



Current approaches to migration policy evaluations

Laura Chappell
International Organisation for Migration

Managing Migration for Development: Policymaking,
Assessment and Evaluation



Outline

- ▶ Defining monitoring and evaluation
- ▶ Current focus of assessment efforts
- ▶ Assessing impacts: an example
 - Defining cause and effect
 - Selecting an assessment approach
 - Selecting indicators

Definitions

- ▶ **Monitoring** – a continuous process that tracks what is happening within a programme and uses the data collected to inform programme implementation
- ▶ **Evaluations** – periodic, objective assessments of a planned, ongoing, or completed project, programme, or policy
- ▶ **Impact Evaluations** – seek to answer cause-and-effect questions and the changes in outcome that are directly attributable to a programme or project



Current focus of assessment

- ▶ Monitoring is relatively common – but important gaps remain
- ▶ Evaluation is much less so. Our review of 130 websites of 68 countries found only 70 evaluations of migration policies, projects and programmes
- ▶ About half mentioned impact, but only about 20% focused on this specifically.
- ▶ GMG stocktake shows that agencies are in same boat as countries – evaluation lacking, especially impact evaluations.
- ▶ Also true for IOM – thousands of projects each year, but only 8 – 16 evaluations. Again the focus tends to be on process (91%), rather than impacts
- ▶ Appears that while we lack an evaluation culture, we really lack a culture of impact evaluation!



Assessing impacts: An example

A three step process:

- ▶ Defining cause and effect
 - ▶ Selecting an assessment approach
 - ▶ Selecting indicators
-
- ▶ Use example of Development on the Move study, which examined the impacts of migration on development

Step 1: Defining cause and effect

- ▶ I want to know the impact of x on y
- ▶ I want to know the impact of “large lunches” on “workshop participants”
- ▶ I want to know the impact of “our temporary migration programme” on “development”
- ▶ Will often be simple – programme in question, and the outcomes it was meant to achieve
- ▶ Sometimes may require more careful definition of the effect
- ▶ Sometimes may also mean going beyond the original objectives of the programme

DotM approach

- ▶ I want to know the impact of “migration” on “development”
- ▶ Defined “migration” as all forms – emigration, immigration and return, as well as indirect effects (e.g. through remittances)
- ▶ Defined “development” as the expansion of capabilities across a range of areas of life, and at various ‘levels’



AREA OF IMPACT	EXAMPLES
ECONOMIC	Poverty, risk, growth, inequality, labour force participation, trade
EDUCATIONAL	Educational spending, attendance, provision, quality
HEALTH	Health spending, attendance, provision, quality
GENDER	Female migrants' own opportunities, gender roles, attitudes towards gender
WIDER SOCIAL	Traditional culture, family structures, confidence in home society



Step 2: Selecting an assessment approach

- ▶ Find an approach to help you see what the situation would have been if the programme had not been implemented (called the “counterfactual”)
- ▶ Review shows a range of techniques are used in different contexts
- ▶ Two basic approaches – informed opinion and measurement

DotM approach to assessment (1)

- ▶ Did a range of things:
 - Stakeholder interviews
 - Household surveys
 - Large sample (1 100 – 1 500 households interviewed)
 - Covered full range of impacts (1 78 questions)
 - Randomly selected households
 - Included those affected by migration and those not
- ▶ Most basic analysis:
 - Asking stakeholders for their views on impacts
 - Asking migrants to assess migration's impacts upon them
 - We used both, sceptical about the first

DotM approach to assessment (2)

- ▶ To start to try to measure impacts we had the data on households with migrants and those without.
- ▶ However, comparing these two groups to understand migration's impacts is complicated by two issues:
 1. The possibility of reverse causality (e.g. migration not causing increased income, but increased income increasing the possibility of migrating)
 2. Self-selection (comparisons between migrants and non-migrants not being valid, because migrants might be different to non migrants).
- ▶ We used data over time; and econometric methods to try to minimise the problems these cause.

Step 3: Selecting indicators

- ▶ From “poverty” to:
 - Ownership of assets (mobile phone, television, generator)
 - Consumption over the past week, month and year
 - Income of household members
- ▶ From “health” to:
 - Days lost to illness in the last month
 - Evaluation of own health from ‘poor to excellent’
- ▶ From “gender roles” to:
 - Who makes key decisions in the household?
 - How are household tasks (looking after children, repairing the home) divided up?