

**SEMINAR ON
ASSESSING THE IMPACTS OF
MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES
Vienna, 30 June to 1 July 2010**

SUMMARY REPORT

Introduction

The seminar was organized by the GFMD *ad-hoc* Working Group on Policy Coherence, Data and Research¹, with the support of the **Swiss Government** and the **International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)**. Some 50 representatives from governments, international organizations and expert bodies attended, including a representative of the GFMD Chair-in-Office (participants list attached).

The seminar was part of the 2010 work plan of the Working Group aimed at pursuing select outcomes of the 2009 and earlier GFMD meetings, in particular those calling for impact assessments of policies and practices in migrant integration, migrant return and reintegration, circular migration and diaspora contributions. In line with GFMD's continued focus on mainstreaming migration into Poverty Reduction Strategies the meeting also updated participants on latest development in this area, including a separate presentation on reducing the up-front costs of migration. Participants then addressed recent progress made in relation to Migration Profiles, also in line with relevant outcomes of the 2009 Athens GFMD.

The Working Group Co-chairs, Mr Azzouz Samri (Morocco) and Ms Beata Godenzi (Switzerland), as well as Lukas Gehrke from ICMPD, addressed the meeting at the opening, followed by an introduction by the Working Group Coordinator, Dr. Rolph Jenny. Colleagues from governments, international agencies and civil society offered expert statements on the issues addressed and acted as session moderators.

The seminar was held in the context of the Working Group's sustained focus on promoting policy and institutional coherence on the basis of policy-relevant information, data and research. It also aimed to contribute its findings to the preparation of the Fourth GFMD meeting to be held in Mexico in November 2010, in particular Roundtable session 3.1 on 'Assessing the impact of migration on economic and social development, and addressing its cause-effect relationship'.

¹ The GFMD ad-hoc Working Group on Policy Coherence, Data and Research is comprised of governments, international agencies and non-governmental experts. Its overall goal is to foster a commonality of understanding within the GFMD of the importance of policy and institutional coherence on migration and development and the role of policy-relevant data and research in supporting such coherence. The Group analyses GFMD outcomes, identifies relevant areas for multilateral and other follow-up action and sustains inter-action with agencies of the Global Migration Group (GMG) and civil society experts. It also carries out occasional 'Informal Inquiries' with GFMD participating governments on areas of interest. The group is currently chaired by Morocco and Switzerland.

I. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS OF MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES (Moderators: Lukas Gehrke, ICMPD, and Ronald Wiman, Finland)

Mr Paul Gosselink (Netherlands), Mr Paulo Cavaleri (Argentina), Mr Manuel Imson (Philippines) and other government officials presented a wide range of national assessment efforts, recognising that assessing and measuring the impact of migration policies on development is complex. In many instances governments lack appropriate capacity and established assessment mechanisms, and efforts are usually limited to the monitoring of national practices. Dr Irena Omelaniuk (GFMD), Prof Susan Martin (Georgetown University), Dr Robert Holzmann (WB), Ms Sarah Rosengaertner (UNDP) and Mr Jean-Christophe Dumont (OECD) then provided detailed insights on assessment procedures and techniques, including assessment indicators, on development indicators of the MDGs and the Human Development report, as well as on recent data activities. After in-depth discussions in both plenary and break-out groups the following conclusions emerged:

1. Promoting an ‘evaluation culture’

Government assessments of the impacts of migration on development exist in few countries only (by comparison, development policies are often among the most intensely evaluated of all government policies). The GFMD should thus encourage governments to create appropriate mechanisms aimed at conducting policy assessments of *the impacts of migration* on development. It should promote a ‘culture of evaluation’ that should be seen as an investment for effective and coherent migration and development policies.

2. Policy impact assessment and policy coherence

Policy impact assessments are key tools in promoting policy coherence on migration and development. They judge the longer-term impact and merit of a policy and determine to what extent a policy has achieved its stated goal(s). They identify what is and what is not working, and can guide a next cycle of coherent policy-making on migration and development.

3. Policies, objectives and assessment indicators on migration and development

Any evaluation exercise by governments should be based on indicators of development relevance, which in the case of most migration policies are unlikely to have been built into the planning and implementation of the policy. Key steps include:

- 1) define the overall policy challenge to be addressed
- 2) determine the migration and development objectives to be achieved
- 3) set out the activities, and
- 4) define the result indicators best suited to measure the attainment of the development objectives and the overall impact of the policy.

Proper impact assessment grids are required for a logical evaluation approach and for defining the inter-linkage between policy, objectives, activities, outcomes and impacts.

4. Capacity and sharing knowledge and experiences

There exists a serious gap between evaluation expertise in governments and the more advanced knowledge of international agencies and expert groups. Governments from all regions need to improve their capacity to develop effective assessment mechanisms, and should seek the cooperation and technical know-how of relevant international organisations and expert bodies. Donors are also encouraged to increase and earmark funding for the evaluation of policies and

programs in developing countries. **Governments and specialised agencies and experts should share** their evaluation experiences and findings to develop ‘collective intelligence’.

5. Listing of existing evaluations

International agencies and experts were encouraged to prepare a list of existing evaluation activities and outcomes, and make this available to the Working Group for further distribution.

6. Ongoing evaluation feedback into policies

Evaluations are a means to an end, i.e. to “do it better next time”. Impact assessments should thus feed back into policy and programme development

7. Data

Reliable and comprehensive data and research are needed for impact assessment. The 2010 global population census offers an opportunity for countries to collect such data on migration.

II. MAINSTREAMING MIGRATION INTO DEVELOPMENT PLANNING (Moderator: Peter Gordon, UK)

Prof Susan Martin provided an update on recent developments in relation to Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and National Action Plans for Adaptation (NAPAs) on climate change, followed by Ms Michele Klein-Solomon (IOM) who referred to IOM’s World Migration Report and the forthcoming IOM/ILO/UNDP/UNICEF Handbook on Mainstreaming Migration into National Development Planning Tools. Prof Philip Martin (University of California Davis) subsequently offered detailed comments on the issue of reducing the up-front costs of migration for migrants. After an inter-active exchange the following conclusions emerged:

1. Integrating migration into PRSPs – a work in progress

An increasing number of governments are integrating migration factors into national development plans and poverty reduction strategies, but these analyses still lack depth. Most often referenced in PRSPs is the role of remittances, often compared to other development inputs such as foreign trade and foreign direct investment. In the context of the recent global financial crisis, PRSPs also noted that remittances are more stable than the other financial flows. *Less often addressed are the role of migrants and diasporas in contributing to human and social capital* to their home countries, for example through the return of skills acquired abroad or investment in productive enterprises and infrastructure. The PRSPs do not generally indicate that consultations with migrants and diasporas have taken place during the development of the strategies. Inadequacies in PRSPs approaches to migration and development factors had recently also been noted by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank (in only one of the reviewed PRSPs was there extensive reference to migration factors, such as impact in reducing unemployment, increasing demand for goods purchased with remittances, spurring reforms in the overall investment climate, etc.).

2. Migration and National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs)

Climate change, migration and development will be on the agenda of the GFMD in Mexico. A review of recent National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) and other documents revealed a similarly mixed picture of the integration of migration into adaptation planning. Many NAPAs note that loss of habitat and livelihoods could precipitate large scale migration,

particularly from coastal areas that may be affected by rising sea levels and from areas susceptible to increased drought, flooding or other environmental hazards that will affect agriculture. A number of NAPAs link climate change to the intensification of natural disasters that displace large numbers, often in emergency circumstances. For the most part, the NAPAs express concern about internal migration, with relatively few references to the likelihood of international movements, which is consistent with relevant research. The majority of NAPAs see the adaptation strategies they describe (modifying agricultural practices, management of pastoral lands, infrastructure such as dykes and coastal barriers, fishing patterns and other strategies to reduce pressures on fragile eco-systems) as ways to reduce migration pressures and allow people to remain in their original settlements. Sustainable development is seen as the best way to avert unnecessary migration. In some cases, the NAPAs identify migration as an adaptation strategy in itself, in two contexts. First, some countries see migration as a way to reduce population pressures in places with fragile eco-systems. Second, countries recognize that resettlement of some populations may be inevitable, but should be accomplished with planning. There is little in the NAPAs and other planning documents, however, on how such movements of people might be achieved, particularly if international migration may be needed (for example, from low-lying island nations).

3. Mainstreaming migration into development planning

Mainstreaming is a process that integrates migration factors in a comprehensive manner in the design of national development planning and poverty reduction strategies, including the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of such efforts. It allows migration to be embedded in the broader development planning of concerned countries and can foster policy and institutional coherence on migration and development. The Handbook (see above) proposes 3 areas to be considered: a) Transfer of population and workforce; b) transfer of knowledge and know-how (skills transfers); c) transfer of financial assets.

4. Lack of capacity and data

Many governments face a lack of data and capacity when pursuing such efforts, and should seek cooperation with specialized agencies. The Handbook will offer useful guidance to this end.

5. Mainstreaming is a voluntary process - migrants and development

Each country freely determines the importance and scope of migration factors in terms of their impact on poverty reduction and development. For some countries, promoting the integration of migration factors into PRSPs is not considered of priority importance for their development planning. And why should migrants carry responsibility for contributing to development and poverty reduction in their home countries? The emphasis is not on placing responsibility on migrants, but rather to *recognise and better manage* a factual context in which migrants and migration are contributing to development through remittances, skills transfers and other means.

6. Reducing the costs of migration

At the 2007 GFMD meeting the Bangladesh Government cited high recruitment costs for migrants, aggravated by high interest rates on the loans many migrants take to cover recruitment costs, which was considered as an obstacle to enhancing migration's contributions to development. In 2009, the Dutch government supported a study to examine the feasibility of using bank-NGO partnerships to provide lower-cost loans to migrants, thus reducing recruitment costs and enhancing migration's contributions to development.

The study found that Bangladeshi migrants typically incur recruitment fees of at least USD 2,000 to secure three-year, USD 200-a-month contracts that generate USD 7,500 in foreign earnings. Reducing fees, and the interest cost on the loans taken to pay the fees, could help migrants and their families as well as foreign employers and origin and destination country governments. The study developed an RFP to attract bids by bank-NGO partnerships to participate in a scheme initially subsidized by donors to have (1) NGOs identify migrants early in the recruitment process, check their contracts, and receive a finder's fee when loans are made; (2) banks to issue loans directly to recruiters, government agencies, and airlines for recruitment and travel costs; and (3) governments to cooperate so that earnings are transferred via the bank making the loan, ensuring that the loan is repaid. The project is awaiting a donor.

III. MIGRATION PROFILES **(Moderator: Miguel Malfavon)**

In line with relevant outcomes of the 2009 GFMD meeting in Athens, the discussion took stock of recent progress made in the further elaboration and implementation of Migration Profiles. Dr Samuel Archer from Ghana, Ms Ecaterina Buracec from Moldova and other government officials presented their concrete experiences in implementing Migration Profiles as tools for comprehensive data gathering that can support effective and coherent migration and development policies. This was followed by presentations by Mr Marc Richir (EC), Mr Frank Laczko (IOM) and Mr Martin Hofmann (ICMPD). The discussion continued in both plenary and break-out groups. The following conclusions emerged:

1. Migration Profiles as tools for coherent migration and development policies

First experiences with Migration Profiles were made in 2006, essentially to gather concise data on migration out- and inflows. Their content was subsequently extended to include a comprehensive range of issues relevant in the migration and development context, such as labour market, human capital, brain drain, diaspora, education, trade and other factors related to the *impact of migration on the socio-economic development of concerned countries*. Contributing to the mainstreaming of migration factors into national development plans, these 'extended' Migration Profiles have also emerged as specific tools for governments to develop *coherent national migration and development policies* that are based on a vast array of relevant data. To date, some 70 Migration Profiles have been implemented, in both developing and developed countries.

2. Migration Profiles as a process for capacity building, institutional coherence and technical cooperation

Migration Profiles are implemented as part of capacity building initiatives to enhance government knowledge on migration and development, support governments in creating or enhancing greater inter-ministerial coordination and institutional coherence, and require technical cooperation with specialized international agencies. The elaboration of Migration Profiles is a sustained process of activity that assesses the present and longer-term impact of migration on development and should be implemented by special inter-ministerial task forces or similar entities.

3. Migration Profiles are owned by governments

Interested countries define the priorities, objectives and scope (template) of a national profile and are the owners of the profile. International agencies support the process.

4. Standardized template vs. national priorities

An appropriate balance needs to be found between national priorities and migration profile data that can be compared to other profiles, for example in a regional or sub-regional context. The profile template should thus include the full range of issues that can and should be compared across countries, particularly based on internationally accepted definitions, while taking account of the preferences and objectives of the concerned government.

5. Migration Profiles and the GFMD

In the context of the GFMD's continued focus on comprehensive data and their relevance for coherent migration and development policies, the Working Group on Policy Coherence, Data and Research should pursue its discussion on Migration Profiles with governments and relevant international bodies, and should support efforts to develop guidelines for the elaboration of Migration Profiles. It should also ensure that interested governments and organisations can report on progress at the forthcoming Fourth GFMD meeting in Mexico.

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