to requests from individual states. For example, when Sweden experienced new problems with unaccompanied minors and a mass influx of Iraqi asylum seekers, it resorted to the IGC secretariat for information. Likewise, the Söderköping Process maintains a database on migration for the participating governments, and often provides country profiles of Söderköping Process countries to the EU. The Process is the only source from which states can obtain EU policy documents on migration and asylum in Russian translations. RCM's well-known Statistical Information System on Migration in Central America and Mexico is another example of an RCP-run database. SACM is in the process of setting up a Migration Information Network for exchanging and making available – to participating countries, institutions within these countries, and possibly NGOs – statistics, information on changes in legislation, and studies on migration. A sort of virtual network, it would be maintained by focal points in various countries who would liaise with other focal points and transmit the information to the other states. The exchange of data and information through RCPs is also more cost-effective – several respondents highlighted that their RCP saved them substantial amounts of money in consultancy fees.

The learning process in RCPs is a dynamic one. Another added value of RCPs is that their agendas can usually be flexibly adapted to respond to new topics and trends

that participating governments may face. Usually, governments can take the initiative in proposing new issues for discussion or for treatment in a workshop or working group. As a result, RCPs also create a space for what might be called "ideational experimentation". Because they are uniquely flexible in their subject matter, RCPs can serve as what respondents referred to as "breeding grounds", "testing grounds" and "laboratories" of new ideas. In some cases, respondents indicated that the RCP served as a forum to think about issues that were still not "ripe" for the formal policy process at national level but which experienced officials saw ascending on the horizon and wanted to discuss with colleagues in the same area of expertise. For example, in the IGC, difficult issues, such as return, were addressed through the process before they had fully entered the domestic policy arena. The same was true in the IGC for questions on Islam and integration. Indeed, there has been a notable evolution in recent years in the agendas of most RCPs. Issues of migration and development, labour migration, circular migration, have increasingly been taken up by RCPs around the world. This suggests that the RCPs agendas are also shaped by global developments such as the High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development and the GFMD, and indeed many RCPs have recently organized meetings specifically to prepare for the GFMD, even though they are not officially linked to it.

(ii) Consensus building and position convergence

Breaking down national divides

Migration is an emotive and divisive issue. In international politics, it often pits countries of origin against countries of destination. Added to this is a lack of shared understanding on its benefits (though the GFMD has made progress on this issue) and absolutely no consensus on the value of unrestricted migration. In this respect, migration differs importantly from trade, where there is a general consensus on the advantages of freer trade as well as formal institutions (such as the WTO) governing it. This lack of consensus can lead to a breakdown in communication when states try to address migration in a formal setting such as the United Nations. Even the UN's greatest achievement in this area, the High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, illustrated this dynamic. Although the fact that it happened at all was in itself an immense achievement, there were too many prepared statements, there was little interaction among states, and when there was the result was acrimony: Cuba sharply criticized the USA, the USA demanded a right of reply, and the result was a public spat that had little to do with the issue at hand.

Properly organized, RCPs can break down these sorts of national divides, diffuse explosive issues, create a consensus, and move the migration governance process towards position convergence. It does so in two ways. First, by removing participants from formal contexts, by taking them out of the public spotlight, and by freeing them from the requirements of prepared statements, negotiating positions and "red lines", RCPs make state-to-state communication easier. Second, the simple fact that participants from different countries sit at the same table and exchange views encourages civility, respect for the other's positions, and perhaps sympathy for them. That, through RCM, the USA and Mexico are able to sit at the same table and talk constructively about the challenges of being an origin, transit, and destination country is evidence of this dynamic. Mexican authorities have also become more sensitized to the concerns of their southern neighbours and the magnitudes of migration pressures they face. As another example, several respondents from RCPs in Asia pointed to a regional political culture of "non-interference" and bilateralism. Given this background, the creation of RCPs as multilateral fora for dialogue was a particularly big step in this region. Similarly, the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (growing out of the Colombo Process) has brought together sets of countries with seemingly opposing interests that have now shared closed RCP meetings and open public panels. Indeed, the process was the first time that countries of destination of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) sat down at the same table with origin states. As an example of politically explosive issues that can be dealt with somewhat more easily in an RCP setting, in the Bali Process, participating governments were able to take up the Rohingya issue which had so far not been the subject of any formal political dialogue. The choice of issue therefore matters: RCPs are likely to eschew grand, abstract concepts (e.g. the "root causes" of migration) and focus on more specific, micro, and manageable topics. The Bali Process mentions the importance, which is generally recognized, of migration's root causes, but moves forth in practice by tackling topics of immediate importance in a regional context: legal frameworks, interdiction, customs and intelligence cooperation, victim protection, and borders. Lastly, RCPs also manifest a realization of common and complementary interests on the part of states: for instance, during Budapest Process discussions, many European countries wanted to implement a return policy but could not do so without country of origin support; similarly, the countries of origin wished to secure greater access to European labour markets but could not without the help of destination countries. Through the process origin countries signed return agreements, while the destination countries worked with them to ensure eventual EU accession.

Breaking down departmental divides

A lack of information, misunderstandings and suspicions can beset not only discussion on migration between countries; divisions also exist between government

agencies, ministries and departments within one state. Responsibility and competencies for migration are typically divided between some combination of the departments of justice, interior, foreign affairs, immigration and, increasingly, ministries of labour and social affairs. Even the routine management of migration can create cross-departmental tensions: the interior ministries in English speaking countries (Home Office in the United Kingdom, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, USA Homeland Security) view visas as a necessary and flexible tool for managing migration; their foreign ministries view them as an irritant. RCPs help overcome these divisions in two ways. First, the participation in external, multilateral discussions on migration obliges a government to coordinate internally. As such, they can bring officials from these different departments together and produce many of the same results they generate in state-to-state contact: new networks, mutual learning, an increased appreciation of the challenges faced by other departments, and constructive cooperation which may eventually lead to more coherent national policymaking. Second, in many RCPs it is common that the country delegations that attend consist of a mix of officials, typically from the department of foreign affairs, and / or of the department of interior and labour. By participating in the same discussions and exchanges, officials with different departmental backgrounds can enhance their knowledge of migration matters. This process can even out the sometimes disparate levels of understanding of and perspectives on migration that may exist within the national context. For example, the Bali Process led Australian departments to work together in coordinating their approaches in the run-up to meetings. Typically, the departments of migration, customs, and the federal police began to work together and after overcoming substantial divisions between them, at the end, there was what one respondent called a "Team Australia" approach. Respondents from numerous other countries and other RCPs testified to the same effect. Through SACM, foreign and interior ministries of several countries came to realize that each side had a different conception of migration (roughly, foreign ministries, responsible for consular protection and assistance, seeing it as a rights issue, interior ministries as a control issue). Interior ministries came to understand that migration policies could have a negative impact on bilateral and multilateral relations; foreign ministries came to comprehend better the pressures of border control. Likewise, in MIDSA countries, relationships between the interior ministries and agencies responsible for integration and service provision, between which there had previously been little contact, have been fostered by the process.

Creating networks

One of the positive corollaries of a reduction in barriers to communication and cooperation is the creation and expansion of networks, between both states and departments. Although networks develop *as* (rather than after) barriers come down, it is worth treating them separately for analytical purposes.

Contacts established through RCPs can and do last beyond the meetings themselves. Professional relationships and even friendships develop. Respondents across all RCPs highlighted how useful these contacts can be in their work. When, often well after a meeting, an official is seeking information or needs assistance in understanding a particular issue or addressing it, he or she can pick up the phone and call counterparts in another country. As a result, the work undertaken at RCP meetings continues well beyond them. In subtle ways that are hard to track, these interactions affect the ways in which officials and ministers conduct their work. When Ireland created, almost from scratch, an asylum system in the late 1990s and early years of the millennium, Irish officials had regular and frequent recourse to contacts developed at the IGC. When, in the run-up to the 2004 enlargement of the EU, Central and Eastern European countries adopted legislation against human trafficking, officials spoke with their EU counterparts through the Budapest Process. More recently, when Australia faced a large influx of asylum seekers, officials made contact with their Bali Process counterparts. These post-meeting conversations of course do not determine policy or even the outlines of it, but they subtly affect the way in which officials and decision-makers conceive of problems and formulate responses to them.

In most cases, of course, these networks are not created in a vacuum. Rather, they complement or build on existing relationships. In the latter, multiple respondents, for instance from the 5+5 Dialogue, MIDSA and IGAD-RCP, noted that RCPs strengthened existing bilateral relationships. In still other cases, new bilateral relationships may develop. The networking effect, therefore, goes beyond the regional RCP framework.

Networks can also have a positive impact on activity at the operational level: where RCPs conduct technical meetings that put officials from different agencies, such as social services or border police, in touch with each other, these contacts have been used effectively in emergency situations, for instance when cooperation was required, and also allow for rapid reactions when needed: this was the case for RCM which served as the principal forum for discussion of the migration-related impacts of Hurricane Mitch in 1998 and the attacks of 11 September 2001. Networks can therefore affect all stages of the migration governance process, including the actual implementation of policies.

Harmonizing positions

Once barriers to cooperation are overcome, it is possible for the RCPs to move forward to position convergence. This does not have to occur. It cannot be emphasized too often that different RCPs do not have identical aims; some simply seek to increase understanding, sharing ideas and storing and disseminating information on migration.

In other RCPs, in effect or by intention, the process contributes to the emergence of a common regional position, which may or may not be explicitly or publicly stated. At a very minimum, this can manifest itself in the development of a "common language" and a consensus on certain terms and definitions which enables states to continue their dialogue more effectively instead of talking at cross-purposes because different people will understand different things by different terms. For example, the IGC helped draw the distinction between skilled and unskilled migration and to create a common set of terms and concepts (such as "points system", "work permits", "employer sponsorship") for understanding skilled migration. In some cases, RCPs have created and published elaborate "migration glossaries" to codify their understanding of various concepts.

One step up from creating a common language, repeated meetings, interaction and sharing of concerns, perspectives and best practices can lead, without much explicit direction, to a *de facto* harmonization of positions across states. In the GCC states, the Abu Dhabi Dialogue helped formulate a particular understanding of temporary and circular migration as the predominant form of movement to the region: participants came to conceive of it as a migration cycle with distinct phases – preparation, arrival, incorporation into the labour market, and return and reintegration. As another example, in the early 1990s, human trafficking was not at the top of the domestic or international political agenda, and there was confusion between trafficking and smuggling in persons. This partly reflected the fact that smuggling had positive historical associations with organizations that helped refugees flee Nazi Germany or Communism. In the decade that followed, policymakers in all Budapest Process states have come to recognize the distinction between the two, the links between trafficking and criminal organizations, and the human suffering trafficking creates. The result through the Budapest Process meetings was a cross-Process position against the practice of trafficking, and, more specifically, in favour of its criminalization. MIDSA helped create a consensus among states of southern African that migration brings benefits to both migrants *and* states receiving them.

RCPs sometimes go even further. The creation of a regional position may be the intention rather than simply the side-effect of the process. This is often the case where governments have reached a consensus that their interests and positions on migration issues will be heard more clearly on the international stage and carry more weight when regions speak with one voice. SACM is specifically designed to provide a forum in which governments make political statements and hammer out a common position. SACM strengthened the regional consensus against the criminalization of (undocumented) migrants, a frequent subject of its declarations. Others, such as the Colombo Process, also issue common positions and recommendations. In this particular RCP, governments of origin countries had long been concerned about the treatment of their nationals abroad, but their protests were often limited to bilateral

discussions. Both the Colombo Process and SACM provide participants with a forum for reaching consensus on migration issues, for embedding their concern for the human rights of migrants in a common set of terms and arguments, and speaking with a common voice in international and inter-regional fora. Explicit expressions of a regional position often take the shape of coordinated papers, submitted for example by RCM, SACM, and MIDSA to the High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development or the GFMD.

(iii) Changes in migration law, policy and practice

The effect of RCPs on migration policy outputs – the most visible element in the policymaking process – is particularly difficult to isolate. This is partly a function of the methodological difficulties discussed above, though these affect in largely equal measure efforts to understand any aspect of the migration governance process. More importantly, many RCPs make no explicit effort to affect migration policy. RCPs such as the IGC and APC were specifically designed to be limited to information exchange (though, as is often the case with RCPs, both the IGC and APC later became concerned with policy). Given this, it is odd, indeed unfair, to assess them solely in terms of their effect on formal changes in migration policy.

Despite these qualifications, there is a case, resting on several elements, in favour of exploring RCPs' impact on migration policy outputs. First, although RCPs may not aim to see the creation of new policies, they may aim to facilitate the better implementation of existing policies (through, for instance, better inter-state cooperation). Second, even in cases where policy change (through new policies or the better coordination of existing ones) is not the aim, it may be the result of the RCPs' deliberations. Finally, there are some instances in which RCPs seek to see policy change: the Budapest Process with regards to people smuggling, human trafficking and irregular migration; the Bali Process on smuggling and trafficking; SACM and the Colombo Process in the area of human rights of migrants; the Abu Dhabi Dialogue in the case of circular labour migration; and RCM in the case of smuggling and trafficking, return and reintegration, and unaccompanied minors.

Building capacity

The most tangible instances of capacity building in an RCP context are those in which regular workshops and seminars at technical level are held that provide trainings and information to individuals involved in day-to-day migration management operations.

The learning effect of RCPs discussed earlier, as testified by many respondents who stated that participation in an RCP has helped them better understand the migration phenomenon, may be seen, in a broad view, as an indirect form of capacity building. This should not be undervalued, as migration is a new administrative field for many governments, developing and developed alike, and therefore understanding the phenomena is a critical first step, and indeed a continuous process.

There are also concrete examples of capacity building. IGAD-RCP undertook an EU-funded border assessment. Following it, changes (for instance, in the training of officials and the provision of equipment) were implemented by IOM with EU and government support. RCM includes technical cooperation as a category of activities in its action plan. In Lebanon, there is currently a pilot project organized through MTM being undertaken on capacity building in detention centres, with support from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Caritas: project activities cover staff training, the development of standard operating procedures, and the exchange of knowledge to improve detention conditions. MTM is also running a regional project, in cooperation with IOM, reviewing the capacity of states to link up with migrant communities abroad in order to support development of the country of origin. Finally, MTM has developed "IMAP", an interactive map providing information on irregular migration flows throughout the region. In keeping with MTM's goal of facilitating agency-state partnerships, UNHCR, the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (FRONTEX), the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the European Policy Office (EUROPOL) are all involved.

When it comes to capacity, however, a circular problem arises: a certain level of capacity is a prerequisite to the successful functioning of an RCP and for governments to be able to take full advantage of an RCP. In other words, governments need to have the financial and human resources, firstly, to get an RCP off the ground and keep it going and, secondly, to participate actively in any meetings and maximize the benefits they can reap from them. It is no surprise that the less vibrant RCPs are found precisely in those regions where capacity is considered to be low. Ironically, therefore, states that most need the capacity building benefits that RCPs may offer are least able to realize them. What this means is that it is very difficult to expect RCPs to compensate for structural deficits in capacity that may beleaguer a country or region, and even more so where political tensions and conflict come into play.

Shaping public policy

In cases where states have coherent migration policies (in some countries, there is no migration policy as yet and therefore nothing to shape), RCPs can play a role in effecting policy change. There are multiple instances in which RCPs had a measurable impact on public policy. These examples belie the allegation that RCPs are nothing more than talking shops.

In migration policy, SACM discussions inspired the 2002 MERCOSUR Residency Agreement and Argentina's 2004 National Migration Act. In the 1990s, when France, Germany and Britain were considering positive policies (later adopted) for skilled immigrants, the IGC helped them to study and imitate Canadian and Australian policies. When Germany reformed its immigration law in 2005, and France and Britain did the same in 2006, all provided new pathways for skilled migration. Switzerland, drawing up its new foreigner's law which distinguishes between EU citizens and non-EU citizens, used the IGC to consider and evaluate alternative models (the Green Card utilized in the USA, or the EU Blue Card), and to draw on other states' experiences. In the area of temporary labour migration, RCM facilitated temporary migration programmes between Guatemala and Canada, and equally importantly helped give Guatemala "ownership" over the process.

In the area of asylum, the primary concern of many RCPs, the IGC had a direct impact on policy in participating states. Irish officials have repeatedly emphasized the importance of the IGC in helping them write their asylum legislation. What's more, the RCP did so at a cost to Ireland that was far lower than the fees it would have had to pay to consultants. The RCP also contributed to regional harmonization in the area of airline liability. Airline liability concerns the responsibility of airlines to check documents, the fines they incur when they allow travellers without the correct documents on board, and the support provided by governments in implementing these practices. During meetings of one of the IGC's working groups participants created a matrix indicating their countries' policies and practices on airline liability. As the meetings progressed, as one respondent put it, "harmonization swept across the board". Finally, IGC meetings ran parallel to and were attended by many of the same states that participated in the EU's efforts to harmonize asylum policies and practices; the RCP therefore contributed indirectly to the coordination of regional policy across most of the EU.

Multiple RCPs are dealing with people smuggling and human trafficking and have induced participating states to adopt policies on this matter. The Budapest Process (above all in the run up to the 2004 EU enlargement) contributed to the signature and ratification by its members of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized

Crime and the Palermo Protocols on Trafficking in Human Beings and Smuggling of Migrants. More broadly, criminalization of trafficking is now common practice: almost all states participating in the Budapest Process have criminalized trafficking, and most have also criminalized the aiding and abetting of trafficking in aliens (for instance, by harbouring aliens trafficked by a third party). Several participating states of the Bali Process used the process's model legislation on trafficking in designing their own anti-trafficking laws. In 2006, RCM members agreed, with substantial NGO input, to "Regional Guidelines for Special Protection in Case of Return of Child and Adolescent Victims of Trafficking". Finally, MTM discussions covered efforts to stop smugglers from moving migrants through the Strait of Gibraltar, and subsequently money and training were provided to that end.

Return, clearly a controversial subject, has been the focus of discussions in numerous RCPs. In RCM, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua signed a memorandum of understanding (which was renewed in 2009) for the dignified, orderly, effective and safe return of migrants over land. Earlier, in 2006, the same process had already developed Guidelines for the Establishment of Multi- and/or Bilateral Mechanisms between member states of the RCM regarding the return of migrants over land. In 2009, RCM adopted Regional Guidelines for the Assistance to Unaccompanied Minors in Cases of Repatriation. In the run-up to the 2004 enlargement of the EU, Budapest played an important role in shaping the negotiation of these agreements between EU and acceding member states. Return and readmission agreements require a high degree of bilateral cooperation. New or enhanced bilateral cooperation can be an important product of RCPs.

Although migration control tended to be a main concern of RCPs, especially in their early days, they have increasingly focused on human rights, with positive outcomes. Consistent with Colombo Process recommendations, Indonesia has established an information service for prospective migrant workers, informing them of their rights when abroad. Similarly, Thailand established a streamlined Centre for Overseas Employment, allowing migrants to access passports, medical check-ups and police reports. Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have established or plan to establish Migrant Welfare Funds providing various forms of insurance for overseas workers in the case of sickness, disability or death. The Abu Dhabi Dialogue has placed human rights of migrant workers on the policy agenda of the GCC states. The long-term impact of this gesture is as yet unclear, but one concrete outcome is a pilot project that will map, monitor and identify roles and responsibilities during the full cycle of temporary labour mobility. Designed to create an efficient and humane system for circular migration, the pilot project targets 3,000 migrant workers in the hospitality (from the Philippines and India), health care (Philippines, India) and construction (India) sectors. The United Arab Emirates is funding this groundbreaking

initiative. The project will consider recruitment practices (for instance, ensuring that potential migrants have full information on work conditions), the prevention of abusive practices (for instance, illegal fees), fair and consistent contracts, standards of accommodation, migrant health and job safety, and possibilities for contributory pension schemes. Similarly, following Söderköping Process discussions, Belarus introduced complementary protection for people fleeing civil war and insecurity, and Ukraine put the issue on the political agenda. The same process also undertook a study on the local integration of refugees and produces documentation on the rights enjoyed by refugees and asylum seekers (for instance, the right to education). Following the study and broader discussions within the process on the importance of refugee integration, Ukraine adopted a cabinet resolution in favour of refugee integration.

These examples are not meant to be exhaustive. What's more, the discussion should not imply that RCPs determine in any mono-causal way changes in public policy. They are, nonetheless, part of the process, and they have contributed to the last and most visible phase of the governance process: public policy itself.

Clearly, some RCPs work better than others. In general terms, however, they have contributed in multiple ways to the process of migration governance: through RCPs, states have jointly defined agendas and issues concerning migration. RCPs have set in motion a process of consensus building on migration issues among states – a topic on which discord tends to be more common than agreement – to the point where, implicitly or explicitly, regional positions emerged. RCPs' effects follow a logical and predictable progression: as meetings occur, national (and sometimes departmental) divisions are broken down, trust is built and free and open conversation leads to increased mutual understanding and the emergence of a common language. The importance of these steps in creating "common ground" on an issue as sensitive as migration should not be underestimated. Lastly, there are numerous examples in which RCPs have had a measurable impact on migration law, policy and practice at national and regional level, even if causalities cannot always be clearly established.

The final section draws out broader lessons on best practices in the operation of RCPs.

4. LESSONS LEARNED: WHEN RCPS WORK BEST

The fact that this study has examined fourteen RCPs covering most of the globe provides a rich empirical basis for drawing conclusions about RCPs. The final section considers a series of measures and conditions under which RCPs are most likely to maximize their benefits to participating states and to produce an impact on migration governance. As ever, these conclusions are based on extensive interviews with those involved in the creation, chairing, and operation of RCPs.

Knit your networks

Networking is an important result of RCPs, but effective networking requires contact between participants after meetings. RCPs can take relatively simple steps to aid the process. The tabulation, distribution, and maintenance of email and phone lists means that officials can and do contact each other with questions, thoughts, and concerns that arise during their day-to-day work. Where RCPs maintain websites these sometimes serve as secure platforms for communication, although many respondents seemed to indicate that they preferred more "old-fashioned" means of communication like telephone and e-mail. Many RCPs systematize their networks as a matter of course; others do not, or do so inconsistently.

In all cases, the designation by national ministries of people acting as focal points for the RCP can play an important role. The focal points are the first port of call or "switchboard" should an official in one country be seeking to contact or obtain information from an official in another country on matters related to migration and the RCP's activities. The focal points also serve as the link between an RCP's secretariat and the states: where there is an active and engaged secretariat, it can liaise with the focal points, provide information, ensure that information is communicated to the right people within the civil service, and check on the progress of any national plans or recommendations (Koehler [in press]). Regular contact, even of a casual sort, between secretariats and focal points can go a long way to keeping an RCP on track; as any overworked professional knows, a simple phone call inquiring on the status of a project can, metaphorically speaking, shuffle it up several places in the "in tray". Lastly, focal points are key when it comes to networking between departments within the same government – it would be the national focal point's responsibility to ensure the right people are informed of and possibly attend relevant RCP activities and to report back to the various departments on topics of interest.

Manage your numbers

Unsurprisingly, a smaller number of countries is easier to manage and, accordingly, many respondents expressed a preference for a smaller process. A smaller membership, of for example less than 20 countries, is likely to have fewer difficulties maintaining effective communication than larger groupings. Smaller numbers also make it easier for the participants to get to know each other, provide more time for discussion, and allow for personal contact between participants (during discussions or, equally importantly, over lunch and coffee), all of which contribute to the building of trust. Where it is possible, smaller RCPs are preferable over larger ones.

Of course, it is not always possible. In some parts of the world, such as Asia, a regional RCP will inevitably take in many countries. What's more, it is not the smallest RCPs that are necessarily the most dynamic, nor are all the larger ones besieged by chronic problems. Small and large are relative terms. Where large processes have found that not all states can participate in equal measure, one of two things can happen: in the worst case scenario, the RCP may enter into a process of disintegration, with a large proportion of governments holding mere "pro forma" membership. Alternatively, institutional arrangements and mechanisms such as steering and working groups can be used to capture some of the trust- and consensus-building and learning benefits of smaller RCPs (as well as ensuring that a large RCP retains focus and momentum). For example, a group of core states leads the steering group and drives the process forward, while other states participate in thematic working groups on an *ad hoc* basis, depending on their interest (Koehler [in press]). The creation of a sort of "process within a process" is a strategy used by some larger RCPs to make the process more manageable.

Gather data

As RCPs are largely regional, they provide a unique opportunity for gathering and comparing data across states. Data can include statistics about different migration flows and phenomena, compilations of migration legislation, analyses of best practices, and sensitive intelligence on such matters as security and migration. As has been pointed out by migration scholars and practitioners over the last several decades, statistics on migration tend to be inadequate and those that are available are often not comparable, presenting a major obstacle to effective policymaking. RCPs sometimes have access to official data from all participating states, and they can and often do use the process itself to collate this data and render it comparable. Some RCPs maintain websites (for instance, the IGC, RCM, Söderköping Process, Bali Process) on which this data

is stored, and others are considering developing such websites. Respondents from these processes have noted the advantage of this data, and all RCPs should make it standard practice. Where the data is sensitive (and it often is), the website or parts of it should be secure and accessible only to participating states through a password (as is the case for the IGC and the APC website, for example). A closed database has the further benefit of building trust among those exchanging information. The gathering of such comparable data is a relatively inexpensive exercise and it is a clear way for RCPs to provide value added to the states participating in them.

Take the lead

As already implied, the functioning and impact of RCPs will depend in large measure on the way in which they are led. RCPs employ a variety of leadership modes, such as temporary or permanent chairs, secretariats, and steering groups. All these actors can play a central role in making RCPs work. Alone or with support from a secretariat where it exists, chairs need to define the topics of discussion and set an agenda. This implies being aware of the regional priorities at the time, ensuring some degree of continuity with issues previously discussed, looking out for relevant developments or possible synergies with activities in other regions or at international level, in order to meet the needs of the participating states. Chairs are also usually responsible for running meetings. When meetings lack focus and are weakly chaired, meetings can become a waste of everyone's time. Discussions become too general and participants tune out and/or revert to prepared statements. Secretariats (bearing in mind that not all RCPs have official secretariats) can play a crucial role in supporting the chairs through the provision of information and the management of meeting logistics. More broadly, they have a crucial responsibility as keepers of institutional memory. Finally, steering groups have ownership over the topic(s) between regular (often annual) meetings and need to ensure that work on them continues.

When the lead is not taken, the results are predictable. Where there is no secretariat and where the chair rotates automatically, there is the risk that interest in the RCP will wane and the capacity to manage its activities will decrease, leading to a period of stagnation from which it is difficult to recover.

Send the right people

The nature and effect of RCP discussions will unavoidably be determined in part by the quality of the participants. It is important that states send the right people. The question is: which people are the right people? Above all, RCPs should not become

junkets that are handed out (and paid for by third parties) as political rewards. Beyond that, the general conclusion emerging from this assessment is that extremes should be avoided: processes occupied solely by political-level participants or only by technical officials are unlikely to produce a major impact. A purely political RCP will too quickly revert, unsurprisingly, to politics: prepared statements, quasi-negotiations. Politicians are interested in and driven by broad strategic considerations and not the details of migration policy implementation and operation. SACM, for example, achieves a great deal in terms of consensus building and issuing joint political positions, but as the process aims at producing annual declarations there is usually little time for discussion of technical documents, best practices or common policies. The aim is rather to negotiate a formal declaration. Conversely, an RCP made up only of technical staff will have people with a great deal of knowledge of how things work, but without the authority to change anything. Since its founding meeting, MIDWA, for example, has not generally attracted high-level political attention which may be one of the factors explaining the relative dormancy of the process. Some respondents viewed Budapest Process meetings as sideshows attended by officials with little influence. A balanced membership is one made up of some combination of technical, mid-level and senior officials, most importantly people who actually know how migration works (or does not) on the ground, *with political back up*. This might be thought of as a two-level game (Tsebelis 1991): the technical officials need to be in the room to ensure that there is a general understanding of the mechanics of migration; the political seniors need to be in the loop to ensure that those officials can speak with authority and when necessary effect change. Put another way, the goal might be to ensure an RCP carries political weight without being politicized.

A final point can be made about participation: there needs to be some continuity to it. Where there is frequent turnover among participants, the whole process of trust building needs to begin again and the process is not likely to go far. In some RCPs, individuals have been involved for years and even decades; in others, the RCP is weakened by constant turnover. This turnover may reflect instability and/or an absence of direction at a higher political level (constant changes of government, or an overly politicized civil service), which again underlines the extent to which RCPs' capacity is a function of broader state capacity. Nevertheless, respondents pointed out that once a process has become sufficiently established, it stores a certain "trust credit", so that the trust building process does not start from zero when new participants join.

Create a two-level structure

Following on from the previous point, participation in RCP gatherings is closely related to the structure of meetings a process has developed. Typically, RCPs hold

some combination of technical-level workshops, thematic seminars, regular working group meetings, gatherings of senior officials, and annual ministerial or vice-ministerial conferences. The structure that is chosen, in turn, will depend in large part on what the process wants to achieve (Koehler [in press]). Form follows function: subgroups, working groups and seminars populated by experts at the technical level are better venues for encouraging mutual learning, the exchange of information, or capacity building. Ministerial plenary sessions, by contrast, are more appropriate for making strategic decisions, specifying a process's objectives, coordinating common positions, and translating the substance of the discussion into policy outputs.

Generally, a mix of different types of meetings is advisable, some dedicated to the nuts and bolts of understanding and managing migration, others for the purpose of steering the process, generating political-level support, or coordinating a regional position if so desired. And the balance may change over time: RCPs may find that being practical and technical best serves their interests early on, during the crucial phases of trust building, but that over time the marginal value of such exchange diminishes. They may then look to become relatively more political. Alternatively, RCPs may start with high-level political meetings to lend them the necessary initial impetus and then turn over the regular running of the RCP to a technical level.

Respect confidentiality

There has been some debate about whether RCPs should be open to non-state actors (Hansen 2004), and scholars have criticized the democratic legitimacy of RCPs on the grounds that they are less transparent and solicit less public involvement than formal multilateral cooperation (Radaeilli 2003). It is true that only a few RCPs, such as SACM, MIDSA and RCM, actively engage civil society. The question is whether other RCPs would benefit or suffer from NGO participation. On this issue there was genuine division among respondents. Some felt that only RCPs whose memberships are restricted to government officials could truly achieve mutual trust and learning. Others disagreed, and held that the participation of NGOs and academic experts added to the learning process. The experience of some RCPs shows that the creation of a sort of "civil society process" may be an appropriate way to organize civil society input to RCPs: civil society actors can be divided in their views and reluctant to appoint spokespeople who speak on their behalf. The more NGOs coordinate their positions, speak with one voice, and select (ideally articulate) representatives to act as contact points with governments, the greater their potential impact on migration governance. RCM may provide an example of the successful incorporation of civil society actors into an RCP, where civil society has participated since the process's beginnings and a dedicated civil society network now operates in parallel to the government proves.

Representatives from the network take part in specific meetings in the RCM calendar and provide coordinated input in the form of declarations, recommendations and comments on government documents.

Two general points flow from this. First, the issue may not be whether or not NGOs participate, but how comfortable the other participants feel about their presence. The fundamental point is that participants need to be able to speak freely. Second, they will always be more comfortable speaking when the discussions are confidential. Where confidentiality is respected and participants do not suffer professionally after a meeting because of comments made during it they will be willing to speak openly at the next meeting. Where it is not, they will not. Respondents noted the importance of confidentiality; in some RCPs it is regarded as a "litmus test" of membership.

There is, therefore, no ideal degree of exclusivity for RCPs. What is important is rather that those who participate – be they ministers, officials, international organizations, civil society representatives or academics – approach the discussions constructively and respect confidentiality commitments. Devising a few "rules of engagement" for membership or observer status in an RCP can also be a useful way to manage who participates, how and when, and thus maximize the benefits that can flow from a diverse set of voices.

Own your process

RCPs divide broadly into two types: those led by the states, and those led by secretariats and/or international organizations. Only the former have a future. If an RCP is going to work, the states themselves have to be committed to the process, have to lead the agenda, and have to take seriously the implications of the discussion for their own policy and practice on migration (that is, make changes where they are needed). If an RCP is being held up by committed but overworked secretariat/organization staff, it will go nowhere.

There are a number of ways of measuring states' commitment. The easiest is money, and it is tempting to say that states who are committed to RCPs pay for them. There is something to this, as, to put it bluntly, not paying for a conference can generate the perception in participants that it is not important. Nevertheless, the economic and financial conditions of the participating states are undoubtedly a determining factor, and the success of the IGC, the Bali Process and RCM reflect the fact that they consist of or contain states prepared and *able* to spend resources on them. RCPs may therefore sometimes require some start-up capital (and initiative) from international organizations and donors, especially in less developed regions or where a process may

be launched tentatively for states to decide whether this is something they would want to pursue further. SACM, for example, began as a process almost entirely funded by IOM, but is now largely self-financing. Where states are strapped for cash to fund their RCP, they can still provide some real contributions, for example "in-kind": hosting conferences, providing state offices, funding receptions or even simply negotiating favourable deals with local hotels and caterers. Such states may lack the resources to implement dramatic change, but there are international donors such as the USA and the EU, and when funds are effectively spent more will be available. Money is, however, rarely available without strings, and in such cases the RCPs' agenda may be to at least some degree driven by the donor. This is at least the impression among some West African states in the case of EU-supported migration projects.

While funding is crucial, states can create and demonstrate ownership of an RCP through other means such as political commitment. States can be active in defining the questions examined by an RCP, the order in which they are addressed, and the agenda at particular meetings to ensure it meets their needs. They can also send the right people and devote time to reflecting on the relevant issues. And they can be sure to follow up with the secretariat and other participants after the meeting.

A process that is not state-owned will wither. Where an organization or secretariat finds itself carrying a process, the staff members are usually desperate to secure more not less state involvement in the process. Where it fails, and where an RCP is sustained solely by an organization or secretariat and viewed by the states as little more than a junket for its employees that is paid for by someone else, the process is unlikely to produce results.

Choose the issues carefully

Particularly at the outset, before trust is built, RCPs find it easier to debate more manageable issues and practical activities. In general, taking up too much at once risks losing focus, unless this is well-managed for example through a system of working groups. Where the modus operandi of an RCP is such that the chairmanship rotates on an annual basis, usually an extra effort needs to be made to ensure a sense of continuity from year to year.

RCPs may also find certain issues more amenable to discussion than others. Such a dynamic in part explains early successes in some RCPs in discussing human trafficking: discussions led to the emergence of a common language and the processes encouraged the adoption of positive actions to cope with it, including ratification of the relevant Palermo Protocol. Trafficking was almost the perfect issue for RCPs: there

was a consensus that trafficking is an evil and those engaged in it – the traffickers – were not in the room. Such a constellation of interests will not always naturally occur, but participants can choose to focus on the issues – particularly in the early stages – where there is agreement or at least a common interest. There does not have to be agreement on the solution – and probably should not be, as it would render the RCP superfluous – but there should be an agreement that an issue needs to be addressed.

That said, migration is a dynamic area, subject to frequent change. The viability of RCPs can also be measured in terms of their capacity to move on. Some of the longest-standing RCPs owe their continued success to the fact that they shifted focus in response to new trends, priorities and interests of the participating governments. The last point is important: a process should not detach itself from the priorities of the very governments that make up the RCP; through regular consultations, RCPs should make sure that they evolve in line with their governments' priorities and challenges.

Find a middle way between informality and formality

As noted, "informal" implies non-political rather an absence of any procedures. RCPs are forums that proceed through open conversation and by consensus, but that does not mean that there are no mechanisms for ensuring that words are translated into actions. The findings have revealed that formality and informality are not "black-or-white", "on/off" positions. Instead, different RCPs hover at various points along a continuum between pure informality and absolute formality. Many if not most of the processes insist on informality as a crucial "added value" of RCPs, but it is also evident that many RCPs experiment with a range of gradations of "formality/informality". Some exist exclusively for the exchange of information, ideas and best practices. Others have started issuing declarations, guidelines or common positions, tending toward greater political formality. Informality and formality hold each other in a delicate balance – RCPs want to make sure the advantages of informality do not begin to outweigh its disadvantages. Informality can also be understood as a function of time: in some cases, informality is one way – or the only way – of easing governments reluctant to discuss migration issues in multilateral settings into processes of inter-state dialogue. As a culture of cooperation builds up over time, the value of or need for informality may decrease.

RCPs implement different procedures to ensure that "informality" does not mean that the processes degenerate to mere "talking shops". For example, plans of action serve as statements of intent, and it is perfectly legitimate for RCPs to institute mechanisms that encourage action on them. There is clearly no place for sanction in an RCP context, but focal points can use the time between meetings to inquire about

and encourage progress. They can then use reports at subsequent meetings to highlight which steps have been taken and which have not. In the absence of plans of action or some other agreement to move forward regionally, bilaterally or nationally, it is difficult to ensure follow-up. Such and similar actions can play a very useful role in keeping the substance of RCPs on government agendas. They do not need to be heavy-handed or intrusive but rather gently to push the process forward. It is important that this occurs: respondents often expressed frustration with RCP meetings at which much enthusiasm and rhetorical commitment was on display but from which nothing followed. This is a point worth emphasizing: RCPs do not need to make commitments, but when they do it is important that these commitments be respected or it risks calling the process's legitimacy into question. Of course, in the absence of a reasonable degree of political buy-in, such plans, statements, and reports will have little effect.

Flowers on graves: letting RCPs die

RCPs are there to serve the interests of states and to fulfil functions that cannot be fulfilled by international institutions or through multilateral treaties. When they no longer serve state interests, or when those interests are picked up by other regional bodies (to which the experience of RCPs is directly or indirectly passed), there is nothing wrong with bringing a process to a close. Such an ending by no means implies failure; on the contrary, it might imply that the RCP has done its job. An end to RCPs dealing with trafficking because trafficking ended would only be good news.

In other cases, an RCP may simply be going nowhere. If there is inadequate funding, little interest and less direction from states, and if over a reasonable amount of time the RCP generates none of the impacts or outputs traditionally associated with RCPs, it is probably in everyone's interest to draw it to a close. In practice, this matter is best left to the states; if none of them is prepared to provide the funding and no international entity steps in, then the RCP will effectively be finished. If, however, even an RCP that does not appear to have a great deal of direction enjoys state support and funding, then it is clearly serving a useful purpose. Again, it is a matter for the states themselves and their motivations will be varied. Like the trees of a Chinese proverb, some RCPs are worth keeping because they produce fruit; others simply look good in the garden.

5. CONCLUSION

As this report has argued, RCPs can produce an impact during various phases of the migration governance process. RCPs have shaped agendas and concretized the issues, built consensus and helped develop common positions. The key contributions of RCPs reside in these stages of the governance process, whereby states are "socialized" into a culture of cooperation, making consultation and exchange among states a more automatic feature of the governance process. Often, an absence of trust and a lack of understanding of the perspectives of other states were the primary impediments to cooperation. RCPs counteracted these problems by creating depoliticized and non-binding spaces for interaction. RCPs have fostered regional networks between individuals and institutions which facilitate the exchange of information and the implementation of concrete activities. By breaking down barriers between states (and incidentally also between ministries and departments responsible for migration-related matters within a country), RCPs have also – explicitly or implicitly – led to a *de facto* harmonization of positions (even when this had not been the intention at the outset). In some cases, participating governments have utilized this potential of RCPs to generate common political positions and speak with a single voice vis-à-vis other regions or fora, thus giving their own individual national interests greater weight. In the final outcome, RCPs can indeed shape public policy, laws and practices on migration at national and regional level and support their implementation. It is, however, more tenable to conclude that RCPs play a *complementary* role, rather than determining policy in any direct and uni-causal way.

That RCPs may affect migration governance does not mean that they do. Whether and how well they affect governance will be a function of their size and internal institutional arrangements, leadership, membership, confidentiality, and, above all, state ownership. All of these factors are in turn affected by individuals who found and operate them, and on the states that provide the funds and other forms of support. Perhaps more importantly, there is a basic distinction between affecting and determining. While RCPs play an important and unique role in removing barriers to conversation, their effect on migration governance is complementary to the states that make up the RCPs and that place matters on the agenda, define positions, and adopt policies. RCPs are facilitators, not generators. They are, after all, forums; they are the containers of the actors who actually drive policy – governments working one by one, bi- or multilaterally. Given the right size, leadership, internal arrangements, direction and funding, they will fulfil this role well.

Is this role enough? It depends on the context. The IGC, with its wealth and experience, cannot be judged against the same standards as a new RCP or one

in the developing world, such as IGAD-RCP or MIDWA. What might be a great accomplishment for MIDWA (bringing the right actors together), would be unremarkable for IGC. It also needs to borne in mind that migration has only recently become a target of international cooperation efforts and remains, for some states, entirely uncharted territory. Much depends on the states themselves: if they feel that RCPs are worth supporting, with funds but also with the intellectual commitment of state representatives, then they are worth keeping. Where they do not – where states are indifferent, unwilling to put up the money when they have it, and send mediocre or otherwise inappropriate representatives – we should be highly suspicious (again, having given the RCP enough time to establish itself) about an RCP's sustainability.

RCPs are, of course, not without their problems. Although their focus has expanded, as argued, well beyond an exclusive interest in border control, they have generally found it easier to agree on enforcement issues than others. This might possibly be because controlling borders is the activity that produces the most "natural" contact and interaction between states. By contrast, many other aspects of migration (those touching on labour markets or integration, for instance), are considered to be internal matters. States may not regard these areas as appropriate or even necessary subjects for bilateral, much less regional, international exchanges. It might also be that there is a tension between the goals of keeping the RCP small (in order to build trust, break down barriers, and build consensus) and ensuring that more voices, including critical ones, are heard. Relatively few RCPs involve NGOs, and those that do generally restrict their access.

A further issue worth reflecting on is the relationship between RCPs and the wider constellation of international actors. This issue was raised at the outset, but has unavoidably taken a back seat to the examination and assessment of the specific RCPs themselves. RCPs exist within a broader web of regional and international institutions that involve themselves in migration governance. They include the IOM, the EU, the UN, and the GFMD. IOM is the world's main international organization dealing with migration, with an expanding membership currently standing at 127 states. IOM's Constitution sets out its role as a service organization operating on behalf of states to provide a wide range of migration services. These include projects to facilitate recruitment, selection, language training, cultural orientation, placement, reception, integration, return, migrant health, migration and development, labour migration, emergency response and more in the interests of promoting humane and orderly migration. IOM's activities also cover research, capacity building, facilitation of policy dialogue and inter-state and multi-stakeholder cooperation and advisory services, among others. The EU, fitfully and with many false starts, is in the process of adopting a regional migration and asylum policy which has included for the last few years an enhanced emphasis on partnership with origin countries and regions. The

UN has also played a much greater role in migration (beyond, of course, UNHCR) over the last decade than in the past. The UN appointed the UN Secretary General's Special Representative on Migration and Development, launched the GCIM, and held a High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in 2006. More broadly, many more UN agencies, such as the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) and the World Bank, among others, have taken an interest in migration. Finally, the GFMD, a state-led forum for informal and non-binding discussions on how migration may aid development, has held three meetings (including 2009).

The future of global governance will depend on how these, in some ways related, sets of initiatives develop. It is perhaps no coincidence that both the GFMD and RCPs share basic features: they are informal, non-binding, outside of any established international structures and state-led. They also meet the same – often unfair – criticism: that they are talking shops, that they offer discourse but not action. How these mechanisms develop will be basic for the future of regional and global migration governance.

It would be arrogant to make confident predictions, but three potential scenarios are imaginable. First, RCPs might remain, as one respondent put it, "regions- and ends-specific", coming into the picture and fading out according to the regional challenges of the day. They would be quasi-free floating associations. The second, at the opposite extreme, is that RCPs would with the GFMD be a stepping stone towards the development of a true global international body backed by a formal treaty and with supranational powers (that is, its decisions would be binding in some measure on member states). Neither of these scenarios is in itself realistic. In the former, RCPs and the GFMD have utility, but they are less than they can be, secondary (and at times "bit") players in the global migration game. In the latter, belief that a treaty-based, binding global regime will emerge from RCPs is (a) very vague about the mechanisms that would lead to such a regime and (b) overly optimistic about states' willingness to transfer any sovereignty in an area as sensitive as migration. A third, and perhaps more realistic, option is to reflect on the ways in which RCPs can find a middle way to transform themselves into more serious global players. Several suggestions present themselves. First, RCPs can gain traction by linking themselves with (formal) regional economic and political associations. To some degree, this has already occurred. MIDSA seeks more political buy-in by linking the process with the Southern African Development Community (SADC). SACM is linked, and shares many members, with MERCOSUR. Creating broader ties between RCPs and formal regional bodies might provide more opportunities for such linkages. They would, however, partially

formalize RCPs and might therefore reduce their appeal for some countries. What's more, RCPs would not want to simply duplicate efforts undertaken by other regional and economic entities. Second, RCPs should reflect on how they relate to each other, how their work creates synergy or competition (for example, does it make sense to have both the Bali Process and APC?), and how it in turn overlaps or complements that of the GFMD. Consideration might be given to creating focal points between RCPs themselves. At the 2009 Global Meeting of Chairs and Secretariats of Principal RCPs, governments expressed a keen interest in facilitating greater exchange among RCPs, for example, by making regular inter-RCP meetings a more regular occurrence or by using and enhancing the section of the IOM website dedicated to RCPs. Third, even if RCPs remain as they are, their participants, and those in the GFMD, should reflect on how cooperation and follow-up action could be "incentivized". Can the current patchwork of efforts designed to encourage follow-up – plans of action, focal points, reporting mechanisms – be translated into a set of best practices employed across RCPs? Like many suggestions, these in turn raise concerns and problems. Rather like RCPs themselves, they are part of the process rather than its endpoint.

ENDNOTES

1. See IOM (2007) Compendium of International Migration Law Instruments edited by Richard Perruchoud and Katarína Tömolövà, T.M.C. Asser Press, for a compilation of relevant instruments.
2. To cite but one example, the "Global Governance Project" at the University of Oxford does not define the concept (see http://www.globaleconomicgovernance.org/about).
3. Please see Koehler (in press) for a similar approach to the study of RCPs.
4. Nevertheless, it should not be neglected that regional economic and political bodies, international organizations, employers and the private sector, civil society actors and advocacy groups can also shape migration governance.
5. The literature on causality is massive, far too large to cite, but see Keohane, King, and Verba (1994).
6. See list of all interviewees at the end of this report.
7. Here, the author would like to express his sincere thanks to all those who helped identify and establish contact with potential candidates for interviews.
8. This dynamic is a typical one at organized meetings. Many say that they attend conferences not for the panels at which papers are presented but for the informal chats in the corridors and over meals.

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ANNEX: REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESSES ON MIGRATION: AN OVERVIEW

AFRICA

Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA), est. 2000

Secretariat: No official secretariat. (IOM provides support in consultation with SAMP).

Governments: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Observers, Partners:
Partners: Southern African Migration Project (SAMP) and IOM.

Observers: Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat, SADC Parliamentary Forum, Immigration and Labour, the African Union (AU) Commission, interested diplomatic mission and relevant UN agencies such as UNHCR, UNDP (depending on the themes of the workshop).

Academics, humanitarian NGOs, legal advocacy groups, faith-based organizations and regional associations are invited to its workshops on an ad hoc basis.

Main Areas of Discussion:

MIDSA focuses on seven main themes:

1. irregular migration;
2. migration and development;
3. migration and health;
4. capacity building in migration management;
5. forced migration;
6. labour migration; and
7. migration policies, legislation & data collection.

Goals:

1. Facilitate a regional dialogue and cooperation on migration policy issues among the governments of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

2. Facilitating regional cooperation in migration management by fostering greater understanding of migration and by strengthening regional institutional and personal capacities.
3. Assess the region's needs for information collection, standardization, and exchange.
4. Review regional approaches to border management.
5. Assess the region's need for further technical assistance.
6. Adopt the UN Protocol on Trafficking, pass national legislation against trafficking, and provide support for its victims.

Current Priorities:

1. counter-trafficking/smuggling;
2. migration management/capacity building; and
3. migration and development.

Migration Dialogue for West Africa (MIDWA), est. 2000

Secretariat: No official secretariat. Based on the Memorandum of Understanding between IOM and ECOWAS signed in July 2002, IOM provides support to capacity building activities targeting both ECOWAS institutions and Member States.

Governments: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

Observers, Partners:
France and Switzerland.
Conseil des Organisations Non Gouvernementales d'Appui au Développement (CONGAD), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), International Labour Office (ILO), IOM, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Organization of African Unity (OAU), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), UNAIDS, UNHCR, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and World Food Programme (WFP).

Main Areas of Discussion:

In December 2000, in cooperation with IOM, the ECOWAS inaugurated a regional consultative process with the major aim of accelerating the regional integration process and addressing problematic migration issues in regional fora. The MIDWA process was

specifically designed to encourage the ECOWAS Member States to discuss common migration issues and concerns in a regional context for which immediate solutions may not be forthcoming on a national level.

MIDWA addresses five key areas:

1. Promotion of peace and stability in West Africa and protection of migrant's rights;
2. contribution of men and women migrants to the development of their country of origin;
3. alleviating poverty in emigration areas;
4. information, sensitization and research into the different aspects of West African international migration; and
5. intra-regional and inter-regional co-operation.

Goals:

1. Fostering border management.
2. Improving data collection.
3. Combating irregular migration.
4. Linking migration with development (including remittances).
5. Ensuring migrant rights.
6. Combating trafficking and smuggling.
7. Facilitating the return and reintegration of illegal migrants.

Current Priorities:

On 18 January 2008 ECOWAS adopted a Common Approach on Migration, which should serve as the general framework for MIDWA initiatives. It identifies six key areas:

1. free movement of persons within the ECOWAS zone;
2. management of regular migration;
3. combating human trafficking;
4. harmonizing policies;
5. protection of the rights of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees; and
6. recognizing the gender dimension of migration.

Inter-governmental Authority on Development Regional Consultative Process on Migration (IGAD-RCP), est. 2008

Secretariat: IGAD Secretariat in collaboration with the AU Commission and IOM.

Governments: IGAD member states (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda (Eritrea has temporarily suspended its membership).

Observers, Partners: African Union (AU) Commission, IOM and the members of the IGAD Partners Forum (Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Greece, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, UK, USA, EC, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank), and other partners, notably:

- transit countries: Chad, Egypt, Libya, Niger, Tunisia and Yemen
- other Regional Economic Communities (RECs) including ECOWAS, EAC, SADC, ECCAS, CENSAD
- relevant NGOs, UN Agencies and IGOs on *ad hoc* basis (depending on the themes of the Consultations)

Main Areas of Discussion:

IGAD-RCP aims to facilitate dialogue and regional co-operation in migration management amongst IGAD Member States by:

1. fostering greater understanding and policy coherence in migration;
2. strengthening regional institutional and technical capacities to implement the Migration Policy Framework for Africa; and
3. improving inter-state and intra-regional cooperation on migration management among countries of origin, transit and destination.

14 priority areas identified by experts which the IGAD-RCP will be responsible for are as follows:

1. migration and development;
2. labour migration;
3. social integration of migrants;
4. protection of migrants' rights;
5. smuggling and trafficking in persons;
6. migration data and research;

7. migration and health;
8. migration and trade;
9. migration and environment;
10. migration and security;
11. voluntary return of migrants;
12. mixed migratory flows and protection of refugees;
13. movement of pastoralist communities; and
14. brain drain and unethical recruitment.

Goals:

1. Establish a mechanism for continuous dialogue among IGAD member states on migration and related issues.
2. Enhance common knowledge on migration's causes, dimensions, patterns, and future trends.
3. Strengthen regional institutional and governmental capacities for managing migration.
4. Harmonizing legislation on legal migration, irregular migration, trafficking and smuggling, migration and development (including diaspora outreach, reducing brain drain, facilitating remittances).
5. Enhance dialogue between IGAD member states and other regions.

Current Priorities:

In addition to the establishment of mechanisms for continuous dialogue and co-operation among IGAD Member States on migration and related issues, the identified priority areas include:

1. technical cooperation and capacity building;
2. information collection, dissemination and sharing;
3. enhance dialogue and cooperation between the IGAD Member States and countries of other regions; and
4. progress toward formulation and harmonization at the national and IGAD level of legislation, policies and practices in the following areas:

    - legal/labour migration management;
    - irregular migration, traficking and smuggling;
    - border management; and
    - migration and development matters.

ASIA AND OCEANIA

Inter-governmental Asia-Pacific Consultations on Refugees, Displaced Persons, and Migrants (APC), est. 1996

Secretariat: A permanent Secretariat established in January 2007 offers operational and administrative support to the Coordinator appointed by the Chair.

Governments*:* Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China (SAR), India, Indonesia, Japan, Kiribati, Laos, Macau SAR, Malaysia, Micronesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, New Caledonia (France), New Zealand (until 2003), Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu and Viet Nam.

Observers, Partners: IOM, UNHCR, Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference (PIDC) Secretariat.

(The United Nations Inter-agency Project on Human Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (UNIAP) participated in the 8th Plenary of the APC in 2003 based on the agreement of that plenary).

Main Areas of Discussion:

APC was established in 1996 to provide a forum for the discussion of issues relating to population movements, including refugees, displaced or trafficked persons and migrants. Its aim is to promote dialogue and explore opportunities for greater regional cooperation.

Goals:

1. Developing a regional approach to refugees, population movement, and information sharing.
2. Responsibility sharing (refugees).
3. Combating migrant smuggling and trafficking.
4. Preventing illegal migration.
5. Reintegration of trafficking victims.
6. Sharing information and increasing public awareness.

Current Priorities:

Recent APC activities include:

1. a sub-regional workshop on the implementation of refugee legislation in the Pacific (20-21 November 2008);
2. a regional workshop on refugee status determination (10 March 2009).

Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (Bali Process), est. 2002

Secretariat: Monitoring and implementation of related activities and initiatives of the Process are guided by a steering group composed of the governments of Australia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Thailand as well as IOM and UNHCR.

Governments: Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, DPR of Korea, Fiji, Hong Kong SAR, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Laos PDR, Macau SAR, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, New Caledonia (France), New Zealand, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Syria, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Turkey, Vanuatu, Viet Nam.

Co-Chairs: Australia and Indonesia

Thematic coordinators:

- Policy Issues and Legal Frameworks: New Zealand
- Policy Issues and Law Enforcement: Thailand

IOM and UNHCR have participant status.

Observers, Partners:
Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and the USA; Asian Development Bank (ADB), APC Secretariat, EC, ICMPD, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), IGC Secretariat, ILO, INTERPOL, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and World Bank.

Main Areas of Discussion:

The following were the specific objectives agreed to by the Member Country Ministers at the two Ministerial Conferences and reaffirmed at the third Ministerial Conference held in April 2009:

1. the development of more effective information and intelligence sharing;
2. improved cooperation among regional law enforcement agencies to deter/ combat people smuggling and trafficking networks;
3. enhanced cooperation on border and visa systems to detect and prevent illegal movements;
4. increased public awareness in order to discourage these activities and warn those susceptible;
5. enhanced effectiveness of return as a strategy to deter people smuggling and trafficking;
6. cooperation in verifying the identity and nationality of illegal migrants and trafficking victims;
7. the enactment of national legislation to criminalize people smuggling and trafficking in persons;
8. provision of appropriate protection and assistance to the victims of trafficking, particularly women and children;
9. enhanced focus on tackling the root causes of illegal migration;
10. assisting countries to adopt best practices in asylum management, in accordance with the of the Refugee Convention.

Goals:

1. More effective information and intelligence sharing.
2. Improve cooperation among regional law enforcement agencies to deter and combat trafficking and smuggling networks.
3. Enhance cooperation on border and visa systems to detect and prevent illegal movements.
4. Increase public awareness to discourage these activities and to warn those susceptible.
5. Cooperate in verifying the identity and nationality of illegal migrants and trafficking victims.
6. Enactment of national legislation to criminalize people trafficking and smuggling in persons.
7. Provision of appropriate protection and assistance to the victims of people trafficking, especially women and children.
8. Enhance the focus on tackling the root causes of illegal migration, including by increasing opportunities for legal migration between states.
9. Assist countries to adopt best practices in asylum management.

Current Priorities:

The current thematic priorities remain the strengthening of regional policy and law enforcement cooperation to combat trafficking and smuggling in all its forms, including maritime ventures, which put the lives of those being smuggled or trafficked at very considerable risk. At the most recent Ministerial Conference, ministers noted that people smuggling and trafficking in persons was only one side of the multi-dimensional aspects of migration and that these forms of irregular migration had to be viewed in the bigger context of migration and development. Noting the persistence of current situations concerning the irregular movement of people in the Asia-Pacific region, it was agreed that the Ad Hoc Group (AHG) mechanisms used during the establishment phase of the Bali Process be retasked to develop regional responses to these current challenges. These groups would seek to address comprehensively particular situations on a case-by-case basis upon the request of affected countries.

It was also recognized that improving the availability of comprehensive and sustainable solutions for refugees might reduce the pressure for onward secondary movement and thereby complement the international community's efforts comprehensively to combat people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime.

Ministerial Consultation on Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin in Asia (Colombo Process), est. 2003

Secretariat: IOM provides technical support to the process since its inception in 2003 and serves as its Secretariat.

Governments: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

Observers, Partners: The 2003 Ministerial Consultations had no observers. In 2004, the only observer was Afghanistan (which subsequently officially joined the grouping in 2005).

In 2005, the following countries were invited as observers: Bahrain, Italy, Kuwait, Malaysia, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Several organizations were also invited as observers: Asian Development Bank (ADB), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Department for International Development UK (DFID), EC, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), ILO, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the World Bank.

Main Areas of Discussion:

The Colombo Process has three thematic foci:

1. Protection of and provision of services to overseas temporary contractual workers. In particular, protecting these workers from abusive practices in recruitment and employment, and providing them appropriate services in terms of pre-departure information and orientation and welfare provisions.
2. Optimizing benefits of organized labour mobility. This includes the development of new overseas employment markets, increasing remittance flows through formal channels and enhancing the development impact of remittances.
3. Capacity building, data collection and inter-state cooperation. This includes institutional capacity building and information exchange to meet labour mobility challenges; increasing cooperation with destination countries in the protection of overseas temporary contractual workers and access to labour markets; and enhancing cooperation among countries of origin.

Goals:

1. Provide a forum for Asian labour sending countries to share their experiences.
2. Protection of and provision of services to migrant workers.
3. Optimizing benefits of organized labour migration.
4. Capacity building.
5. Data collection.
6. Combating abuse by recruitment agencies.
7. Establishing and operating migration welfare services.
8. Pre-departure orientation services.
9. Establishing a common migrant resource centre and in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).
10. Facilitating managed labour migration.
11. Facilitating remittances.
12. Enhancing the development impact of remittances.
13. Training and skills development.
14. Information sharing.
15. Training and capacity building.

Current Priorities:

1. Share experiences, lessons learned and best practices on overseas employment programmes.
2. Consult on issues faced by overseas temporary contractual workers, countries of origin and destination, and propose practical solutions for the well being of vulnerable overseas temporary contractual workers.
3. Optimize development benefits from organized overseas employment, and enhance dialogue with countries of destination, and
4. Review and monitor the implementation of the recommendations and identify further steps for action.

The Ministerial Consultations in Bali in 2005 set forth action-oriented recommendations in the following areas:

- welfare of overseas workers and support services, and
- optimizing the benefits of organized overseas employment and cooperation on managed labour mobility between countries of origin and destination.

Pursuant to these recommendations and with funding from the European Commission's AENEAS programme, the Colombo Process has undertaken activities in three broad areas:

- working with governments and private institutions to enhance national capacity – for instance, introducing a labour market research unit in each Colombo Process country to monitor manpower requirements in major countries of destination in order to meet demand with matching skills – and to establish linkages among countries to better facilitate legal labour mobility;
- disseminating information to potential overseas temporary contractual workers regarding legal labour opportunities and procedures and the risks of irregular mobility in order to ensure that these potential workers make informed decisions; and
- fostering regional cooperation efforts among major Asian labour source countries and with major countries of destination in promoting legal labour mobility channels and opportunities and thus reducing irregular movements.

Ministerial Consultations on Overseas Employment and Contractual Labour for Countries of Origin and Destination in Asia (Abu Dhabi Dialogue), est. 2008

Secretariat: Joint Secretariat provided by the Ministry of Labour of the State of the United Arab Emirates and IOM. IOM provides support at technical and expert level.

Governments: 11 Colombo Process countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam) and 9 Asian destination countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, United Arab Emirates and Yemen).

Observers, Partners: France, Germany, Japan, US, Mauritius, Republic of Korea, Poland and EC.

Main Areas of Discussion:

The concrete output of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue is the Abu Dhabi Declaration, which defines a new collaborative approach, forward-looking and action-oriented, to better address issues of temporary contractual labour mobility and to optimize its benefits for the development of both countries of origin and destination as well as the workers themselves.

Participating States identified the following four key partnerships through which they wish to foster information sharing, promote capacity building, technical cooperation and inter-state cooperation:

1. enhancing knowledge in the areas of: labour market trends, skills profiles, temporary contractual workers and remittances policies and flows and their interplay with development in the region;
2. building capacity for effective matching of labour demand and supply;
3. Preventing illegal recruitment practices and promoting welfare and protection measures for contractual workers, supportive of their well being and preventing their exploitation at origin and destination; and
4. developing a framework for a comprehensive approach to managing the entire cycle of temporary contractual mobility that fosters the mutual interests of countries of origin and destination.

Goals:

1. Promoting properly managed temporary contractual labour mobility.
2. Enhancing knowledge of labour market trends, skill profiles, temporary contractual workers, remittances policies/flows and their interplay with regional development.
3. Capacity building for the effective management of labour demand and supply.
4. Preventing illegal recruitment practices and promoting welfare and protection measures for contractual workers.

5. Developing a comprehensive approach to managing the entire temporary migration cycle in a manner that benefits countries of both origin and destination.

Current Priorities:

1. identification of the roles and responsibilities of all actors (governmental and private) at each stage of the contractual work cycle (from recruitment to preparation to movement to work in a host country to return and reintegration) to ensure safe, protected and beneficial labour mobility;
2. elaboration of concrete projects activities ("practical outcomes" and related plan of action) to give realize these partnerships;
3. elaboration of a regional multilateral framework on temporary contractual labour mobility.

The ministerial consultation is intended to take place every two years, the next one being in 2010.

THE AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN

Regional Conference on Migration (RCM or Puebla Process), est. 1996

Secretariat: Technical Secretariat (TS). IOM provides the TS with technical cooperation and administrative support.

Governments: Belize, Canada, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and the United States.

Observers, Partners: Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Jamaica and Peru.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), IOM, UNHCR, Central American Integration System (SICA), Inter-American Commission for Human Rights (ICHR), Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB), UNHCR, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants.

The Regional Network for Civil Organizations on Migration (RNCOM) is a coalition of civil society organizations (CSOs) from all 11 RCM member States. It is neither a member of nor an observer to the RCM but participates in many aspects of the RCM including seminars, workshops, and conferences.

Main Areas of Discussion:

Three main areas of discussion: migration policy and management; human rights of migrants; and migration and development.

Goals:

1. Managing irregular movement through and in the region.
2. Linking migration and development.
3. Cooperating on the return of extra-legal migrants.
4. Securing human rights.
5. Enhancing technical cooperation.
6. Combating trafficking.

Current Priorities:

1. study the possibility of establishing links with other cooperation processes in the area of migration and development;

2. social development policies linked to migration processes;
3. enhance border cooperation;
4. promote better understanding of the regional migration phenomenon through a long term comprehensive approach;
5. guidelines for the return of unaccompanied migrant minors;
6. migration and health activities;
7. strengthen respect for the human rights of migrants regardless of status with special attention to vulnerable groups such as women and children;
8. ensure international protection of refugees;
9. cooperation in the return and reintegration of repatriated migrants;
10. cooperation to combat migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons;
11. share best practices in the facilitation of remittance flows;
12. undertake activities in the area of "Integration and Insertion of Migrants".

South American Conference on Migration (SACM), est. 1999

Secretariat: IOM serves as the Technical Secretariat, providing technical cooperation and logistical support.

Governments: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Surinam, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

Observers, Partners: Australia, Canada, France, Italy, Mexico, Spain, Switzerland and the USA.

Andean Community of Nations (CAN), ECLAC, ILO, IOM, Latin American Economic System, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNHCR, groups affiliated with the Catholic Church or defending human rights.

Main Areas of Discussion:
Governments hold meetings to share views and information on topics including development, diasporas, rights of migrants, integration, information exchange, migration statistics and trafficking and smuggling.

Goals:

1. Linking migration and development.
2. Exchanging information and improving statistics on migration.
3. Upholding migrant rights.
4. Value the economic and cultural contributions made by migrants in the destination countries.

5. Promote representatives from civil society to help in the formulation, implementation and supervision of migration programmes.

Current Priorities:

1. respect for human rights of migrants regardless of their status (rejection of the criminalization of irregular status);
2. view the issue of migration in relation to development;
3. strengthen dialogue and political coordination among States;
4. contributions made by migrants to development in destination countries both in labour and production;
5. value contributions of migrants to the welfare and cultural enrichment of host societies;
6. promote representatives from civil society to help in the formulation, implementation and supervision of programmes on migration matters.

EUROPE AND THE FORMER SOVIET UNION

The Budapest Process, est. 1991

Secretariat: Hosted by International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).

Governments: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia (FYR), Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom and Uzbekistan.

Observers, Partners: Australia, Canada, the US, EC, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), Inter-Governmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration Policies (IGC), IOM, UNHCR, UNODC, Council of Europe, Centre for International Crime Prevention (UN-CICP), SECI Centre, INTERPOL, Regional Centre of the Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI), International Labour Office (ILO), Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Executive Committee, Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation (BSEC), EUROPOL and FRONTEX.

Chair: Turkey
Co-Chair: Hungary

Main Areas of Discussion:

The Budapest Process is an inter-governmental dialogue engaging close to 50 Governments and more than 10 international organizations, aiming at developing comprehensive and sustainable systems for orderly migration. It provides for information sharing, exchange of experience and discussion on relevant topics.

On the basis of recommendations from Ministerial Conferences (1991 Berlin, 1993 Budapest, 1997 Prague and 2003 Rhodes) topics of common concern, are identified by the senior officials meeting (annual or bi-annual) as well as geographic and thematic priorities. The Secretariat organizes working group meetings on identified topics.

The following thematic and geographic working groups are currently active:

- Working Group on Irregular Movements and Asylum, chaired by the Czech Republic.
- Working Group on Immigration and Admission Policies, chaired by Hungary, co-chaired by Slovakia.
- Working Group on the Development of Migration Management Systems, chaired by Bulgaria.
- Working Group on Irregular Transit Migration through the South East European Region, chaired by Croatia.
- Working Group on Return and Readmission chaired by Poland, co-chaired by the UK.
- Working Group on the Black Sea Region, chaired by Bulgaria.
- Working Group on the Approximation of Penalty Scales for smuggling of migrants and trafficking of human beings, chaired by Belgium.

Goals:

1. Reduced irregular migration (originally from East and Central Europe towards Western Europe).
2. Help Central and East European states further EU *Acquis Communautaire* adaptation (visa, border controls, capacity building, readmissions policy).
3. Combating smuggling and trafficking.

Current Priorities:

The fourth Ministerial Conference (Rhodes, 2003) emphasized a more comprehensive approach in promoting migration co-operation between countries of origin, transit and destination - especially with the CIS countries (Commonwealth of Independent States). This shift in focus was implemented through the 2005 project "Re-direction of the Budapest Process towards the CIS region" which included in the consultative framework of the Process the twelve countries Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Since Turkey took over the Chair in 2006, the emphasis has been on continuity and bringing in broadened ideas with regard to the areas examined. These include, in addition to the traditional areas of interest for the Budapest Process (return and readmission, border management and asylum), an increased focus on:

- managing labour migration
- integration policies

- re-integration
- how to maximize the development impact of migration

The broadening of the thematic focus of the Budapest Process was confirmed in a senior officials meeting in Trabzon, Turkey, in May 2008.

It is furthermore expected the results of the Ministerial Conference "Building Migration Partnerships" organized by the Czech Republic during its EU presidency will have an important impact on the work of the Budapest Process. Topics include "Return and Readmission", "Fight against illegal migration", "Legal migration", "Integration", and "Migration and Development".

The geographical focus of activities will remain the CIS region, however at the Senior Officials meeting in Trabzon a discussion started to expand the scope of interest of the Budapest Process to include the Black Sea Region and countries of origin and transit relevant for the migration routes in Black Sea region.

Cross-Border Cooperation Process (CBCP, or Söderköping Process), est. 2001

Secretariat: Cross-Border Cooperation Process Secretariat, staffed by IOM and UNHCR.

Governments: Belarus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine.

Observers, Partners: European Commission (EC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the Swedish Migration Board (SMB).

There are no official observers, though other governments and the EU Presidency participate in various activities of the Process on an *ad hoc* basis.

The Process cooperates on a regular basis with the Finnish Ministry of Interior, UK Home Office, European Network of Asylum Reception Organizations (ENARO) and Odysseus Academic Network.

Researchers and NGOs are invited to take part on occasion, and governments recently explored further involvement of NGOs in the Process. In 2007 a regional NGO network was established.

Main Areas of Discussion:

The Söderköping Process was launched in 2001 by the Swedish Migration Board, UNHCR and IOM to promote dialogue on asylum and irregular migration issues. Since 2004, the Process has focused on transferring experiences, best practices and lessons learned of seven recently acceded EU Member States to Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine in aligning their migration and asylum related legislation, polices and practices with the EU *Acquis Communautaire* and international standards.

Goals:

To support Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine in strengthening their migration and border management as well as refugee protection through:

1. Strengthening asylum systems.
2. Facilitating dialogue between EU member states and involved migration authorities.
3. Building government capacity to manage migration.
4. Transferring the experience of recently acceded EU member states on adopting the EU migration *Acquis Communautaire* and international standards.
5. Enhancing information sharing mechanisms on migration statistics, policy development, legislation, and similar areas.

Current Priorities:

The objective of the Söderköping Process is to support Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine to strengthen their migration and border management as well as refugee protection capacity through:

1. strengthening asylum systems;
2. facilitating a structured open dialogue between involved migration authorities and EU member states in the interests of creating a regional network for managing migration and asylum;
3. building government capacity in the region to manage migration;
4. transferring of experience of recently acceded EU Members on adapting to the EU migration *Acquis Communautaire* and international standards;
5. enhancing information sharing mechanisms between Governments on migration statistics and trends, policy developments, legislation etc.; and
6. supporting migration research in the region.

The Söderköping Process was funded by the EU (UNHCR is the contracting agency, with IOM and the SMB as implementing partners). Based on the strong support and interest of all participating Governments for the Process to continue beyond the current implementation phase ending in June 2009, UNHCR, IOM and SMB have proposed a Strategy for the Future of the Process, which foresees the transition into a government-led Process with rotating chairmanship and stronger involvement of the National Coordinators. The Strategy has been endorsed by all ten participating governments. With EU funding over, CBCP is currently transforming itself, with the support of all member states, from a project-based to a state-led process. This would entail rotating chairs and stronger involvement of the National Coordinators.

WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Regional Ministerial Conference on Migration in the Western Mediterranean (5 + 5 Dialogue), est. 2002

Secretariat: No official secretariat. In the past, IOM has provided technical cooperation and logistical support whenever requested by the relevant Presidency.

Governments: Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, and Tunisia.

Observers, Partners: IOM, ILO and ICMPD.

Main Areas of Discussion:

Informal dialogue in which governments cooperate and exchange information and analysis on topics such as migration trends; irregular migration and trafficking in human beings; migration and co-development (the role of diaspora); migrants' rights and obligations; integration; movement of people and regular migration flow management; labour migration and vocational training; migration and health; local cooperation; and gender equality in the context of migration.

Goals:

1. Combating irregular migration and trafficking.
2. Linking migration, diasporas, and development.
3. Supporting migrant rights (and obligations).
4. Managing the regular movement of people and workers.
5. Linking labour migration and vocational training.
6. Promoting migrant health and gender equality.
7. Exchanging information and raising public awareness.

Current Priorities:

2008 Evora/Portugal Conference highlighted the following:

1. importance of the need to try to establish a coherent and complementary strategy with other regional and international fora;
2. need to facilitate legal mobility for labour purposes;
3. request for the introduction of measures aiming at improving migration impact in development of the countries of origin;

4. need to establish integration models grounded on the principles of promoting and respecting fundamental rights.

Pursuant to the recommendations adopted at the Evora Conference, Portugal and Tunisia jointly-organized an expert workshop on circular migration held in Tunis in February 2009.

Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue (MTM), est. 2003

Secretariat: Hosted by ICMPD.

Governments: Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia otherwise referred to as the Arab Partner States (APS); the 27 EU Member States; and Norway, Switzerland and Turkey, called European Partner States (EPS).

New Partner States for specific activities: Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal.

Observers, Partners: The MTM Dialogue is currently in its fourth phase, entitled "A Dialogue in Action".

Partners on ongoing projects being implemented within the framework of the MTM Dialogue include Caritas, EUROPOL, FRONTEX, INTERPOL, IOM, UNHCR, and UNODC.

Observers are Australia, Community of Sahel and Saharan States (CEN-SAD), Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Eurojust, General Secretariat of the European Council, IGC, IOM, International Organization for Peace, Care and Relief (IOPCR), League of Arab States, MARRI, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA).

Main Areas of Discussion:

Four Phases:

- 2002-2003: Exploratory Phase
- 2004-2005: Consolidation Phase
- 2006-2008: Project Phase
- 2009-ongoing: A Dialogue In Action

The aim of the fourth phase is to implement capacity building and operational projects encompassing a dialogue component to facilitate dissemination of results at regional level and provide a solid platform to discuss and build-up spin-off projects.

The MTM Dialogue is organized along two pillars: *Pillar I* aims at enhancing operational co-operation to combat irregular migration. Areas of discussion are:

- interception and apprehension of irregular migrants;
- combating smuggling and trafficking, including the protection of victims;
- reception and detention of irregular migrants;
- asylum and refugee protection; as well as
- return and readmission.

Pillar II addresses medium and long-term issues such as the root causes of irregular flows. Areas of discussion are:

- the mapping of remittances and development in countries of origin;
- deepening links with diasporas to foster development; and
- labour and circular migration.

Through ICMPD, the MTM participates in conferences such as the 5+5 Dialogue, the Rabat Process, the AU-EU Tripoli Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development, et al. The orientation and action plans of these major events are subsequently reflected in MTM activities.

Goals:

1. Enhancing cooperation to combat illegal migration (border services, technical assistance, visa security).
2. Addressing the root causes of irregular flows through development cooperation and better joint management of migration.

Current Priorities:

Under Pillar I, a national project on *Strengthening Reception and Detention Capacities of Lebanon (STREDECA)* is implemented in partnership with Caritas and UNHCR.

In line with the jointly endorsed Arab and European Partner States Working Document on the Management of Mixed Migration Flows (2008), the conclusions of the MTM Project Closing Conference held in Geneva in January 2008, Pillar II

of the MTM Dialogue – migration and development – is a key target of the MTM's strategic planning for the short to medium term. Under Pillar II, ICMPD and IOM are currently implementing the project *Links to Emigrant Communities – Inventory of National Institutional Capacities and Practices*.

With regard to cross-pillar activities, the current priority is to deepen knowledge and understanding of irregular migration in the broader Mediterranean region, including its evolution and impact on the Partner States. In this respect, ICMPD, in partnership with EUROPOL, FRONTEX, INTERPOL, UNHCR and UNODC, is implementing a project consisting in developing and maintaining an *Interactive map on irregular migration routes and flows in Africa, the Middle East and the Mediterranean region (MTM i-Map)*.

THEMATICALLY ORGANIZED RCPs

Inter-governmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC), est. 1985

Secretariat: IGC Secretariat.

Governments: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and the USA.

Observers, Partners: IOM, UNHCR and European Commission (EC).

Main Areas of Discussion:

The major focus of discussions in the IGC from 1985-1992 was asylum; from 1992 the focus shifted to enforcement: inter alia, return, smuggling, and technology.

In 2001, the IGC held its first meeting on immigration and since has also focused on specific aspects of immigration and integration, including security and migration, legal and illegal migration, labour migration, and circular migration.

Goals:

1. Sharing information and ideas on all aspects of asylum, including data collection, entry and border control, temporary protection, responsibility sharing, and temporary protection.
2. Combating smuggling and trafficking.
3. Unaccompanied minors.
4. Family reunification.
5. Labour migration.
6. Technology and migration management.
7. Migration and national security.

Current Priorities:
Since 2005, following a strategic review, IGC has three core activities:

1. asylum/refugees;
2. admission, control and enforcement; and
3. immigration and integration.

There is a growing emphasis in IGC States on immigration and integration following a reduction in asylum numbers and the rising importance of these other topics.

IGC currently has standing working groups on (i) Asylum/Refugees, (ii) Immigration, (iii) Integration, and (iv) Admission, Control and Enforcement with crosscutting working groups on (v) Technology and (vi) Country of Origin Information. Another crosscutting working group on Data meets on an *ad hoc* basis, as required.

Each Chair identifies a theme for the duration of its year-long Chair and holds a specific workshop on it; Ireland identified "Designing Effective Immigration Systems" as its theme for 2006/2007, which reflects the growing interest among IGC States in immigration/integration issues. Sweden's theme for its Chair (2007/2008) was "Circular Migration", and the theme of current Chair Switzerland (2008/2009) is "Skilled Labour Migration: Opportunities for National and International Cooperation".

IOM Migration Research Series

1. *Myths and Realities of Chinese Irregular Migration*
   Ronald Skeldon, December 2000

2. *Combating Trafficking in South-East Asia: A Review of Policy and Programme Responses*
   Annuska Derks, December 2000

3. *The Role of Regional Consultative Processes in Managing International Migration*
   Amanda Klekowski von Koppenfels, May 2001

4. *The Return and Reintegration of Rejected Asylum Seekers and Irregular Migrants: An Analysis of Government Assisted Return Programmes in Selected European Countries*
   Khalid Koser, May 2001

5. *Harnessing the Potential of Migration and Return to Promote Development*
   Savina Ammassari and Richard Black, August 2001

6. *Recent Trends in Chinese Migration to Europe: Fujianese Migration in Perspective*
   Frank N. Pieke, March 2002

7. *Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation: The Case of the Russian Federation*
   Donna M. Hughes, June 2002

8. *The Migration-Development Nexus: Evidence and Policy Options*
   Ninna Nyberg-Sorensen, Nicholas Van Hear and Poul Engberg-Pedersen, July 2002

9. *A Review of Data on Trafficking in the Republic of Korea*
   June J.H. Lee, August 2002

10. *Moroccan Migration Dynamics: Prospects for the Future*
    Rob van der Erf and Liesbeth Heering, August 2002

11. *Journeys of Jeopardy: A Review of Research on Trafficking in Women and Children in Europe*
    Elizabeth Kelly, November 2002

12. *Irregular Migration in Turkey*
    Ahmet Içduygu, February 2003

13. *Bordering on Control: Combating Irregular Migration in North America and Europe*
    Philip Martin, April 2003

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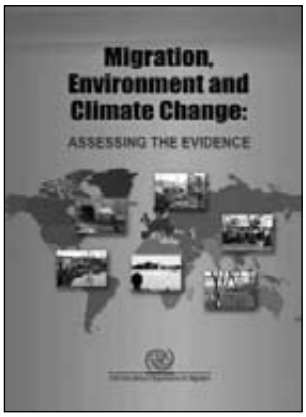
Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Assessing the Evidence



Adequately planning for and managing environmentally-induced migration will be critical for human security. Though policymakers are increasingly interested in this issue and have acknowledged the need to enhance the knowledge base on the migration and environment nexus, policy-oriented research remains limited. It is also widely recognized that the evidence base needed to manage environmental migration effectively is currently very weak. Knowledge on the two-way relationship between migration and the environment remains limited for several reasons: little agreement on how to conceptualize and define 'environmental migration'; difficulty to isolate environmental factors from other factors driving migration due to its multi-casual nature; chronic lack of data; diverse impacts of slow onset events versus extreme climate events; and lastly, migration may be only one of various adaptation strategies. Furthermore, the data and evidence currently available is often scattered across disciplines and is not always readily accessible to either policymakers and/or researchers.

Therefore, with the financial support of the Rockefeller Foundation, *Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Assessing the Evidence* has been an attempt to selectively map the landscape of the current knowledge base on the environment and migration nexus. In addition, it has endeavoured to highlight innovative methodological approaches and the way forward for new research to address remaining knowledge gaps. By systematically taking stock of existing research evidence in the field of migration and the environment, the book emphasizes the implications for policy and prepares the ground work for further empirical and a larger-scale global programme of work.

The origins of this book and the themes selected stem from the recommendations of the *Research Workshop on Migration and the Environment: Developing a Global Agenda for Research in Munich,* Germany in April 2008 which addressed the need for more sound empirical research and identified priority areas of research for policymakers in the field of migration and the environment. IOM organized this workshop together with the United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS), in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and with the support of the Munich Re Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation.

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Migration is an important, yet sensitive topic on the international agenda. Multilateral cooperation on migration issues has not always been self-evident or straightforward. Over the years, however, States have developed different mechanisms for interacting with each other on this subject. Specifically created with a view to addressing migration issues, Regional Consultative Processes on Migration are one such mechanism. While differing widely in size, composition and structure, all processes bring together States for informal and non-binding dialogue and information exchange on migration at the regional level.

Most Regional Consultative Processes on Migration have been in existence for at least five years, and some significantly longer, making this an opportune moment to reflect on their achievements and challenges. The present study considers fourteen of the principal Regional Consultative Processes on Migration, spanning most regions of the globe. Based primarily on interviews with government officials and other actors involved in these processes, the study asks what impacts Regional Consultative Processes on Migration have had on migration governance and on fostering greater confidence in inter-State cooperation on migration.

This report sets out with a broad definition of migration governance. It identifies three distinct phases of the governance processes and analyses the contributions Regional Consultative Processes on Migration have made to each of these. The study then proceeds to draw general lessons and recommendations from the experiences of different processes in terms of their working style and focus. It concludes by exploring where Regional Consultative Processes on Migration fit in the global picture of dialogue and cooperation on migration, with a look ahead to their future possible trajectories.

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