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Background Paper
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Round table 3: Enhancing Institutional and Policy Coherence and Promoting Partnerships

Session 3.1: Measuring Migration and Development Impacts: Latest Initiatives and Progress

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Session 3.1

Measuring Migration and Development Impacts: Latest Initiatives and Progress

1. The context - Issues to be addressed

This paper acts as "food for thought". It highlights the lack of information and evidence regarding the impacts of migration policies and programmes on development - and vice-versa. It aims to call attention to issues regarding the reciprocal impacts between migration and development, to examine existing initiatives to measure migration and development impacts as well as their advantages and disadvantages, and to challenge some perceptions. It provides tools for the participants of the session to seek a better understanding of what is understood as policy relevant information and how this could better be utilised.

Section 1 introduces the context of the discussion, calling attention to the necessity to produce policy-relevant analysis for highly differing needs and interests. It examines the consumers and stakeholders of such analysis, and elaborates on the differences in the needs of policy-makers. Section 2 moves on to provide an overview of existing initiatives. It categorises and analyses different types of initiatives, and seeks to clarify the complexity of what it is we are trying to analyse. In section 3 conclusions are drawn from the perspective of policy planning. Some existing mechanisms in wider policy sectors are looked at with the aim of finding ways to adapt them to impact assessment on migration and development. In section 4 the focus is on future action and outcomes of the session.

Some central questions for the session have been identified as follows:

- 1. What is the overall state-of-play of assessing impacts of development on migration and of migration on development? What are the main success stories and challenges in the generation of credible, comparable information and analysis on the impacts between migration and development? Are there crucial gaps?**
- 2. What is the potential of these initiatives to be utilised in policy planning? For what type of migration analysis is there demand and by whom? Should the needs of policy-makers be more clearly defined?**
- 3. How can we link research/analysis and policy-making more constructively and sustainably? How is analytical information 'filtered' so it can be transferred for use by policy-makers? How can access and capacity to utilise impact analyses be ensured?**

During the past years increasing focus has been put on improving understanding and awareness of the nexus between migration and development. The term Policy Coherence for Development is also increasing in importance. This means that development policy objectives – in particular the Millennium Development Goals – are taken into account and supported in all policies that have an impact on development. The need to pursue policies in a coherent manner is at the core of the discussion concerning migration and development.

The increasing call for evidence-based policy-making accentuates the need to better understand the interlinkages between development and the migration *phenomena* on the one hand, and the impacts that development policies and migration *policies* have on each other on the other. There is a need to develop strengthened evidence-based approaches and functional methodologies which are capable of better guiding and informing decision-making. These are further needed to act as impact assessment tools in policy planning. This is relevant for authorities both in developing and developed countries, whether they are countries of origin, transit or destination. They are also relevant for inter-governmental and regional organisations who act as policy-makers and norm-setters. The needs of stakeholders vary.

From the point of view of a developing country of origin, transit or destination, for it to prepare a development strategy (a Poverty Reduction Strategy or equivalent), it should have sufficient data on the migration phenomenon (outflows, inflows; disaggregated by profession, gender, age, region etc.) as well as the impacts migration has on broader societal development: (formal and informal) economy, employment,

social stability, health, education, poverty etc. - as well as data on development. With such information and analysis, and with adequate capacities to utilize the information, the country concerned is better equipped to plan appropriate strategies, which take these dynamics into account. It is also important that the developing country has evidence on how increased development might affect migration patterns on the short, medium and long term.

From the point of view of a developed country or an international organization, implementing its development policy through traditional means of development cooperation as a donor, this type of information and analysis is necessary for preparing migration-sensitive development policies and cooperation activities. It should have similar data as the developing country on the migration phenomenon as well as the impacts migration has on development. This requires practice-focused impact assessment tools which feed the necessary field information into the normal planning processes. Donors should support developing countries in their efforts to produce, analyse and utilise the available information in policy planning, and cooperate closely to implement the plans. In order to act in true partnership with the developing countries, donor actions should be well-coordinated and planned following the principles of harmonisation.

From the point of view of a developed country of transit or destination of migration, it is necessary to have information on the impacts of its migration policies on development in the developing countries of origin, transit or destination. The use of analyses should to the extent possible be made part of long-term strategic planning. This is essentially a matter of domestic policy coherence between development policy objectives and migration and labour policies. When evaluating the possible effects different policies may have, it is crucial to note that the impacts are mutually reinforcing. The cause-effect link is two-way.

Key terminology in international development and migration discussion has a certain level of ambiguity. This makes the measurement and generation of comparable analytical information and discussion on the nexus between migration and development difficult. This is partly due to political sensitivities behind the usage of certain terms, in addition to the fact that it is still early stages in the debate on the linkages between migration and development. In order for it to be possible to retrieve data and produce comparable evidence, and methodologies for analysis on the impacts, it is essential to discuss how to proceed with key terminology. This, however, calls for capacity building both as regards policy planning and concerning analytical/research work.

2. Existing initiatives and practices

An extremely wide variety of initiatives is currently being or has recently been undertaken across the academic and policy worlds. Whether academically oriented or more policy-focused, these are aimed at boosting understanding of how and to what extent migration and development affect each other. While much high-quality analysis exists on migration and development as separate entities, much work is still needed to shed light on the linkages between the two phenomena. It is the interlinkages, or the causal relationship between migration and development, which continue to be fairly poorly understood.

Several typologies of initiatives are suggested below to provide an overview of existing actions. This is necessary because initiatives to improve the measurement of migration and development impacts cannot simply be classed along one continuum. When an initiative is being planned decisions have to be made (explicitly or implicitly) regarding a number of issues to be dealt with. These include questions such as:

- How many impacts (on what and who) should it try to measure?
- What sort of methodological tools should it use?
- Should the initiative try to measure migration and development impacts itself, or should it support others in trying to do so?
- What is the sustainability of the impact?

Typology 1: What to measure? Phenomenon, impact or policy?

The first typology which can be used to divide the initiatives up is on the basis of what precisely they attempt to measure. Three types of things which initiatives could attempt to measure can be discerned.

Measuring the phenomenon

Initiatives, which encourage better measurement of migration itself are vital, as they provide the basis for all further studies and analyses on how migration affects, or is affected by development. Initiatives to improve the measurement of migration have focused on creating data where it is absent, improving the coverage, accuracy and accessibility of existing migration data, as well as on harmonising data (to enable cross-country analysis and even policy-making).

Example 1a.

'Resource Guide: Household Surveys with Migration Related Components', currently underway. Undertaken by the Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty at the University of Sussex.

Objective: To share copies of surveys with migration questions, and the data resulting from those surveys online, in order to assist the collection of good quality migration data, and promote harmonisation.

Example 1b.

'Labour Migration for Integration and Development in Africa' currently underway. Undertaken by the International Labour Organisation (ILO)

Objective: To map the migration data currently available in West, North and East Africa, in order to assess where gaps exist, and direct resources towards addressing these deficiencies. This is one part of a larger project which seeks to develop the contribution of migration to economic integration and development in these regions.

Measuring impacts of the phenomena

Many initiatives try to improve understanding of the relationship between migration and development. The vast majority of empirical work in the migration and development field is directly addressed at improving understanding of impacts.

Example 1c.

'Migration and Remittances for Development in Africa', currently underway. Undertaken by the African Development Bank, the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and the Africa Region and Development Prospects Group at the World Bank.

Objective: To examine the incidence and impacts of migration and remittances across sub-Saharan Africa, a region where relatively little is known about migration trends and the impact of remittances upon development.

Measuring impacts of policies

Attempts have also been made to try to measure the impact of migration and development policies, the intention being that analysing the current effects of policies should allow some conclusions to be drawn regarding how they could be changed for the better. This sort of policy analysis not only relies on having some measurement of migration, but also an idea of how migration impacts development (or vice versa). Only then can the impact of the policy be evaluated.

Example 1d.

'Commitment to Development Index' (2004, and ongoing), undertaken by the Centre for Global Development

Objective: To assess the extent to which the migration policies of the countries of the OECD are 'development-friendly'. This assessment is combined with estimations of the extent to which six other policies (on issues such as aid, trade and investment) reflect a commitment to development, in order to create an overall 'commitment to development index'. The hope is that this will put pressure on developed country governments to try to increase their placing in the ranking vis-à-vis other OECD countries.

Advantages and disadvantages can be seen to all three types of initiatives:

- It is clear that, from a policy point of view, initiatives that focus on improving migration data are potentially extremely valuable. Having an idea about the flows of immigrants and emigrants into and out of the country, or about the nature of the root causes of migration, is the first step. It is further

important to have data disaggregated by gender, age, skills level, profession/sectors etc. Initiatives which focus on improving migration data potentially enable many other studies measuring the impacts between migration and development. As such, their potential multiplier effects, in terms of increasing our understanding of migration and development linkages, are substantial and will be coherent only if efforts are also made to improve data on economic and social development in developing countries. However, improving data to inform policy requires a long term investment of financial and human resources. In the short term, measures and initiatives should be taken to improve the use and coordination of existing data.

- Initiatives which focus directly on measuring the impacts of migration upon development (and vice versa) are the most common kind of initiative that is observed. Governments need to go beyond knowing the characteristics of migration, and understand what it means for development. This work directly takes up that challenge.
- Initiatives which attempt to precisely measure the impact of policy on migration and development outcomes may be less successful in many cases, as they require information about the extent of migration and the nature of migration and development impacts, either of which may be incomplete. A distinction would also need to be made between policies which will have an indirect or unintentional impact. For example, the initiative detailed here has to make some fairly heroic assumptions in order to evaluate the development-friendliness of the policies concerned. This has been made necessary by the lack of cross-country comparable data available to disaggregate impacts any further (for example by gender, age and skill level). However, despite the poor information base available for doing so, countries will nonetheless need to formulate policy regimes and compare potential policy options. Therefore initiatives which help them to do so, utilising the current information despite its incompleteness, will be valuable.

Typology 2: How wide? How deep? Initiatives that investigate part of the picture and those attempting the whole canvas

This second typology of initiatives categorises them on the basis of whether they examine one aspect of the migration and development picture (e.g. the impact of migration on household income/the impact of inequality on migration/the impact of the brain drain on health service provision/the impact of the integration of migrants in countries of destination on their capacity to contribute to the development of their country of origin – and many, many others), or whether they attempt to examine the whole set of impacts that migration can cause in terms of development (or vice versa).

Measuring part of the picture

Many studies have been undertaken to try to better understand the relationship between particular aspects of migration and development. For example, a large number of initiatives attempt to examine the impact of remittances on development, and there is much material to draw upon in order to analyse this particular question. In other areas the measurement of impacts seems to have recently made progress where previously there had been little – one good example is the measurement of the relationship between the diaspora and development.

Example 2a.

‘Egyptian, Afghan, and Serbian diaspora communities in Germany: How do they contribute to their country of origin?’ (2007). Undertaken by the Hamburg Institute of International Economics, the Hamburgische Welt-Wirtschafts Archiv and the University of Osnabruck

Objective: To understand the ways in which the diaspora interact with their countries of origin, as well as measure the impacts that these activities are having on development.

Measuring the whole canvas

In contrast, other initiatives have tried to move beyond examining one particular linkage between migration and development, and have tried to develop ways to understand the multiplicity of the impacts of migration upon development (and vice versa). In this approach, emphasis is given to assessing impacts on, for example, the labour market, working conditions, social development (health, welfare, etc.), gender roles, demographic trends, and cultural patterns.

Example 2b.

Development on the Move: Measuring and Optimising the Economic and Social Impacts of Migration, currently underway. Undertaken by the Global Development Network and the Institute for Public Policy Research.

Objective: To conceptualise and measure the different ways in which migration impacts upon development, and to design policies which maximise the positive impacts and minimise the negative.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches:

- On the one hand, single issue studies can allow for an in-depth investigation of important parts of the migration and development picture. They can make particularly important contributions to understanding aspects of migration and development which may have been understudied – and under-measured – in the past and be in a good position to propose policy options. More broad-brush studies will not be able to do so with the same precision.
- On the other hand, whilst boosting understanding of one issue will inevitably help policymakers to plan policy, it would be preferable for policy decisions to be based on an understanding of all the ways in which migration impacts development (or as many of the key ways as possible). It will take a long time to build up this sort of over-arching knowledge if it is to be approached through a series of single issue investigations.

Typology 3: How to measure? Initiatives taking different methodological approaches

Initiatives trying to improve measurement of the impacts of development on migration and vice versa have taken a wide variety of methodological approaches, which makes it challenging to classify them into a few discrete categories. However, a simplified typology can tentatively be constructed.

Primary evidence

The first sort of initiative attempts to gather new *primary evidence* on the impacts of migration on development, and vice versa, in order to aid the measurement of impacts. The methodologies used are numerous. Qualitative tools are used to ascertain information both from those people directly experiencing migration or the impacts of migration, and from stakeholders who may be in a privileged position to assess the impact of migration upon the country. Other sorts of initiatives have collected or promoted the collection of quantitative data, whether through improving censuses, population registers or other administrative records with the potential to collect migration data, or through household surveys.

Example 3a.

'Push and Pull Factors of International Migration' (2001) Undertaken by EUROSTAT and the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute.

Objectives: To better understand the direct and indirect causes of migration to the EU, and the mechanisms by which it occurs, through the collection of both quantitative and qualitative primary data. The initiative focuses on the determinants, or root causes, of migration.

Analysing already collected data

The second sort of initiative attempts to *perform analysis on existing data*. These initiatives vary to a great extent, depending on the sort and quality of data drawn upon and the specific impacts analysed.

Example 3b.

'Migration, Remittances and Development' (2005), undertaken by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Objective: To analyse existing data on migrants' remittances to demonstrate their magnitude and transfer functions in the countries of origin and in relation to official development assistance, and to evaluate their potential for spurring economic and social development.

Applying and generalising

The third sort of initiative tends to be applied in circumstances of limited data – for example a country with limited survey evidence regarding a particular development outcome. It involves *drawing on the literature* regarding the impact of migration upon development (or development upon migration) in circumstances which are deemed to be similar in significant ways. These findings are then applied in the situation where the relevant evidence is lacking.

Example 3c.

'Measuring the Economic Impact of Immigration: A Scoping Paper' (2004), undertaken by Jacques Poot and Bill Cochrane, University of Waikato.

Objective: The study attempts to measure the various economic impacts of immigration on New Zealand. For those impacts where evidence or methods are currently lacking, the study draws on findings from international research that are also likely to apply to New Zealand to make an estimate of what the relationship might be, as well as suggesting a research strategy to fill the gaps in the long-run.

The different kinds of initiatives are all likely to have important roles in supporting policy planning.

- There is much need for more primary evidence regarding the impacts between migration and development. Were this primary data available, it is almost certain that understanding of the relationships between various factors would be much greater than it is today. For national policy planning purposes, there is certainly a need for more quantitative data regarding migration's impacts. Qualitative data is helpful but for the greatest usefulness in terms of planning national policies it needs to be combined with quantitative data on both development outcomes and migration behaviour.
- There is no shortage of people wanting to make analyses of migration and development, if they had the data. Whilst government agencies may require some capacity building assistance in carrying out analyses of their own data, there is perhaps less of a deficit in attempts to measure the migration and development impacts using data analysis than there is in initiatives to gather the data in the first place.
- In the short run, in circumstances where data is unavailable, policy planners may have to rely on measures regarding the impacts of migration on development and vice versa, derived from circumstances other than their own. This is of course less than ideal, but may be preferred to basing a policy on a complete lack of evidence, or not having a policy at all. In these cases, initiatives should support the free flow of existing information and help policymakers utilise it in a systemic fashion.

Typology 4: To measure or to support measurement?

Some initiatives attempt to improve understanding of the impacts of migration upon development and vice versa by actually trying to measure the impacts themselves. All the initiatives described above, except example 1a, have taken this approach. However, there are also a plethora of initiatives which attempt to support, in different ways, the measurement of migration and development impacts by others.

Example 4a.

'Measuring Migration: Best Practices', currently underway, undertaken by the Development Research Group, the World Bank.

Objective: The Development Research Group at the World Bank is currently working on drawing up best practice principles for measuring migration in censuses and household surveys. The intention is to use these lessons learned in the Bank's own assistance to countries, as well as to spread them around the global research and policy community more generally, through papers, seminars etc.

Example 4b.

'The Integrated Migration Information System Project' (2001), undertaken by the Egyptian Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the International Organisation for Migration

Objective: Through the capacity building of staff, the re-structuring and upgrading of the office of emigration (including the provision of full internet facilities), and the development of a website for information sharing, this initiative helped the Egyptian government develop the tools to (a) better understand and respond to the diaspora, and (b) spread information about foreign job opportunities to Egyptian residents.

Example 4c.

Establishing an observatory on the Moroccan migrant community living abroad, undertaken by the Moroccan Foundation Hassan II and supported by IOM.

Objective: Document emigrant population trends, and build understanding in government and non-government agencies as well as in private sector, of the needs, issues and potential strategies for improved knowledge of the expectations, difficulties and potential of the Moroccan emigrant population.

There are important advantages to these kinds of initiatives, and it is likely that the approach taken by a particular actor will depend on who they are:

- Direct assessments are likely to be most useful when conducted by agencies whose role it usually is to carry out measurement exercises - whether it is a government statistical agency or academic econometrician.
- In contrast, there is an important role for development partners in building the capacity of others to undertake measurement of migration and development impacts.

4. The way forward - conclusions and suggestions for further action

This final section focuses on drawing general conclusions and suggests answers to the questions posed at the beginning of the paper. Some further questions rising out of the analysis above are raised, and proposals made for concrete actions which can be considered as a way to commence the implementation of discussions.

Good practices for impact assessment in policy-making

As stated in section 1, there are several types of policy-makers who require better information and analysis regarding the impact of migration upon development. Existing impact assessment practices can therefore be tentatively grouped according to the potential users.

In the category of developing country policy-makers preparing national development strategies, the integration of migration in Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) is essential. With demand to identify priorities and have a follow-up plan, the inclusion of migration also compels the policy-makers to link migration to other policies, and further to wider impacts on development. By being a key source for understanding how migration is perceived in national development strategies, the processes help policy-makers identify what type of information and analysis there is need for at national and regional levels. An example of this can be taken from collaboration between IOM and the Government of Ghana to develop a methodology to monitor the impact of migration and development and to identify key relevant pro-poor migration policy interventions for Ghana's Development Plan and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers.

An example of an impact assessment tool for policy-maker at a donor country or organisation is the Poverty and Social Impact Analysis (PSIA) of the World Bank. PSIA provides a set of tools for measuring the impact of a particular phenomenon (such as agricultural subsidies) on development outcomes (particularly poverty and social outcomes), and building on that, analysing how a policy change regarding the phenomenon might impact the selected development outcomes¹.

¹ It also provides guidance regarding how best to manage the process of policy change (e.g. generating local ownership and managing risks) in order to maximise chances of success.

Finally, for the third category of migration policy, policy-makers of a developed country of destination, the example could be taken from the European Commission. To provide impact assessment is a mandatory step in the preparations of all European Commission initiatives or legislative proposals in all policy areas. The assessments should provide analysis of likely social, economic and environmental impacts and include assessment of impact on third countries and international relations. The European Commission is in the process of improving the tool and has been encouraged to develop it further for the purpose of strengthening policy coherence for development.

In this framework, integration of a gender perspective into all policies would improve their efficiency and sustainability. Factoring gender considerations into development and migration policies implies that, without re-designing them, the specific needs, priorities and interests of female and male migrants are incorporated.

Concrete proposals for action

1. Transferring analysis to use by policy-makers

The adaptation of other than migration-development practices has its benefits in avoiding having to "re-invent the wheel". The advantage of continuing to draw from outside the migration and development field is that there are undoubtedly methods in the wider study of development – such as PSIA - which have been systematically developed over long periods of time, in order to be both effective and user-friendly. However, adapting tools from outside the field is likely to be a longer term project for migration experts and development partners. Policy planning processes will at least in the short run have to utilise those tools which have already been developed.

The first crucial question the session should consider is: Once the necessary data is collected and analysed, how can this information be 'transferred' for use by policy-makers? An intermediate 'bridging phase' is needed to help the transfer of analytical information and knowledge for use in practical policy planning. A 'filter' is needed to convert the analytical information into a format which is more readily utilised by policy-makers, while appreciating the complexities of the issues and the multi-dimensional causalities. What type of capacities are needed for this on the policy-makers' side on the one hand, and in the analytical/academic circles on the other? Are there best practices which could be used as a starting point? What types of ideas can be identified for a cooperative project, designed to develop practical tools to routinise the use of analytical information and to mitigate the use of anecdotal evidence?

2. Filling the gaps to meet common needs

Section 2 has provided a general outline to show possible typologies of existing initiatives, as well as analysis of possible disadvantages and advantages of the different approaches. Any assessment of where the most crucial gaps exist, and what sort of initiatives would be most effective in addressing them, depends partly on the needs of the actor making the assessment. However, there is also likely to be much common ground between the different stakeholders on what is required to generate better policy-relevant information.

1. Increased attention need to be given to improving migration data itself. Analyses of the impacts between migration and development, as well as the impacts of policy upon migration and development outcomes, all rely on accurate assessments of migration flows and stocks. Improving migration data is the vital first step to enabling the generation of better analyses of all sorts. Initiatives should be planned to sufficiently disaggregate data (by gender, age, skill level, region etc.) as well as to take note of the non-economic impacts, to ensure the usefulness, comparability and trustworthiness of information. Further, there seems to be much interest in *analysing* existing data, but less resources available for *gathering* that data in the first place. There may be much to be gained from gathering more primary data on migration and development, including less quantifiable issues, such as changes in gender roles.
2. Considerable gains might be made by switching from a focus on individual relationships between migration and development, towards a focus on trying to look more holistically at how the two phenomena are related. To make better policy, governments need a more overarching analysis of

the kinds of costs and benefits that migration might have in terms of development. These sorts of initiatives would address that challenge head on.

3. Much of the current work on migration and development consists of individual institutions undertaking their own projects and analyses. More work supporting a number of key projects, particularly those located in developing countries, and focused on gathering better data, might be more effective than a larger number of more disparate projects. This calls for closer coordination.

3. Streamlining efforts of stakeholders to priority areas

A possible step towards developing these initiatives might be for governments and partner institutions to commit to streamlining their efforts to focus on the above-mentioned four priority areas. These commitments should then be carried through into individual institutions' policy planning processes, so that they shape the way that partnerships are formed and future initiatives planned and funded. Could this be taken forward with more concrete cooperation between policy planners, researchers, members of civil society and international organisations on developing impact assessment and methodological tools?

4. Concerted capacity building efforts for all stakeholders

The fourth issue for the session participants to consider is the need for concerted capacity building projects for all stakeholders. What types of practical initiatives can be foreseen to be implemented within the next two years? What type of concrete cooperation between developing and developed countries is envisaged in the short, medium and long term? How can the expertise and added value of different types of actors be utilised for the benefit of the whole? Can we identify what type of expertise each group of actors could offer and how these could be combined to produce efficient projects?

5. Monitoring progress and ensuring follow-up

What type of cooperation can be envisaged to monitor if and how the use of analytical information has strengthened policy coherence? Could a timeframe for follow-up discussions be held, in for example two years, to evaluate if the practices for using analytical information in policy planning has improved and policy coherence as a result been strengthened?

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