



SECTION 2
COSTS AND BENEFITS OF MIGRATION

CHAPTER 8

ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION: A SYNOPTIC OVERVIEW¹

Globalization, particularly the inter-penetration of markets and economies, has added new dimensions to some of the old migration issues; just as it has profoundly influenced both the surroundings and the consequences of contemporary migration.

ECONOMIC considerations alone do not determine migration policies. But economic arguments, notably about benefits and costs of migration, can play a critical part in policy making. Unfortunately, the debate is often pre-emptively hijacked by negative, populist slogans, which can inhibit the formulation of sound and balanced migration policies. Current knowledge about the benefits and costs of migration also remains inadequate, diffuse and often confusing, which in turn aids the cause of those politicizing the debate, and helps to create a vicious circle.

The impressive volume of literature on the subject shows how complex and diverse the effects of international migration are. This chapter draws on some of this literature, including the available empirical evidence, to discern the major economic effects of migration. It refers to past and current theories, identifies points to be discussed further in ensuing chapters of this section of the Report, and highlights some of the issues for future consideration by policymakers.

THEORETICAL MODELS TO ASSESS MIGRATION IMPACTS

GIVEN the complexity of migration, how helpful are the existing theoretical models in discerning its

effects? At first glance, classical and neo-classical theories of economic migration seem to offer some straightforward answers.

According to these theories, migration has an all-round beneficial effect, with gains for all, or nearly all, directly involved. The receiving country (assumed to have a labour shortage) gains as immigration removes labour scarcity, facilitates occupational mobility and reduces wage-push inflationary pressure, leading to fuller utilization of productive capital, increased exports and economic growth. For the sending country, emigration can reduce unemployment and boost economic growth through access to strategic inputs such as remittances and returning skills. The migrants, in turn, can benefit from higher wages and productivity in the capital-rich receiving country. These theories also suggest that with wages rising in the sending country and falling in the receiving country, factor costs eventually become balanced, and migration between the two countries ceases.

At a time of increasing resistance to immigration, such a glowing assessment of the consequences of migration may not enjoy high credibility. But there is some historical evidence lending support to these theories. The massive trans-Atlantic migration of the late 19th century both helped to open up the US economy with its vast potential resources, and ease

1. This chapter is prepared by Professor Bimal Ghosh, Emeritus Professor of the Colombian School of Public Administration, and international consultant on trade, migration and development. A longer version of this paper is to be found in his forthcoming publication Migration and Development: Unveiling the Nexus.

poverty and population pressures in the sending European countries. The economic conditions of labourers in poorer countries like Ireland, Italy, Norway and Sweden improved as migrants left, both in absolute terms and relative to those in the UK and France in Europe and in the US (Williamson 1996). In 1882, the Swedish economist Knut Wicksell argued in favour of emigration to rid his country of paupers, because poverty, he reasoned, was a consequence of surplus labour and insufficient land.

Supposing these theories are right, how much can the world gain from free circulation of labour? In 1984, experts made an assessment of possible efficiency gains using a simple methodology to assess the differences in marginal productivity of labour between countries and across regions owing to barriers to inward mobility of labour (Hamilton and Whalley, 1984).² They concluded that if these barriers were removed, the efficiency gains could double world income. More recently it has been postulated that, since wages for similarly qualified workers in developed and developing countries differed sharply – by a factor of 10 or more, as against a difference for commodities and financial assets that rarely exceeds a ratio of 1:2 – the gains from openness could be enormous, roughly 25 times the gains from the liberalization of the movement of goods and capital (Rodrik, 2002).³

These theoretical models and analyses highlight the positive effects of migration in a given set of circumstances, but they fail to take into account the costs, or negative externalities, of migration. Huge inflows of foreigners could place a heavy strain on the receiving country's physical infrastructure and public services, including housing facilities, transport systems, schools and medical services. The costs of integration could be high when the ethnic, cultural and religious background of the migrants differ sharply from that of the resident population. If this overwhelms the overall capacity of the receiving

society to integrate them, exceeding the margin of tolerance for foreigners, tension and even conflict could follow, threatening economic growth and social stability.

These theoretical models also suffer from another type of limitation. They are based on a set of fixed assumptions; for example, that migrant labour is homogeneous, that there is perfect competition and mobility in the labour markets, that full employment prevails in all countries, and there are no state interventions in respect of migration. The reality, as discussed later in this chapter, is often different.

There is a litany of other theories of economic migration. But they fail to provide a better or more adequate framework to capture the complex effects of migration in varying contextual circumstances. Those constructed on the general hypothesis that migration invariably takes place between economically and politically unequal geographical units (e.g. centre-periphery theory or conflict theory) are too rigidly deterministic, while those focused on limited economic aspects of migration (e.g. new economics of migration) do not reveal the complexities of the situation as a whole.

FRAMEWORK FOR CURRENT EMPIRICAL STUDIES: HOW ADEQUATE IS IT?

If there are limits to what we can learn from theoretical models, what about empirical studies? While empirical studies abound in migration literature, they have generally been designed as micro projects, confined to specific areas and time periods. Aside from differences in methodology, the diversity of settings has often led the studies to divergent and conflicting conclusions. The snapshots they provide are real and therefore valuable, but not a sufficient basis for rational generalizations on the benefits and costs of migration.

2. See also the chapter in this report "Economic Costs and Benefits of International Labour Migration".

3. Rodrik estimated that even a modest relaxation of the restrictions on the movement of workers – temporary admission of poor country workers numbering no more than 3 per cent of rich countries' labour force – could yield a benefit of USD 200 billion for the developing world. Feasible Globalizations, Kennedy School of Government, Working Paper Series RWPO2029, July 2002, pp.19–20.

But the current empirical and analytical studies suffer from other shortcomings as well. As at 2000, just under 40 per cent of the world's migrant stock lived in developing countries.⁴ Although the collective emigration flows from these countries exceed their collective inflows, the latter (mostly between developing countries) continue to be significant. More important, in addition to the oil-producing Gulf states, which host millions of contract migrant labourers, several developing countries, including Gabon, Malaysia and Singapore, have been receiving relatively large numbers of labour migrants, and others, such as Argentina, Côte d'Ivoire and Venezuela did so in the past. But little is known about the impact of immigration on these and other developing countries, as the empirical studies have so far focused almost exclusively on developed countries, notably Australia, Canada, Germany and the US.

If a rigid, mutually exclusive categorization of "emigration" and "immigration" countries is used in analysing the effects of migration, this will also leave some important knowledge gaps for those countries significantly affected by both emigration and immigration at the same time. A 1994 ILO survey of some 100 countries showed that nearly 25 per cent of them now fell into that category (ILO 1994; 1999), and that their numbers were increasing. To assess the consequences of migration inflows, analysts normally use net immigration figures. However, since persons entering and leaving countries are not necessarily the same, the method used fails to reveal the interactive effects, if any, of the simultaneous flows of immigration and emigration. For instance, if, as the ILO survey showed in 1994, Italy had some 500,000 economically active non-nationals on its territory and 600,000 economically active nationals abroad, were the two flows completely independent of each other? Or did the two flows interact in some ways; and, if so, what were the repercussions for Italy's labour market and economy?

In addition to the two-way migratory flows (when both are significant), it seems important to examine the effects of migration on a country's other economic flows, such as trade. A recent study by Columbia University showed that in the US the gains in output from labour immigration in 1998 were more than offset by a deterioration in its terms-of-trade amounting to 0.9 percent of GDP, or USD 80 billion, about nine-tenths of which (or USD 72 billion) were carried by US-born workers. These findings could be argued about and caveats issued, but the study unquestionably makes the important point that the effects of labour immigration can be fully assessed only in conjunction with other economic flows, such as trade and foreign investment, and not in isolation.⁵

GLOBAL CHANGES AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE CONFIGURATION AND CONSEQUENCES OF MIGRATION

THE ABOVE arguments make the case for a broader analytical framework to assess the effects of migration. But, it is no less important that the framework also be sensitive to the global changes that impinge on migration. Globalization, particularly the interpenetration of markets and economies, has added new dimensions to some of the old migration issues; just as it has profoundly influenced both the context and the consequences of contemporary migration. For example, the conventional idea of trade-offs between remittances and "brain drain" is now being largely replaced by new models of transnational networking with the diaspora. In these models, emigration and migrant return can be seen less and less as discrete events and increasingly as part of a wider process of global mobility and international exchange. Similarly, freer temporary movement of persons providing skill- and knowledge-intensive services, as envisaged under the General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS), has opened up the prospect of turning "brain drain" into "brain gain".

4. See also the chapter "International Migration Trends".

5. Most of the existing studies on trade and migration assume, based on the Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson model, that they are substitutes. However, the relation between trade and migration is often much more complex, depending on such factors as the openness of the economies, differences in the levels of technologies and specialization of countries. In many cases, trade and migration could be complementary, or both complements and substitutes (as in the case of temporary movement of service providers under mode 4 of the GATS), see Venables, 1999.

SHARING GAINS AND LOSSES

DOES the lack of a sound and comprehensive theoretical or analytical framework make it obsolete to assess the effects of migration? We think not. By following the conventional approach, we can still make a sensible, though not complete or perfect, assessment of these effects, provided full use is made of the available theoretical and analytical tools and the pieces of empirical evidence are pulled together in a balanced manner. Some of these effects, but not all, are discussed in this chapter.

There is ample evidence that migration brings both benefits and costs for sending and receiving countries, and that these are often shared differently by different groups – workers and employers/ owners of capital, skilled and unskilled workers and groups of consumers in the respective countries. The volume, skill composition and other characteristics of the migration flows critically influence these effects, as do other contextual circumstances in which the flows take place. These include labour market conditions and trends, the demographic profile, and the stage, strategy and rates of economic growth and development in each country. Additional important factors are: a) for the receiving country, its socio-cultural capacity to accept and integrate new immigrants, and b) for the sending country, the degree of its preparedness to respond to new economic stimuli such as remittances and returning skills, and to inspire confidence in the future of the economy.

For the distribution of gains and losses due to migration, a key issue is whether, or to what extent, immigrants complement, or compete with, local workers. An important point to note is that labour is not homogeneous within or across countries. Thus, when unskilled foreign workers directly compete with similar workers in the receiving country, all things being equal, the latter are likely to lose, owing to the likely downward pressure on their jobs and wages. On

the other hand, employers/owners of firms engaged in labour-intensive production, consumers of their products, and the immigrants themselves, would gain. But so would skilled workers, if the unskilled immigrant workers complemented them. A 1995 study in Germany, for example, found that a one per cent increase in the share of foreign workers led to a small increase of 0.2 per cent in the wages of blue collar workers, but to a 1.3 per cent rise in the wages of white collar workers (Haisken-DeNew and Zimmermann, 1995). Also, if the economy is open and flexible, with elastic demand in external markets for its tradable, labour-intensive goods, a fall in wages of unskilled workers may induce employers to expand production and recruit some new ones. Thus, a change in output mix could eventually leave both wages and employment relatively unaffected.

For the sending country, the effects will, in principle, be the opposite. Unskilled workers left behind gain through a rise in wages, while employers lose. But this, too, is not automatic. In a typical labour-surplus country, outflows of unskilled workers may not necessarily lead to a general rise in wages given the vast pool of unskilled workers, many of whom may be unemployed or under-employed.

In a country that has abundant labour but a shortage of skills, skilled immigrants can also be a complement to unskilled workers. The latter can gain from the inflow of new skills leading to a better and fuller utilization of labour and other resources, though skilled workers are likely to lose from this. The situation is less than clear cut if skills brought by immigrants lead to innovation and the creation of new jobs. Even in a highly advanced economy, and depending on the type of new jobs, it could have a positive effect on skilled workers as well. In the US, the Cypress Semiconductor Corporation recently reported that about 40 per cent of the research and development jobs were held by immigrants and that each job created nine additional jobs.⁶

6. Cited in *Migration News*, Vol.4, No. 2, Feb. 1997.

A further important point is that even within the same skill category labour may not be fully homogeneous across countries. The immigrant workers may be substitutes for local workers, but only partially so. When Mexican workers move to the US, they may not be used at the same level of labour productivity as local workers, although they may belong to the same skill category. The immigrants could gain from higher wages than in Mexico, but if paid less than the US workers they are replacing, their gains will be correspondingly smaller than expected.

Finally, there is the question of contextual circumstances. Just as the volume and skill composition of migration flows change over time, so do the labour market conditions in particular countries or regions, and the interactive conditions of the world economy. These changes can in turn alter the migration effects, both real and perceived. This can be seen from the shifting international migration policies in different periods following World War II. In the early 1950s, there was an acute labour shortage in industrial countries, especially in war-ravaged western Europe, which, helped by massive inflows of US capital, was heavily engaged in reconstruction work. There were widespread calls to liberalize the movement of workers for the benefit of both migrant-receiving and migrant-sending countries. Formal declarations of international organizations such as the ILO in 1949, OEEC (now OECD) in 1953, and the EEC (now EU) in 1957 echoed these calls (Ghosh, 1992; ILO, 1981). But, by the early 1970s, as countries in western Europe faced the first oil crisis and suffered from widespread recession and high unemployment, they no longer needed imported labour. There was also a growing feeling that the social costs of immigration were rising fast.

In western Europe, labour immigration was virtually halted by 1973-74, with international organizations also highlighting the economic and social costs of migration. It was no longer perceived as a factor in world development.⁷ The situation led to calls in 1976

for a new division of labour in trade, which would 'take work to the workers' and reduce emigration pressure, while promoting growth and welfare in both rich and poor nations. However, by the mid-1980s, amid a sharply deteriorating world trade and economic environment, it became apparent that the slogan 'trade in place of migration' had failed. Once more, there was a change in international migration policy. Reducing the need for migration was still the main objective, but the emphasis now shifted from a new international division of labour to wider economic cooperation between sending and receiving countries to achieve this goal (Ghosh, 1992a).

CURRENT CONCERNS IN THE RECEIVING COUNTRIES: MYTHS AND REALITIES

CONTEXTUAL circumstances can seriously influence the real effects of migration and shape the perception of it. In many receiving countries, where there is a growing sense that immigration is getting out of control, large sections of the public seem to have a negative perception of the effects of immigration. This expresses itself through three inter-related concerns: 1) migrants take away jobs from the local population; 2) immigration is driving down wages, and 3) immigrants are a heavy burden on the country's social welfare system. How valid are these concerns?

DO IMMIGRANTS TAKE AWAY JOBS AND DEPRESS WAGES?

Studies in western Europe show that the impact of immigrants on employment is weak or ambiguous.⁸ As discussed above, the key issue is whether, or to what extent, foreign workers complement or compete with resident workers. In western Europe, there are at least three categories of jobs that largely eschew direct competition between foreign and local workers, and where the question of job displacement hardly arises.

7. This was despite the new demands for immigrant labour in the oil-producing Gulf States.

8. See Herbert Brücker: "The Employment Impact of Immigration: a Survey of European Studies", Table 3.7, 2002.

First, many dirty, difficult and dangerous (so-called 3-D) jobs are being increasingly shunned by local workers in industrial countries.⁹ Second, the current life-style of many Europeans is sustained by a wide variety of service jobs – childcare, house cleaning, pizza delivery etc. – undertaken by foreigners who cannot easily be replaced by locals.¹⁰ Third, immigrants also respond to another type of unmet, but distorted labour demand – low-skilled jobs in the underground economy, which in the EU countries now engage between 10 and 20 million workers, many of whom are immigrants with irregular status (Ghosh, 1998).

There is still another category of jobs traditionally filled by immigrants, in sectors such as farming, road repairs and construction, hotel, restaurant and other tourism-related services, which, although not completely shunned by local workers, often suffer from seasonal shortages of labour. In the EU as in the US, lavish export subsidies, domestic support and import protection enhance production and thus labour demand in the farm sector. Far from taking away jobs from local workers, immigrants redress labour scarcities and help these businesses to flourish during the high seasons.

Finally, there are several skill and knowledge-intensive industries, notably in the fast-moving information technology sector, with an unmet demand for highly skilled immigrants in most industrial countries.¹¹ There is a scramble for additional skills to develop new technologies, enhance competitiveness and create new jobs. At the European Council meeting in Stockholm on 23 March 2001, Romano Prodi, President of the EU Commission, warned that the EU needed 1.7 million qualified workers in the technology sector alone (*The Economist*, 29 March 2001). Despite the recent downturn in the IT market (or partly because of it),

Germany was hard pressed to recruit 20,000 software engineers from abroad. The UK National Skills Task Force said in 2000 that if the UK could close the skill gap on Germany, it would generate GBP 50 billion additional output in a decade (DIEE, 1998; *Financial Times*, 6 September 2000), and has since launched the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme, which is similar to the points assessment schemes of Australia and Canada.

Thus, in a wide variety of jobs in western Europe there is hardly any direct competition between immigrants and local workers. In the US, even when low-skilled immigrants compete with resident workers, they do so mostly with other immigrants possessing similar skills but other labour market (and ethnic) characteristics already in the country. A series of econometric studies showed that the impact of Hispanic immigrants (who arrived between 1975 and 1980, the majority of them “illegal”) on wages and employment was insignificant, except for one category – other immigrants (DeFreitas, 1986). Earlier, this chapter had indicated that in some situations immigration may create, or help to create new jobs. Many people think or tacitly assume that there is always a fixed number of jobs in an economy. This notion is incorrect.

In view of the foregoing, it is not surprising that recent studies have found no correlation between migration and unemployment. The OECD, for example, carried out an exercise for a number of countries to establish if increased immigration in fact matched with increased unemployment. Of the five countries that saw a substantial increase in immigration in 1984–89 (the US, Germany, Japan, Switzerland and France), unemployment dropped in one, rose slightly in three and remained the same in the fifth (OECD, 1998). The contrasting experiences of Spain and Switzerland are also revealing. Spain has a migrant stock of some 3.2 per cent of its population,

9. According to a recent study, two-thirds of foreigners in Germany who found employment in 1998 were working in jobs turned down by local workers (Migration News, 1996).

10. In 1997 the World Bank reported, on the basis of data collected by OECD, that as many as 70 per cent of recent migrants from developing countries were active in unskilled labour sectors native workers prefer to avoid. World Bank, World Development Indicators, 1997. In Spain in February 2000, at a high point of joblessness in the country, the Employment Minister declared “we need people to do the jobs Spaniards no longer want to do” (*The Economist*, 6 May 2000).

11. According to a study in 2000, since 1998 western Europe had lost EUR 110 billion in gross domestic product due to skill shortages (*Financial Times*, 7 March 2000).

and an annual net immigration rate of less than 0.9 percent, but its unemployment has been hovering above 18 per cent. By contrast Switzerland, with a migrant stock of over 22 per cent and a net annual migration of 0.6 per cent, has had an unemployment rate of around 4 (3.7) per cent.

This does not mean that immigration has no effect on employment. When there is a high concentration of foreign workers in certain industries or geographical areas, it can cause pressure on jobs and working conditions of the local labour force. For example, in the construction industry in Germany, which employs large numbers of both regular and irregular foreign workers, trade unions have complained that the situation was endangering job prospects for regular German workers. The problem is aggravated by a rigid labour market and low mobility of German workers, who do not move away from immigration areas and wind up in times of recession competing directly with immigrants. This undermines their job prospects.¹²

The situation is somewhat different in the US where the labour market is less rigid and white workers have high (4-6 times higher than in Western Europe) mobility. New immigration, for example of low-skilled (and mostly irregular) Mexicans, may displace some resident workers, but, as noted above, this applies mostly to Mexican immigrants with similar skills, who had arrived earlier, and not the white workers (Ghosh, 1998; DeFreitas 1986; OECD, 1993).¹³

What about wages? There is a widespread belief that even if immigrants do not steal jobs, they depress wages. But the findings in a wide range of studies in Europe and the US tell a somewhat different story. In Europe some found small negative wage effects, ranging from -0.3 to -0.8 per cent, while others suggested that local wages, especially of the highly skilled, increased slightly (Hanson et al., 2002). In the UK, a recent study suggested that wages among

existing workers there had not been affected; if anything, they had gone up (Dustmann, 2004; *The Economist*, 28 February, 2004). In the US, one study concluded that a 10 per cent increase in immigrants in a region lowers non-migrant wages by an amount close to zero (0.2%) (Brucker 2002).

Some of these differentiated effects on wages of skilled and unskilled local workers can also be influenced by the conditions of the labour market of the receiving country. The large contrasts in labour market situations in Western Europe and the US have already been noted. The fact that the US has a vast pool of black and Hispanic labour explains further how the recent streams of low-skilled Mexican immigrants have put downward pressure on wages (and jobs) due to direct competition at the low end of the local labour force, involving not only earlier Mexican immigrants with similar skills and other characteristics, but also low-skilled black and Hispanic workers.

Not surprisingly, in 1997 the US National Research Council concluded that American workers as a whole have gained from immigration, but wages of workers without a high-school education had declined – a conclusion in line with findings of the 1994 Report of the President. It also confirmed that those most affected were previous immigrants in low-wage jobs for which new immigrants were competing. A more recent study confirmed that those most affected by new immigrants who had arrived since the beginning of 2000 were resident immigrants, but that the group also included young, less educated American worker (Sum, 2003).

To complete the picture of labour market effects, in most countries of western Europe immigrants are more likely to be unemployed than the local labour force, and are generally first to be retrenched in times of recession. Both in western Europe and the US, they

12. In the US, a few studies have shown how immigration can have a negative effect on jobs and wages of local workers. See, for example, G.Borjas "The labour demand curve is downward sloping: Re-examining the impact of immigration on the labour market," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 118(4), 2003; and "Increasing the supply of labour through immigration, measuring the impact on native-born workers." *Center for Immigration Studies*, 2004.

13. More recently, they have also been found to compete with black workers in the same areas holding low-skilled jobs. Mexican immigrants, for example, are now doing the work black janitors used to do in Los Angeles (Martin and Midgley, 1994). It should be noted, however, that most blacks do not live in areas with large concentration of immigrants.

are also found to earn less than local workers in comparable jobs. This may in part be due to lower levels of education and skills, but there is enough evidence to suggest that it is also due to discrimination against immigrants.

DOES IMMIGRATION RAISE SOCIAL WELFARE COSTS?

Immigrants are sometimes seen by host communities as profiting from benefits. The assumption is that they rely heavily on public welfare and social services, but pay relatively little in the form of welfare contribution and taxes. In the US, as in western Europe, the assumption is being widely used as an argument to restrict immigration or delay welfare benefits to certain categories of immigrants. The fear of being a “welfare magnet” has led countries like Ireland and the UK to delay such payments to immigrants from the new EU members, even while opening their borders to them. Once more, evidence from existing empirical studies is somewhat conflicting, and the reality is much more complex.

In the UK, a recent Home Office study calculated that in 1999–2000 migrants contributed GBP 2.5 billion (USD 4 billion) more in taxes than they received in benefits (Gott and Johnston, 2002). Another study revealed that the foreign-born population contributed around 10 per cent more to government revenue than they took in benefits, and that in the absence of their contribution either public services would have to be cut or taxes raised (ILO, 2004). Similarly, in Germany it was claimed that without the contributions from immigrants who came in 1988–91, the German social welfare system would have collapsed (UNHCR, 1992). In the US, a recent study at Rice University concluded that regular and irregular migrants who had arrived since 1970 cost the country USD 42.5 billion in 1992. But, more recently, the Urban Institute showed that, instead of a net cost of USD 42.5 billion, there was a net benefit for the US during the same period.¹⁴

A critical element in these cost estimates is the extent of immigrant dependence on public welfare. But

again the picture is ambiguous. Across western Europe, in a number of countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, the Netherlands and Switzerland) migrants’ welfare dependence seems to be higher than that of the local population. On the other hand, several other countries (Germany, Greece, Portugal, Spain and the UK) show that welfare dependence among migrants is similar to, or lower than that of EU citizens (Brucker, 2002). In Canada, too, a 1993 study showed that immigrant households were generally less dependent on welfare than non-immigrant households (Baker and Benjamin, 1993).

There is often also a general belief that irregular immigrants do not pay taxes. But, anxious to conceal their identity, many irregular immigrants do not claim welfare benefits. In the US, a most recent measure that seeks to link immigrant patients’ legal status to federal government support of USD 1 billion to hospitals would make the situation even more complex (*New York Times*, 10 August 2004). Studies in the US show that a large percentage pays social security and income through the automatic withholding system. In 1984, the average irregular immigrant worker in the US had more than USD 1,000 withheld each year for federal income taxes and social security payments alone (Simon, 1989). In 1990–1998, employers paid the US government up to USD 20 billion in welfare contributions for the irregular immigrant workers they employed. But they did so with fake social security cards. Since these cards cannot be matched to legally recorded names, they do not entail any benefit expenditure (ILO 2004).

What then is the real situation? Some of the differences among these findings clearly stem from differences in the methodology used. For example, in the two US studies cited above, the Urban Institute treated social security on a pay-as-you-go basis (in keeping with US federal government practice), while Rice University did not. It excluded the 15 per cent of each worker’s earnings paid as social security contribution on the grounds that these would be offset by the anticipated benefits to be returned on

14. For a more detailed discussion on the public welfare costs of immigration, notably irregular immigration, see Bimal Ghosh, *Huddled Masses and Uncertain Shores: Insights into Irregular Migration*, 1998.

retirement. Also, in countries with a federal system (like the US), if the assessment is confined to a particular city or area, it would lead to distorted results. Clearly, for an overall assessment of the net welfare cost it is important to take into account all contributions made to, and benefits received from, different public authorities by the immigrants. In 1997, the US National Research Council (NRC) estimated that, measured in terms of net present value, while the states had a loss of USD 20,000 for every immigrant, the corresponding gain for the federal government was USD 80,000 (NRC, 1997).

Caution is also needed on how to calculate the value of the services provided. It can be argued that only the marginal costs should be taken into account for all those services that the host country will need to maintain, even if there were no immigrants. And the marginal cost could be lower than the average cost, if the migrants use only the spare capacity of existing services, or higher if new facilities are to be set up because of the arrival of immigrants.

Methodology aside, the main issue is the level of use of welfare services by immigrants and their families. And this, once more, depends on the characteristics of the immigration flows in a given time period. Skills and education, age, family status and cultural background as well as the original motive to migrate – all influence migrants' attitudes towards the use of public welfare. Studies in the US have shown that immigrants who came during 1965-69 used less public welfare than those who arrived in 1985-89. Why? At least part of the explanation lies in the differences in skills and education of the two groups (Borjas, 1994). The National Research Council similarly found that newly arrived immigrants with little education used more state and local public services than they paid in taxes. Experience in countries like Australia and Canada have shown that skilled immigrants have a lower propensity to depend on public welfare (Ghosh 1998; Baker and Benjamin, 1953).

Age and family status are also important factors: young, active, highly motivated and often single, most migrants in the initial stage are less likely to depend on welfare. But the situation evolves over time, especially as families grow and welfare transfers are likely to increase. After a relative decline, these could rise again as immigrant populations age. The importance of the age factor was brought into focus in a recent study in Germany, which showed that if someone immigrated at the age of 30, he or she will contribute EUR 110, 000 over his or her lifetime. By contrast, a person who immigrates before his/her first birthday will create a net burden of EUR 60,000 on public finances. Since 78 per cent of immigrants in Germany are of working age, an average immigrant makes a positive net contribution of EUR 50,000 in his or her lifetime (ILO, 2004).

Taking a longer, inter-generational view, the US National Academy of Sciences has concluded that immigrants in the early years do add to costs, particularly for education. Eventually, however, each immigrant, with his or her descendants paying taxes, would make a net positive contribution of USD 80,000 to the US budget (Smith and Edmonston, 1997).

Another important factor shaping immigrants' attitudes towards the use of public welfare is the integration policy of the host society. What matters particularly is their ease of access to training and economic opportunities, including scope for occupational mobility and advancement. Will they remain poor and continue to depend on public welfare? Or, will they have economic success and, as earnings rise, avoid dependence on public welfare, despite being eligible? Any policies or practices based on exclusion or discrimination are unhelpful. A separate, but related, factor is the attitude of the host society and its own citizens towards the use of public welfare. A general cultural aversion and social reticence of the host society towards public welfare dependence is likely to discourage immigrants from relying unduly on public welfare, and the reverse could be equally true.¹⁵

15. See chapters "Benefits and Costs of Integration – International Convergence?" and "Migration and the Contemporary Welfare State".

MIGRANT-SENDING DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: DOES MIGRATION HELP OR HINDER DEVELOPMENT?

FOR POLICYMAKERS in the developing countries a key question is whether migration helps or hinders development. Some of the general effects of emigration are discussed earlier in this chapter and in greater detail in other chapters of this Report.¹⁶

One of the most stubborn problems facing most developing countries is widespread unemployment. Emigration is sometimes seen, as was the case for several eastern Mediterranean countries in the 1960s and early 1970s, as a means to reduce joblessness and enhance industrial development through increased foreign exchange earnings (Ghosh, 1996; Korner, 1987). In Asia, similar considerations have led countries like Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka to encourage labour emigration. There is little doubt that in over-crowded areas emigration can provide some temporary relief from unemployment. It can be particularly helpful in absorbing the increase in labour force, as has occurred in countries like Pakistan, the Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka at different times (ILO/UNDP, 1988; Korale and Gunapala, 1985; Kim, 1983).

Emigration can also serve as a temporary safety valve against mass discontent resulting from job losses during the transition following economic reform and restructuring. This was a major consideration prompting western European countries, notably Germany, to launch various temporary labour migration schemes from Central European countries in the early 1990s. By alleviating unemployment, emigration can also reduce the fiscal burden of welfare benefits. Egypt might have found it difficult to sustain its employment guarantee scheme in the 1970s without the massive movement of its workers to the Gulf states.

But emigration usually does not involve more than 2-3 per cent of the domestic labour force – too small to make a real dent in widespread unemployment and underemployment of many labour-abundant countries. Even a much higher level of emigration may prove relatively ineffective, when the problem is structural and the country continues to face high demographic pressures. In 1973, Turkey had one million expatriates abroad, or six per cent of its labour force at that time. Today, the Philippines has about six per cent of its labour force living abroad. But in neither case could emigration solve the problem of structural unemployment. In Sri Lanka, although the gross emigration flow represented roughly 86 per cent of its incremental labour force, unemployment remained 14 per cent in 1960. Mexico continues to face serious problems of joblessness, although around 8 million Mexicans – nearly 8 per cent of its total population of 108 million – are living in the US alone.

Reliance on emigration, even as a temporary relief to unemployment, also carries a potential risk. Should such relief encourage the sending country to postpone unpopular but essential economic reforms, it can over time only aggravate the unemployment situation and undermine sustainable growth. Also, the selection of migrants – whether by family decision (or, as in many cases in Africa, by clan heads) or at the behest of employers – tends to cream off some of the most enterprising and innovative workers of the sending country. As a result, both future economic growth and job creation could seriously suffer, especially in a country with a narrow human capital base.

The negative consequences of labour outflows on output and eventually on employment could be particularly disturbing when several types of outflows occur at the same time, causing production bottlenecks and economic dislocation. The immediate production and employment losses can be compounded by population redistribution, dislocation of inter-firm and inter-industry linkages and their

16. See particularly the chapter "Migration and Poverty: Some Issues in the Context of Asia".

negative spread effect. Empirical evidence in some countries, for example Pakistan in the 1970s and Jordan in the 1980s, also shows how labour outflows can create temporary labour shortages in certain industries or high emigration areas. This can lead to a substitution of capital for labour in the production process, reducing labour demand and thus job opportunities.

Some of the direct consequences of emigration on the labour market can have second-round effects owing to changes in the social and family structure of the sending country. Just as labour outflows can encourage the use of unemployed labour, they can also draw new people into the labour market, especially at the lower end. Examples include increased female participation in the labour force in the Philippines, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, and the Sahelian countries in Africa. In Yemen, following labour migration in the 1980s, children were inducted to fill the jobs previously handled by adult workers. In some countries, labour migration has also been found to encourage increased spatial mobility of the domestic labour force. When there are social or spatial barriers to such mobility, unemployment and labour shortages can co-exist in the same country (Ghosh, 1996).

How does emigration affect wages? Although in theory labour emigration should lead to a rise in real wages, in most developing countries this may not happen, since, as already noted, they generally suffer from a large backlog of unemployed and underemployed. This is one reason why employers normally do not oppose labour emigration. However, if large-scale emigration leads to temporary labour shortages in specific industries or high emigration areas, it could, at least temporarily, lead to a sharp rise in wages, as happened for example in Yemen between 1975 and 1977, and in Pakistan in the late 1970s (Ghosh, 1997).

SKILL MIGRATION: TURNING BRAIN DRAIN INTO BRAIN GAIN AND BRAIN CIRCULATION

Skill migration, a hotly debated issue in the 1960s and 1970s, has once more moved sharply up the migration agenda (see the next chapter). Globalization, including fast-evolving technological change, ascendancy of knowledge- and skill-based service industries, and intense market competition, have led to a worldwide scramble for skills. Although this concern is also shared by most industrial countries, poor nations are particularly worried about losing their best talents to rich countries with selective immigration policies for skilled workers. But the new global changes are gradually shifting skill migration away from its fixed, unidirectional pattern, which, in the past, generally resulted in a permanent loss of talent for the home country, into a new transnational model of skills sharing.

A recent estimate suggested that some 400,000 scientists and engineers from developing countries (between 30 and 50% of the total stock) were working in research and development in the industrial countries, compared with around 1.2 million doing the same at home (Meyer and Brown, 1999). In the US, immigrants from several developing countries had twice as much education as their counterparts at home in 1999 (ILO 2004). An extreme case is that of Jamaica in 2000, when there were nearly four times more Jamaicans with tertiary education in the US than at home. The percentage of such migrants in the US from several Central American countries – El Salvador, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic – varied roughly between 25 and 40 per cent of those at home (see Table 8.1). More Ethiopian doctors are practising in Chicago than in Ethiopia.

TABLE 8.1

MIGRANTS TO THE US BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION RELATIVE TO SIMILARLY EDUCATED COHORTS REMAINING AT HOME, 2000 (IN PERCENTAGES)

Country	Total	Educational level		
		Primary or less	Secondary	Tertiary
East Asia				
China	0.1	0.1	0.2	2.2
Indonesia	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.7
Philippines	3.6	0.6	2.2	11.7
Eastern Europe, Central Asia				
Croatia	1.2	0.4	1.2	4.7
Turkey	0.2	0.1	0.4	1.3
Latin America and the Caribbean				
Brazil	0.2	0.1	0.5	1.1
Colombia	2.1	0.4	4	9.9
Dominican Republic	12.9	5.3	42.4	24.8
El Salvador	24.3	12.4	114.8	39.5
Guatemala	7.6	3.8	29.9	25.8
Jamaica	33.3	4.7	40.9	367.6
Mexico	13.3	10.8	17.2	16.5
Peru	1.8	0.3	2.5	4.2
Middle East, North Africa				
Egypt	0.3	0.1	0.2	2.3
Tunisia	0.1	0.1	0.2	1.3
South Asia				
Bangladesh	0.1	0.1	0.3	2.3
India	0.2	0.1	0.2	2.8
Pakistan	0.3	0.1	0.5	6.4
Sri Lanka	0.2	0.1	0.1	5.6
Sub-Saharan Africa				
Sudan	0.1	0.1	0.3	3.4

Note: Immigrants defined as foreign-born population in the US aged 25 years or over ; primary education or less corresponds to 0-8 years of schooling, secondary to 9-12 years of schooling ; and tertiary to more than 12 years of schooling. Percentages represent ratio of numbers living in the US over those living at home with same educational attainment.

Source:

Reproduced from table 5, R.H. Adams : International Migration Remittances and the Brain Drain : A study of 24 labour-exporting countries, Working Paper No. 3069, 27 May 2003.

A disquieting aspect of skill migration from developing countries is that skilled individuals are disproportionately high among those who leave. Some 12 per cent of Mexico's labour force is in the US, but 30 per cent of Mexicans with PhDs are among these migrants. OECD estimates that between 1990 and 1999 the stay rates of foreign science and engineering PhD graduates in the US were as high as 87 per cent for China, and 82 per cent for India, followed by Britain (79%), Taiwan, China (57%) and the Republic of Korea (39%) (OECD, 2002b).

BRAIN DRAIN, REVERSE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY AND POVERTY

Skilled labour is both a complement to, and an embodiment of, technology and capital. Not only does it have a cumulative or multiplier effect on production and economic growth, but it also has an impact on the pace and prospects of technological innovation and future human capital development. It is this nexus between human skills and technology that led the 1972 UNCTAD III conference to describe developing countries' "loss of brains" to developed countries as "reverse transfer of technology". A recent survey covering 14 countries revealed a clear link between

skills development and a rise in both labour productivity and GDP growth (Coulombe et al., 2004). Given their importance as a key factor in production and growth, the outflow of skills, if not easily replaceable, may ultimately lead a fragile economy into stagnation, with a lowering of average incomes of the resident population. At the same time, the redistribution of income in favour of the skilled workers resulting from their outflows, may depress wages of unskilled workers. It can thus lead to a deterioration of income distribution, and aggravate poverty in the sending countries.

Long-term or permanent emigration of skilled individuals can involve a loss of large amounts of public funds directly and indirectly invested in them. South Africa claims to have spent USD 1 billion educating health workers who migrated – the equivalent of one-third of all development aid received between 1994 and 2000. In Ghana and Zimbabwe, three-quarters of all doctors leave within a few years of completing medical school (*Financial Times*, 16 July 2004).¹⁷ The full magnitude of such losses cannot be easily estimated, but the gains for receiving countries are obvious.¹⁸

Rich nations' policies of draining scarce and expensive human resources from poor countries, which aggravate global inequality, have also been criticized on ethical grounds. Skill migration boosts the tax revenues of receiving countries, but depletes them in the sending countries. A study at Harvard University showed that the one million Indians living in the US accounted for 0.1 per cent of India's population but earned the equivalent of 10 per cent of India's national income. In India, their income would have been less, but they would still have been among the highest taxpayers¹⁹ (Desai et al., 2001). The 50 million Chinese who live outside China (including Taiwan Province of China) earn an annual income

equivalent to two-thirds of China's gross domestic product (Devan and Tewari, 2001).

BRAIN DRAIN, BRAIN OVERFLOW OR OPTIMAL BRAIN OUTFLOW?

There are also some well known counter arguments to the above approach. Since skill migration is not the cause but a consequence of lack of job opportunities, the phenomenon should be seen, it is argued, more as a "brain overflow" than a "brain drain". From this perspective, the outward movements actually reduce the supply-demand gap of skilled workers in sending countries and ensure a more efficient allocation of human resources, from which the world economy gains. It is further argued that the investment in education and training of skilled workers is more in the nature of a sunk cost, and that it is better to have "brain drain" than "brains in the drain". The experience of many European countries is also sometimes cited to counter the criticism of skill migration. Norway, Sweden and the UK in the 19th and early 20th century, and Italy, Spain and Portugal in the 1960s and 1970s sent their skilled (and unskilled) workers abroad, but none of them became the poorer as a result. Finally, there is the argument of the individual's freedom of movement and the right to market one's talent in the world market.

OPTIMAL BRAIN DRAIN?

Goldfarb, Havrylyshyn and Magnum (1984) used a model to analyse the impact of skill migration, in conjunction with the effects of remittances, in the case of Filipino physicians moving to the US. Their findings, based on a set of reasonable assumptions about the income differential between the US and the Philippines, the proportion of the US income to be sent to the Philippines, the multiplier effects and other relevant factors, were that those who remain will

17. "Exodus of medical staff hampers aids programmes", based on a report by Physicians for Human Rights, presented at the International Aids Conference in Bangkok.

18. The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) estimates that for each developing country professional aged between 25 and 35 years, USD 184,000 is saved in training costs by developed countries. Considering that the 27 OECD countries have a workforce of approx. 3 million professionals educated in developing countries, this could result in a staggering USD 552 billion savings for the OECD countries (cited in Meeus and Sanders' presentation "Pull factors in international migration of health professionals" at the Public Health 2003 Conference, Cape Town, 24-26 March, 2003).

19. As mentioned in the section on remittances, the fiscal loss is currently more than offset by the remittance flows to India.

benefit from the physicians' emigration. More recent econometric analyses have put forward the concept of "optimal brain drain". They show that countries with emigration of over 20 per cent of all persons with tertiary education, and low levels of education (e.g. El Salvador, French Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago), would benefit from reduced skilled emigration. On the other hand, countries with low levels of adult education and low emigration rates (e.g. Brazil and China) would benefit from increased skill emigration (Lowell, et al., 2004).

For countries with a broad and flexible human resources base and the capacity to easily replace the outflows, skill migration is not a major problem. However, when poor countries that are short of human capital lose some of their most talented workers, this can be a major impediment to future economic growth and technological progress. In Sub-Saharan Africa, as in the Caribbean and several countries in Latin America, the initial cost of skill migration has been compounded by a second round of negative effects, undermining the training of the intermediary cadres and inhibiting product and process innovation (Ghosh, 1996; Papademetriou et al., 1991).

Even for countries with a broader human resources base skill migration can create temporary skills shortages in specific sectors and occupations, and if these occur in key sectors, the problem can be more serious, as found in Sri Lanka, Jordan and Turkey.²⁰ On the other hand, sector-specific experience in several countries, including Pakistan and the Philippines, has shown that when skills can be rapidly replaced and the production processes easily adjusted, the losses from skill migration could be marginal (Ghosh, 1996).

In the past, a few countries tried to restrict skill migration, with little success. Others have sought to levy a tax on the migrant, and this, too, has had few

positive results. It was also proposed to set up a global fund with contributions from skill-receiving countries to compensate for the loss suffered by the countries of origin, but it never took off. A more promising, but still problematic approach is to work out bilateral arrangements for sharing taxes paid by the skilled developing country expatriates. An alternative, but also doubtful approach is to give a "talent tax credit" to local companies employing workers returning from abroad (Devan, et al., 2001).

An excessive outflow of skills from a developing country often reflects the supply-demand gap of skilled workers. The response is either to reform the education and training system, or to increase the demand for skilled workers by creating opportunities for jobs through increased foreign and domestic investment. Interstate wage differentials, while important, are not necessarily a decisive factor in all circumstances. A 1999 global survey showed that, regardless of their stage of development, countries with an unfavourable future economic outlook tend to experience outflows of qualified people (IMD, 1999). This applies to a country's political and cultural environment as well. Scientists, academics and high-level researchers in particular, cherish intellectual freedom. As past experience has shown in countries like Argentina and Chile in Latin America or Ghana, Nigeria and Uganda in Africa, when political oppression and human rights abuse create a stifling intellectual and cultural environment, improvement of earnings or physical working conditions alone do not arrest the outflows of high-level talent (Adepoju, 1991; Ghosh, 1992).

TURNING BRAIN LOSS INTO BRAIN CIRCULATION

But skill migration need not be seen as a permanent loss for the sending country. Recent global changes, including closer economic and market integration, and spectacular progress in information and communication systems, make it possible for the

20. In Sri Lanka, the loss of construction and engineering skills at the height of labour migration to the Gulf States led to a decline in output and delays in project implementation. Many small firms lost their workers to larger enterprises, involving the transfer of their training costs to the former (Korale et al., 1984). In Jordan, migration of highly skilled workers in the early 1980s and their replacement by rural-urban migration (often at lower levels of productivity) caused skill shortages in rural areas. In Turkey, skill migration led to a sudden worsening of safety conditions in mines on the Black Sea coast.

sending country to establish transnational links with its diaspora and tap its skills and talents. A new pattern of increased transnational mobility of skilled personnel is thus emerging, presaging better sharing of knowledge and talents among nations.²¹ International organizations, for example UNDP through its TOKTEN and IOM through its MIDA programmes, are facilitating temporary visits by qualified expatriates without requiring their permanent return, to help countries of origin meet their skills requirements.²²

The potential available resources of the transnational diaspora network for the home countries are not limited to knowledge and talents; they are also a source of investment and new technology, market intelligence and business contacts. The diaspora can be a bridgehead for the penetration by home country enterprises of the markets of the host country, as exemplified by Korean Americans who helped to open markets in the US for Korean automobile, electronics and other industries (OECD, 2002 b).

However, only few countries have so far tapped the full potential of the diaspora network, and its impact has generally been limited to certain sectors. Its role in the development of the country of origin should not be taken for granted. Building transnational links is a two-way process. The home country environment needs to be friendly and supportive if expatriates are to be actively engaged in its development. Emotional bonds and nostalgia are important, but not sufficient for the purpose. The diaspora, if it holds key positions in transnational corporations (TNCs), can influence company decisions to set up operations in the country of origin, as Indian expatriates working in Hewlett Packard have done (Biers and Dhume, 2000). Some companies are recruiting young developing country graduates abroad and, after further training, post them in their country of origin to better exploit local market opportunities (*Financial Times*, 1 July 2004).

All this is unlikely unless, in addition to market openness, the country can provide macroeconomic stability, good governance, basic infrastructure and a generally favourable investment climate. Closer cooperation between migrant sending and migrant receiving countries, including mutual recognition of dual nationality and other rights and obligations of the migrants, can be of significant help.

BRAIN GAIN THROUGH TRADE-RELATED TEMPORARY MOVEMENT OF SKILLED PERSONS

A new and promising, but still largely unexploited approach to turn brain drain into brain gain lies in the freer temporary movement of persons providing skills and knowledge-intensive services across borders. Balance-of-payments data show that many developing countries have a “revealed comparative advantage”, i.e. the ratio of a given export item to a country’s total exports, divided by a similar ratio for the world, in a variety of sectors, including engineering, accounting, law, management consulting, nursing, software development and data processing. The same comparative advantage largely explains the increasing interest by industrial countries’ service industries in outsourcing high-skilled jobs to developing countries (*Financial Times*, 31 March 2004).

The rapid development of these services and their increased exports in the global markets can give a powerful boost to the economy of a sending country and reduce the pressure for skill migration. It requires better market access, including freer temporary movement of persons as a mode or sub-mode of delivery of such services. The WTO’s General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) provides precisely for such liberalization, although so far government commitments under the agreement are limited. A 1997 study shows that instead of depleting

21. South Africa and several countries in Latin America have linked expatriate researchers to networks at home, leading to circulation of ideas and knowledge. The Indian government has been encouraging the development of such private networks by supporting organisations and events that actively involve the non-Indian nationals abroad.

22. See also the chapter “Enhancing the Benefits of Return Migration for Development”.

human capital such temporary movements among countries can raise the earnings of the skilled individuals involved and help broaden their knowledge and experience, thus leading to a “brain gain” for themselves and their country (Ghosh, 1997).²³ This can raise developing countries’ earnings and employment rates, and alleviate long-term or permanent migration pressure. Importing countries also stand to gain from access to such services at lower cost and a more efficient allocation of their resources.

HARNESSING THE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL OF REMITTANCES

Remittances are widely seen as a litmus test of the benefits to be derived from migration by the sending country. As the subject is discussed in detail in other chapters of this report,²⁴ only a few points related to the development impact of remittances are highlighted here (Ghosh, 2004).

Many analysts use the gross amount of remittances to developing countries to highlight their importance relative to official development assistance and other financial flows. But this is misleading, since the gross figures do not take into account the transfers migrants make to rich countries, and those that take place between developing countries. When these “reverse flows” are taken into account, the net amount received by developing countries is much smaller – in 2002, around USD 50 billion, compared to the official gross amount of USD 93 billion.²⁵ On the other hand, the actual remittances to developing countries far exceed the amount officially recorded as many transfers take place through unofficial channels. No one knows the exact amounts involved, but an earlier study covering 11 different countries estimated that the unofficial transfers may, on average, represent 36 per cent of total flows²⁶ (Puri and Ritzema, 1999).

Remittances are not necessarily a net addition to the household budget or the economy. The opportunity cost of emigration – the possible earnings forgone in the home country if the migrant had stayed at home, and the output loss to the economy, needs to be taken into account, too. But, as other chapters show, migrants make their own rational cost-benefit calculations (Ghosh 1996, 2004) and, besides the high personal consumption fuelled by remittances, by boosting the household budget they also promote children’s schooling, better health, housing and family welfare, and, hence, future human capital development (Ghosh, 1996).

High transfer costs reduce the size and thus the development impact of the flows. But this problem is being increasingly addressed and the costs, which can be as high as 20 per cent of the sum being remitted, are falling for some regions, such as Latin America (IADB, 2003). The later chapter “Migrant Remittances as a Source of Development Finance” explores measures to lower these costs and ensure the security of transfers.²⁷

The criticism that remittances do not generally find their way into productive investments, first, because remittances are not capital flows, but rather a contribution to family income and, second, because of the migrants’ alleged general lack of familiarity with investment instruments, is largely flawed. As demonstrated in the chapter “Migration and Poverty: some Issues in the Context of Asia”, recipients of international remittances have a high propensity to save. Remittances can also open the way to credit for use as investment capital. When made through credit co-operatives or community-based microfinance institutions, they provide valuable capital for small business. By creating new demand for labour-intensive goods and services, they can boost

23. The study also recommends a special, multilaterally harmonized visa regime both as a facilitating and a monitoring tool for such trade-related temporary movements.

24. See the chapters “Migrant Remittances as a Source of Development Finance” and “Economic Costs and Benefits of International Labour Migration”.

25. Estimated on the basis of IMF balance of payment statistics (IMF, 2003).

26. The claim made by some transfer agencies that unrecorded remittances may be larger than official transfers seems exaggerated.

27. These can include electronic transfers and related innovative devices, such as prepaid debit cards, transfer agencies’ easier access to state-owned service networks and development of credit unions (as already seen in Spain and Portugal) and community-based microfinance institutions.

aggregate demand and therefore output and income, with a multiplier effect as high as 1: 3 or even more (in Bangladesh, for example, it was 3.3 for GNP, 2.8 for consumption and 0.4 for investment (Van Doorn, 2003)).

Remittances can help local community development projects and businesses in the home country and, as the chapter “Migrant Hometown Associations: the Human Face of Globalization” shows, migrant associations in the host country are increasingly active in pooling migrant funds and raising additional means from external sources to support such projects. For instance, the government of Mexico, among others, actively encourages the development of social assets through matching contributions.

Remittances are a valuable addition to GNP, an important source of foreign exchange (especially for small countries) and can alleviate temporary foreign exchange difficulties, but it is doubtful that they serve as a driving force for trade policy or economic reform. The overall development impact of remittances at the macro level has so far been less impressive than at the household or local community level. Cross-country comparisons do not show any direct correlation between inflows of remittances and economic performance.

In recent years, remittances have proven more stable than other forms of private financial flows to developing countries,²⁸ opening up the possibility of raising external funds by securitizing future flows, as is being done in Brazil, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama and Turkey (Ghosh, 2004; Ketkar and Ratha, 2001). They generally also have an anti-cyclical economic effect. Even so, undue reliance on remittances as an engine of development may be unwise, and could make emigration-dependent countries vulnerable to external shocks.²⁹ Excessive reliance on remittances

to finance development can also be self-defeating, if necessary, but often politically painful structural reforms are postponed or avoided, as may have happened in some of the remittance-receiving eastern Mediterranean countries in the 1960s and 1970s (Korner, 1987).

Do remittances reduce poverty and inequality? A recent study covering 74 low and middle-income countries indicated a positive correlation between remittances and poverty alleviation. According to the findings, a 10 per cent increase in the share of remittances in country GDP would lead to a 1.2 per cent decrease in the percentage of persons living on less than USD 1 a day, and also reduce the depth or severity of poverty (Adams and Page, 2003).³⁰ The available evidence of the impact on equality is inconclusive. Some studies show that remittances have an equalizing effect on income distribution in Mexico (Taylor, 1999). In contrast, others found that, to the contrary, international remittances increased rural-urban inequality and economic asymmetry in Mexico, and also in Egypt (McCormick and Wahaba, 2002; Rubenstein, 1992). This finding is probably partly explained by the original (pre-migration) income levels and the location of the migrant households. To the extent that migrants come from above-average income households, remittances may exacerbate income inequality.

BENEFITS OF MIGRANT RETURN

Do sending countries gain from improved human capital when their migrants return? The answer could be positive, provided three main conditions are met: a) migrants return with more, or better skills than they would have acquired at home; b) the skills acquired abroad are relevant to the needs of the home country economy, and c) the migrants are willing and able to use the skills upon return. Empirical evidence

28. See also the chapter “Migrant Remittances as a Source of Development Finance”.

29. For example, Egypt faced a difficult budgetary situation when 1.5 million Egyptian workers and their dependants were suddenly repatriated during the 1991 Gulf crisis; and Turkey's 1973-77 Five Year Plan, which had anticipated an export of 350,000 labour migrants was in a shambles when western Europe put a sudden halt to labour immigration in the mid-1970s.

30. For an indication of the volatility of annual remittance flows to selected African countries, see IOM World Migration Report 2003, Table 12.3. What is, however, less clear is how and to what extent the decline in poverty is influenced by the effects of remittances-induced economic growth and its distribution.

suggests that only in a few cases are these conditions fully met (Ghosh, 1996).

Studies on return migration in several countries, including Greece and Turkey, show that more skilled and successful migrants are generally better integrated in the receiving society and hence less likely to return. Data relating to other migrants, such as e.g. from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in the Gulf States, provide little evidence of skills upgrading during their stay abroad. On the contrary, available though limited evidence suggests that at least in a few cases there was actually some downgrading or de-skilling of migrants, as was also the case in regard to some Turkish workers in Germany during 1960-73. In such situations it is not just the immigrants but also the host country that fails to reap full benefits from the available human capital.

Moreover, new skills acquired by the migrants abroad are not always adaptable to local conditions. In Pakistan, 81 per cent of returnees and 84 per cent of employers felt that the skills acquired during overseas employment were largely irrelevant (Adams, 1998). Finally, when migrants return to the country of origin, they are not always willing to accept new challenges in the industrial sector. A general tendency among many returnees is to set up their own business or simply opt for retirement. The few who would like to take up the challenge have often been disillusioned by the negative attitude, even resistance shown by members of the local community, and have been handicapped by the lack of support and guidance of public authorities.

Even so, the benefits of return must not be completely discounted. The experiences of a significant number of countries, e.g., Colombia and Mexico in Latin America, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in South Asia and Greece and Turkey in Europe, show that return migration can be a powerful factor for modernization and social change in small towns and villages, despite occasional tension in the initial

stages. In several East African countries, return migration has contributed significantly to the growth of small business enterprises, the construction of modern houses and roads and overall development of local communities. Indian and Taiwanese returnees from Silicon Valley in the US have been a main driving force for the growth of the software industry in India and Taiwan, following liberalization³¹ (*The Economist*, 28 September 2002; Luo and Wang, 2001; Ghosh, 1996).

As the past experiences of several southern European countries demonstrate, when conditions in the home country improve, the more enterprising and innovative migrants tend to return and participate in national development. This has already been happening in several East Asian countries, while similar prospects are opening up in Central European countries, such as Hungary and Poland. As suggested earlier, highly skilled and otherwise successful migrants can pay frequent short visits to the country of origin, without having to contemplate permanent return. Such multiple short visits are more problematic for unskilled or low-skilled migrants, especially if they do not have residence visas or citizenship status in the host country. They may even fear being denied re-entry once they leave.

A different kind of problem is faced by contract workers as they return home at the end of their contract period and have to wait for an indefinite period before getting new offers for jobs abroad, as, for instance in the case of Indian migrants from Kerala working in the Gulf states. Since they may have difficulty in getting jobs in the local market or a new contract abroad, they need special assistance (e.g. accelerated retraining to meet new skill needs).

Then there is the additional complex problem of voluntary and forced return of rejected asylum seekers and irregular migrants, and temporary refugees. This has serious implication for development, but is insufficiently discussed in

31. Of the 312 companies in the Hsinchu industrial park near Taipei, 113 have been started by UDS-educated engineers with professional experience in Silicon Valley, where 70 of the park's companies have offices to pick up new recruits and ideas, *The Economist*, 28 September 2002.

existing migration literature, with the notable exception of the work done in this area by IOM (IOM, 2004).

HOW DOES DEVELOPMENT AFFECT MIGRATION?

To what extent can the economic development of sending countries contribute to managing migration? The basic objective of migration management is not to eliminate migration altogether.³² Rather, the goal should be to make movement of people more orderly, safe and humane, and to ensure that it is voluntary. Greater economic convergence between countries should no doubt lower emigration pressure; it is also a welcome objective on ethical and other grounds. But, there are two important reasons why global economic convergence should not be overstated as a means of managing migration:

a) The income disparity, in dollar terms, between rich and poor countries has been increasing rather than decreasing, and the prospect of closing the gap in the near to medium term is slim. At its present GDP growth rate, it would take India some 62 years to reach the current per capita income of the US. If India grows at its pre-1980 rate, it would take 246 years (*Financial Times*, 17 August, 2004).³³ In terms of purchasing power parity (PPP), which is a better index of the real welfare situation, the gap is much smaller,³⁴ but it is still too large to be eliminated in the near term. Average per capita income figures do not, however, take into account the internal income distribution patterns (and therefore do not

adequately reflect the real individual or family welfare gaps between countries). If instead of per capita income, we looked at the wage rates across countries, does the outlook for convergence seem any more promising? Clearly not. It has been estimated that average wages for similarly qualified workers in rich countries were 10 times higher or more than in poor countries (Rodrik, 2002).³⁵

b) Income differential is clearly an important factor in international migration, but not the only one.³⁶ As one UN study observed, in the majority of cases, large wage differentials do not by themselves trigger migration. Indeed, a striking feature of international migration is that in the aggregate, its responsiveness to international income and wage differences is very low (UN, 1997). Moreover, historical and contemporary evidence demonstrates that when a migrant-sending country is successfully engaged in broad-based development involving job creation and economic growth, and people feel that things will improve for themselves and their children, migration pressure declines and it may even trigger some return migration despite higher earnings abroad. Clearly, it is the rate of economic growth and its fair distribution in the population rather than the absolute level of income that is of importance for the effective management of migration.³⁷

This leads the discussion to another issue related to the development-migration nexus, namely the so-called migration hump theory, which argues that

32. Clearly, the "right to stay" does not imply that people should never move.

33. *Financial Times*, 17 August 2004. Similarly, an estimate made in 1994 suggested that even at three times the per capita GDP increase in the countries of Central America, it would take 150 years to overcome the income disparity between these countries and the US (Weintraub and Diaz-Briquets, 1994).

34. The ratio between high income and middle-income countries is: 27: 5.7 or less than 5 times and between high income and low income countries is 27:2 or slightly less than 14 times.

35. The World Bank estimated that the ratio between the wages of the richest and the poorest groups in the international wage hierarchy – skilled industrial country workers and African farmers – was 60:1 in 1992 and that it could rise to 70 by 2010, if things were to go badly, World Development Report 1995.

36. See also the chapter "Economic Costs and Benefits of International Labour Migration".

37. Establishing a fixed threshold in terms of per capita income or international income disparity for migration transition to take hold (that is, for emigration to stabilize) is an elusive goal. Based on the experience in Western Europe in certain periods it is sometimes argued (see the chapter "Economic Costs and Benefits of International Labour Migration") that when interstate disparity is reduced to about 4/5:1, emigration pressure tends to decline. But this varies widely depending on the numerous other factors involved. Brazil, for example, has a per capita GNP of US 3,060, which is roughly one-tenth that of high-income countries; and yet, its net annual migration is nil. Aside from questions of distance and the direct and indirect cost of the move, the anticipated delay in getting a job in the destination country as well as the risks of subsequently losing it must be taken into account, alongside the question of access (or its absence) to unemployment benefits at home and abroad.

development may be the only effective means of reducing emigration pressure, even though initially it would stimulate more migration. The transition period of high emigration – the “migration hump” – is supposed to span many years, even generations, for the process to run its course and turn full cycle.³⁸ But more needs to be known about the nature of the interactive process, the different variables that influence it and the time element involved for policymakers to be able to effectively use this paradigm.

While western and northern Europe’s transition from emigration to immigration was the result of development sustained over several generations, newly industrializing economies in Asia, e.g. Singapore, Malaysia and, more recently, South Korea and Thailand, have brought emigration under control in less than 15 years and, in some cases, in only 10 years. The story of the erstwhile emigration countries of southern Europe is not much different. In the wake of the accelerating expansion of tourism and off-shore banking activities in the Caribbean, the turnaround was rapid in several island countries, such as the Bahamas, the Cayman Islands and the US Virgin Islands. Indeed, in some cases, it may have been too rapid and, instead of emigration pressure, excessive immigration has emerged as a serious problem.

To judge from available indications, the time element in the transition does not seem to be an independent variable, but rather closely correlated to the applied development strategy, and the causes of existing migration. It is also likely that the development strategy influences the types and characteristics of any new flows it may generate.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

THE DISCUSSION above and in other chapters of this section of the Report show how difficult it is to make generalizations about the complex effects of international migration. Existing knowledge bases are fragile and fragmentary and, combined with the lack of an adequate theoretical or empirical framework, increase the difficulty of assessing these effects properly. This can also feed the politicization of migration issues and polarize the debate.

Many of the receiving industrial countries’ immigration-related concerns over jobs, wages and increased public welfare cost are exaggerated or ill founded. They are heightened by the fear that migration is getting out of control. Such fears are likely to remain unabated, unless the rising emigration pressure in most developing countries, and the opportunities for legal entry into destination countries, are brought into a dynamic equilibrium. This calls for closer international cooperation based on agreed principles and practices, that balance and harmonize the needs and interests of both groups of countries, and the migrants themselves (Ghosh, 2000).

In the past, migration-related issues, including the benefits and costs of migration, have often been perceived as an area where the interests of sending and receiving countries are largely in conflict. The framework used for assessing the benefits and costs has been narrowly unilateral. However, with migration becoming an integral part of global integration this needs to be changed to one of cooperation and partnership. A transnational framework is now more suitable to capture the benefits and costs of migration, as reflected in the discussion in this chapter on skill migration, remittances and return.

³⁸. See the discussion in the chapter “Economic Costs and Benefits of International Labour Migration” based on the findings of the 1990 US Commission for the Study of International Migration and Cooperative Development.

A wider framework is also needed to assess the effects of the interaction between migration and other economic flows, such as trade and investment. The recognition of such interaction will help ensure adequate policy coordination between migration and other related fields, both domestically and internationally. Migration will be better factored into development policies.

Achieving global economic convergence, however desirable an objective, is not an essential precondition for effective migration management. What is needed is for migrant-sending countries to be engaged in dynamic and broad-based development, combining job creation and economic growth with a fairer distribution of income, thereby generating general optimism about the future of the country. The effective support by industrial countries of these efforts will enhance this process and contribute to its success.

LABOUR MIGRATION

CHAPTER 9

ECONOMIC COSTS AND BENEFITS OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR MIGRATION¹

Even a marginal liberalization of international labour flows would create gains for the world economy that are far larger than prospective gains from trade liberalization.

INTRODUCTION

LABOUR migration does not lend itself to an easy cost-benefit analysis, in part because of the immeasurable aspects of migration, such as integration “costs”. The benefits of foreign labourers may be immediate and relatively easy to measure in terms of jobs filled, wages paid and economic output, but there can be disagreement over whether more diversity is either a benefit or cost, or whether educating the children of migrant workers is a pure cost or a productive investment in their future. For these and other reasons, optimal migration frameworks and flows are likely to vary over time and between regions.

This chapter discusses some of the key economic factors regarding international labour migration - the enduring economic disparities between countries that drive labour migration, the positive and negative impacts on sending and receiving countries, and also globally, and the migration policies that can ultimately help alleviate the very disparities that are one of the causes of labour migration, and the negative impacts. It poses some overarching policy questions for governments, including whether, and if so, what level of migration between developing and developed countries could be optimal, in whose interest international migration for employment should be managed, and whether labour migration

management agreements should be bilateral, regional, or global.

Four major topics are covered: i) economic reasons for migration, ii) the economic impacts of migration in receiving countries, iii) its economic impact in the country of origin, and iv) the relationship of development and migration. The conclusion emphasizes that the “natural” solution to shrinking labour forces in developed countries and growing labour forces in developing countries is managed labour migration, which generally benefits individuals and the receiving countries. Underlying this is the danger that migration could lead to economic divergence instead of convergence, e.g. where some countries become “nurseries” and “nursing homes”, when their working-age population goes abroad in search of jobs. Avoiding a world in which the long-run comparative advantage to some countries of this arrangement brings too high a cost for others adds urgency to the quest for a better migration management framework.

ECONOMIC IMPULSES FROM MIGRATION

IN AN IDEAL world, there would be little unwanted migration and few migration barriers. People move for many reasons, but economic differentials are still the main determinants of migration from developing

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to developed countries (Ellerman, 2003). To achieve such an ideal world would require a greater reduction of economic differences between countries that encourage people to migrate than is at present the case. Governments and international organizations are striving to reduce these differences and, using migration, managed properly, as one means to speed development and convergence.

Experience shows that once per capita income differentials are reduced to about 4:1 or 5:1, as when per capita income is USD 20,000 in the receiving country, and USD 4,000 - USD 5,000 in the sending country combined with a higher economic and job growth rate, the anticipation of continued economic improvement would keep most persons, who might otherwise consider crossing national borders for economic reasons, at home.² Other factors also stimulate international migration for employment, including, e.g. relative deprivation, that is, individuals are not necessarily absolutely poor, but feel poor in comparison to others, for instance, when families with a migrant abroad are able to acquire additional valuable (and status-boosting) consumer items, such as a TV, stimulate other families to also send out migrants to keep up; or where some misfortune, such as a failed crop or a health emergency prompts emigration to bring quick money for survival or to repay an unexpected bill (Taylor and Martin, 2001).

But, we do not live in a world where per capita income differentials between countries tend to be reduced substantially. Instead, economic differences between many states are widening, increasing the motivation for international labour migration. Though the world's GDP was USD 30 trillion in 2000, yielding an average annual per capita income of USD 5,000, the

actual income levels ranged from USD 100 per person per year in Ethiopia to USD 38,000 in Switzerland, a 380:1 difference. When countries are ranked according to per capita GDP and tracked over time, it becomes apparent that the gap between high-income countries (USD 9,300 or more per person per annum) and low-income countries (below USD 750 per person per annum) and middle-income countries (USD 750 to USD 9,300 per person per annum) has been widening, and that very few low and middle-income countries were able to climb into the high-income ranks over the past quarter of a century.³

Per capita GDP in the high-income countries in 1975 was on average 41 times higher than in low-income countries, and 8 times higher than in middle-income countries, but by 2000, high-income countries had a per capita GDP 66 times that of low-income countries and 14 times those in middle-income countries.⁴ It should be emphasized that per capita income differentials by themselves do not necessarily trigger migration flows, but once they are started, flows tend to stop "naturally" when income differentials narrow to 4:1 or 5:1.

2. There are exceptions to this, and important reasons for them. For example, Brazil has a per capita GNP of USD 3,060, roughly only one-ninth the per capita income of high income countries, but generates relatively few emigrants. The richest Brazilians who could get visas to migrate have much higher-than-average incomes, and are likely to remain at home, and poorer Brazilians have less opportunity to access higher-income countries. There is a significant migration of over 200,000 ethnic Japanese Brazilians to Japan for employment (Tsuda, 2003).

3. For example, Portugal and South Korea moved from the middle- to the high-income group between 1985 and 1995, while Zimbabwe and Mauritania moved from the middle- to the low-income group (World Bank World Development Reports, various years).

4. These numbers would change slightly if per capita income were measured in purchasing power terms, but would still be far more than 4 to 1. Note that inequality can also be measured across individuals rather than countries, e.g. by dividing the world's population of 6.4 billion into quintiles and seeing the share of global income accruing to each 20 per cent. Measuring inequality in this way shows, according to some studies, declining inequality, but largely because of rapid economic growth in a few countries like China and India.

TABLE 9.1

GLOBAL MIGRANTS AND INCOMES, 1975-2000

	Migrants (mio)	World pop. (bio)	Migrant pop.	Year change (mio)	Countries grouped			Ratios	
					Low	Middle	High	High-low	High-middle
1975	85	4.1	2.1%	1	150	750	6,200	41	8
1985	105	4.8	2.2%	1	270	1,290	11,810	44	9
1990	154	5.3	2.9%	10	350	2,220	19,590	56	9
1995	164	5.7	2.9%	2	430	2,390	24,930	58	10
2000	175	6.1	2.9%	2	420	1,970	27,510	66	14

Sources:

UN Population Division and World Bank Development Indicators; 1975 income data are 1976. Migrants are defined as persons outside their country of birth or citizenship for 12 months or more. The estimate for 1990 was raised from 120 million to 154 million, largely to reflect the break-up of the former Soviet Union.

There is another dimension to the economic differences between states that contribute to international migration pressures. Agriculture remains the world's major employer, accounting for 43 per cent of the world's 3 billion workers. In poorer countries, where farmers account for the majority of labourers, those with below-average incomes are often taxed. In contrast, the relatively few farmers in rich countries are often subsidized to a point where they earn above-average incomes.⁵ Low farm incomes in developing countries encourage rural-urban migration and international migration, in part because trade barriers for farm products sustain a demand for migrants in more developed countries, while reducing farm prices and farm employment in developing countries. The so-called "great migration" off the land in developing countries provides a ready supply of workers willing to accept "3D" (dirty, dangerous, difficult) jobs inside their countries, as in the People's Republic of China, or abroad, as when Mexicans migrate to the US.

Demographic differences also contribute to migration pressures. Developing countries add over 40 million workers to their labour force each year, while there is slow or no labour force growth in developed countries,

where two-thirds of workers are employed in service industries. Labour costs are a high share of production costs in most service industries, encouraging some employers to turn to migrants to hold down costs, while others move the jobs offshore, or outsource them, to lower-wage countries. If current trends continue, many developed countries will experience a shrinking work force, while many developing countries will continue to have high levels of under unemployment. To maintain the labour supply in developed countries, workers could work more hours, more women could be induced to join the work force, retirement could be delayed to reflect longer lives, or migrants could be admitted to stabilize work forces at current levels. Some or all of these are being tried in many developed countries.

The role migration should or could play in this mix of policy options to stabilize the labour force and social security systems in developed nations is the subject of much debate. Migrants will clearly play a role, and most industrial countries have already made it easier for foreign students to enter, and graduates to remain as workers and settlers,⁶ and have opened immigration doors more widely for highly skilled and professional migrants. However, most unemployed and under-

5. The OECD reported that farmers in rich countries received USD 257 billion in subsidies and payments in 2003, making subsidies equivalent to a third of farm sales. But this varies: in Norway, for example, subsidies are the highest share of farm incomes, while in Australia and New Zealand they are the lowest (OECD, 2004).

6. For example, the Australian Skilled Migration Programme allows overseas students in the country to change their status to permanent resident and to work in Australia. Today, some 40 per cent of Australia's skilled migrants are drawn from the overseas student caseload, a trend growing also in Canada, the US and Europe, although not on the same scale.

employed workers in developing countries are unskilled, and there is far more ambiguity in developed countries about their recruitment and settlement.

Since most developing countries welcome the opportunity to export their “excess” unskilled workers in order to relieve unemployment pressures and generate remittances, a critical dialogue is needed between developed and developing countries on the potential impacts of brain drain on development and the conditions under which “brawn drain” migrants can be employed abroad to mutual benefit.

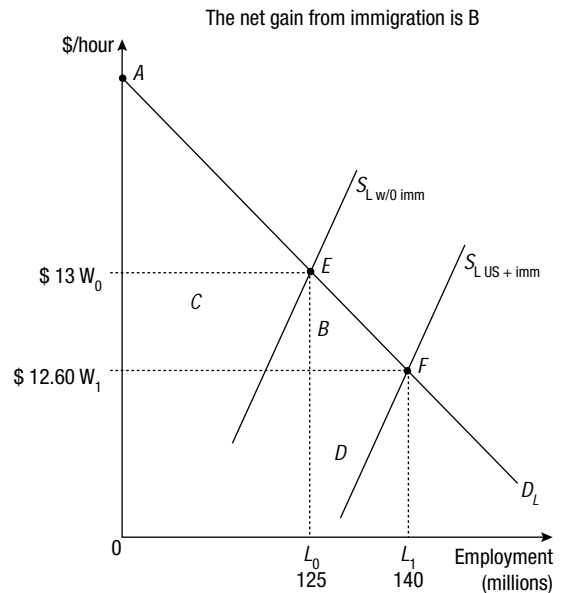
THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON COUNTRIES OF DESTINATION AND ON MIGRANTS

Most economists welcome migration of all types of workers from lower to higher-wage countries, since it tends to allocate scarce labour resources to their highest value use, allowing maximal global production. In standard economic theory, the overall economic gain from migration in receiving countries are the net income gains to migrants, plus a (small) dividend that accrues to the owners of capital in the host country. Local workers most similar to the migrants tend to lose: their wages may fall, or rise more slowly, or their unemployment rates may rise, but these negative effects tend to be small.

For example, the wage and employment changes in the US due to an influx of migrant workers in the mid-1990s are illustrated in Figure 1. Without migrant workers, the US would be at E, with 125 million US-born workers earning USD 13 an hour. In fact, the US had 15 million migrant workers, which shifted the labour supply to the right, to 140 million at F, and lowered average hourly earnings by 3 per cent to USD 12.60, according to the National Research Council (Smith and Edmonston, 1997).

GRAPH 9.2

THE NET ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF MIGRATION



The movement from E to F creates two rectangles, C and D, as well as triangle B. Rectangle C represents the reduced wages paid to US workers. These reduced wages do not disappear into thin air, but are transferred to the (US) owners of capital and land in the form of higher profits and rents. Because of immigration, the US economy expands by rectangle D and triangle B, with migrant workers getting most of the benefits of this expansion in the form of their wages (D).

The net gain from immigration is triangle B, and its size can be estimated in percentage-of-national-income terms as $1/2 \times$ the estimated 3 per cent decrease in US wages due to immigration \times 11 per cent immigrant share of US labour force \times 70 per cent share of labour in US national income, or $1/2 \times 0.002 = 0.001$, which means that US national income was about 1/10 of 1 per cent or about USD 8 billion higher

in 1997 because of immigration (Smith and Edmonston, 1997).⁷

This economic gain from immigration is small but positive. To put it into perspective, if the USD 8 trillion US economy (1996) grows by two per cent a year, economic output rises by USD 160 billion a year, which means that the gain from immigration was equivalent to about 20 days of “normal” economic growth. The economic gain may be larger if there are positive externalities, as might occur if immigrants are entrepreneurial, or the risk-taking that encouraged them to migrate inspires Americans to work more productively. On the other hand, if there are negative externalities from migration, as when immigration is associated with crime or over-crowded schools, for example, the gains are smaller.

Most of the economic gains from migration accrue to the migrants, whose incomes rise after they cross borders; but there are also flow-on gains for global GDP. For example, if one million foreigners cross borders, and they achieve an average net income gain of USD 10,000, global income rises by USD 10 billion. This was the basis of UNDP’s earlier calculations that, if an additional two per cent of the 2.5 billion strong labour force of developing countries in 1990 migrated to industrial countries, there would be 50 million additional migrants (UNDP, 1992). If each migrant earned an average USD 5,000 a year or a total of USD 250 billion, and remitted 20 per cent or USD 50 billion a year to countries of origin, the extra remittances would be equivalent to official development assistance (ODA).

Other estimates of the global economic gains of more migration between developing and developed countries reach similar conclusions. Free migration

that equalized the marginal productivity of labour, and had all workers fully employed, and paid the value of their marginal productivity (contribution to economic output), is estimated to potentially more than double global GDP from USD 8 trillion (in 1977), to USD 16 trillion (Hamilton and Whalley, 1984).⁸

This suggests that even small increases in migration can help individuals enjoy higher incomes while significantly raising global GDP. Furthermore, since the first migrants gain the most because they move when the wage gaps between countries are greatest, one economist advises that “even a marginal liberalization of international labour flows would create gains for the world economy” that are far larger than prospective gains from trade liberalization, so that, “if international policy makers were really interested in maximizing worldwide efficiency, they would spend little of their energies on a new trade round or on the international financial architecture. They would all be busy (...) liberalizing immigration restrictions” (Rodrik, 2001).⁹

If economists agree that migration benefits receiving countries and increases global output, why do the richer destination countries keep their doors (at least partially) closed? Migration restrictions are especially surprising when the numbers favour openness - the benefits of migration tend to be immediate, measurable and concentrated, while the costs of migration, if any, tend to be diffuse, deferred and harder to measure. For example it is relatively easy to measure the wages paid and the value of additional output from additional migrant workers, but much harder to measure integration and diversity “costs”, since there may not be agreement on which aspects of bilingual education and integrated housing are

7. The increase in national income due to immigration - triangle B - will be larger if: 1) there are more migrant workers, and/or 2) the wage depression effect of migrant workers is larger. For example, if the migrant wage-depression impact doubled to 6 per cent, and the migrant share of the work force doubled to 22 per cent (e.g. California in the late 1990s), the income would increase due to migration by $1/2 \times 0.06 \times 0.22 \times 0.7 = 0.005$, or 5/10 of 1 per cent, four times larger.

8. Hamilton and Whalley assumed the world’s labour supply was fully employed, producing a single output, and used CES production functions to estimate differences in the marginal productivity of labour across seven multi-country regions - these differences were assumed to be due to migration restrictions. They estimate the efficiency gains that would result from labour moving until MBPS and wages were equalized, that is, they assume factor-price convergence via migration, with workers losing and capital owners gaining in receiving areas and workers gaining and capital owners losing in sending areas. There are many problems with such estimates. For example, the full employment assumption is necessary to claim that wages are determined by marginal productivity; as is the assumption that capital does not move even as labour migrates.

9. Rodrik notes that most “artificial” barriers to cross-border flows of goods or capital lead to differences in prices or interest rates of 2 to 1 or less (differences in goods prices of more than 2 to 1 may reflect supply and demand, transportation, risk etc.), while wages for similarly qualified workers vary by 10 to 1 or more.

benefits and which are costs.¹⁰ The existence of triangle B means that the overall net economic gains from migration are positive, suggesting, much like the case for freer trade, that governments need to educate their residents about the virtues of increased migration and develop ways to compensate its losers.

The benefits and costs of migration are more ambiguous for developing emigration countries, and this ambiguity is reflected in the views of leading economists. At one end of the spectrum are the “internationalists”, such as Johnson, who in the 1960s asserted that, because voluntary migration from poorer to richer countries increases the incomes of migrants as well as global income, economically motivated migration is good even if emigration countries are worse off; the global gains from moving workers into higher wage jobs offset any country-specific losses.¹¹ Johnson believed that there were few negative externalities from emigration for sending countries, and those often discussed could be handled with specific policy changes, such as having students rather than developing country governments pay for higher education, to counter the losses due to brain drain.

The opposite “nationalist” perspective uses the nation-state rather than the individual as the appropriate unit of analysis. Patinkin, for example, argued around the same time that developing countries need a critical mass of talent to achieve an economic take-off, and the emigration of “too much” human capital can keep a country poor, perhaps trapping it in a low-level equilibrium, where people are sustained by remittances, but where there is no stay-at-home development (Patinkin 1968). More recent endogenous growth theories support this perspective, emphasizing the positive externalities and spill-over effects of highly educated people on economic growth, and warning that increased movement of human capital from poorer to richer countries in the 1990s could slow growth in developing countries (Mayer, 1996; Straubhaar, 2000).

To sum up, immigration generally brings economic benefits for individual migrants and receiving countries, measurable in monetary terms. However, the benefits are relatively small, and tend to be concentrated among the relatively well off, who own capital in receiving countries. This, in combination with the already difficult socio-economic adjustments faced by immigrants, their families and the host communities, can make immigration very controversial.

Clearly, individual migrants benefit by moving elsewhere for higher wages; but it is less clear if their countries of origin benefit from the loss of human capital associated with their emigration.

THE ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT IMPACT OF MIGRATION IN THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

THE EFFECTS of migration on sending countries are usually mixed, but in large measure can be seen as either virtuous or vicious for development. There can be virtuous circles in which *recruitment*, *remittances* and *returns* speed up growth in sending countries, accelerating convergence and reducing migration pressures; and there can be vicious circles when these “three Rs” interact in ways that widen the very gaps that motivate international migration.

International migration moves people from one country to another, and the three *Rs* summarize the impacts that migrants can have on the development of their countries of origin. *Recruitment* deals with who migrates, asking whether migrants would have been unemployed or underemployed at home, or key employees of business and government, whose departure leads to layoffs and reduced services. *Remittances* are the monies sent home by migrants abroad, and remittance questions include whether the volume of remittances can be increased by reducing the cost of transferring funds between countries. The more important question is how to invest remittances

10. See also Borjas, 1994, for more discussion of the different use of public welfare by migrants with different skills.

11. Migration, “like any profit-motivated international movement of factors of production, may be expected to raise total world output.” (Johnson, 1968, p. 75).

in ways that create jobs and reduce migration pressures. *Returns* ask whether migrants return with new technologies and ideas of use to them and their country, or just return to rest and retire.

Migration is not random: young people are most likely to move across borders, because they have “invested” the least in jobs and careers at home, and the longest period to recover an “investment in migration” abroad. However, even among the youth, the question of who migrates is influenced by the recruitment efforts of employers in receiving areas, recruiting agents in sending areas, and networks that link them. For example, if employers are seeking IT professionals and nurses, recruiters will help young computer specialists and nurses to move abroad, and networks will evolve to make it easier for their friends and relatives to follow them. If foreign employers are seeking domestic helpers and farm workers, recruiters will find them, and networks will evolve to move unskilled migrants over borders.

The recruitment of migrants has been concentrated at the extremes of the education ladder, involving migrants with college education and unskilled migrants alike. However, different processes are involved. The overseas recruitment of well educated professional workers is often done openly, with employers and recruiters advertising for migrants in developing countries, and offering contracts to nurses and teachers before they travel abroad. Recruiters play a larger role in recruiting unskilled migrants, who are more likely to be abroad in an irregular status, often employed by contractors and other intermediaries.

The skilled worker flows tend to be of most concern to developing countries, and unskilled flows of most concern to developed countries. However, the impetus of both flows comes largely from inside developed countries - it is their approval or toleration of recruitment that brings the first migrant workers, and

then networks allow the migration to take on a life of its own. By the time governments stop legal recruitment or announce that they will no longer tolerate unauthorized migrant flows, they are attempting to break networks that serve the interests of both migrants and employers. Governments that believe migrant flows can be turned on and off like a water tap are often disappointed. For example, stopping legal recruitment is assumed to stop the flow of migrants, just as closing a gate in a dam stops the flow of water in a river. But migration networks are like rivulets that form a delta, and blocking one migration channel often pushes migrants into other channels.

The problem in many developed countries is that irregular migrants outnumber regularly admitted migrant workers, and there is no agreement on how to deal with the irregular migrants. In the US, there were an estimated 9.3 million irregular migrants in 2003 (Passel, et al., 2004). There is general agreement that the irregular migrants should be converted into regular migrants, but no agreement on what should happen after regularization. For example, the US president’s proposal in January 2004 for a Fair and Secure Immigration Reform (FSIR) plan that would, *inter alia*, allow US employers to legalize the irregular workers they employ, has had very mixed responses,¹² with no agreement on what status would represent an improvement for the US and for the migrants’ countries of origin.

The second R stands for *remittances*, the portion of migrant incomes abroad that is sent home. Remittances to developing countries more than doubled between the late 1980s and the late 1990s, after experiencing drops in 1991 (Gulf war) and in 1998 (Asian financial crises), reaching USD 72 billion in 2001, and on track to surpass USD 100 billion by 2005. They have risen with the number of migrants, surpassed ODA in developing countries in the mid-1990s, and are approaching declining foreign direct investment flows to developing countries. It should be

12. Most employers embraced the FSIR, but it was attacked by unions and migrant advocates for converting irregular migrants into guest workers, not immigrants. The Democrats countered with the Safe, Orderly, Legal Visas and Enforcement Act (SOLVE) in May 2004, which would give immigrant visas to unauthorized workers who have been in the US for at least five years, worked at least two years, and pass English, background and medical checks.

noted that all these flows are gross flows, and that remittances also flow from developing countries to the expatriates employed there.¹³

A handful of developing countries receive most of the remittances. The three largest recipients, India, Mexico and the Philippines, received a third of total remittances to developing countries in recent years, and the top six recipients, these three plus Morocco, Egypt and Turkey, received half of all remittances to developing countries. Remittances are most important in smaller and island nations, where they can be equivalent to between 20 to 40 per cent of GDP, e.g., in 2001 remittances represented 37 per cent of GDP in Tonga, 26 per cent in Lesotho, 23 per cent in Jordan, and 15 to 17 per cent in Albania, Nicaragua, Yemen, and Moldova. The major sources of remittances were the US (USD 28 billion), Saudi Arabia (USD 15 billion) and Germany, Belgium and Switzerland (USD 8 billion each).¹⁴

The best way to maximize the volume of remittances is to have an appropriate exchange rate and economic policies that promise growth (Ratha, 2003). Since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, many governments have tried to shift remittances into formal channels, such as banks, which migrants use if it is easy and cheap to do so. However, there must be enough banking outlets in migrant communities at home and abroad, and competition in order to lower transfer costs, and this is not always the case. Governments have become far more active regarding policies to reduce remittance transfer costs, and the June 2004 G-8 summit called for remittance transfer costs, today typically 10-15 per cent of the amount transferred (USD 30 to USD 45 of USD 300), to be reduced by 50 per cent within a decade.¹⁵

Most remittances are used for consumption, which helps to explain their stability,¹⁶ even as exchange rates and investment outlooks change.¹⁷ Migrant families are the chief beneficiaries, but their spending of remittances also generates jobs for non-migrants, with most studies suggesting that each USD 1 in remittance spending generates a USD 2 increase in local economic output, depending on whether remittances are used to purchase imported or locally produced goods (Taylor and Martin, 2001). The emigration of adult men initially leads to reduced output in local economies, but remittances prompt adjustments that maintain output. For example, many farming families with migrants abroad shift from crops to poultry or livestock, because they have less labour, and hire labour to produce crops or rent crop land to other farmers; incomes bolstered by remittances raise the demand for meat.

Remittances have many other socio-economic effects. They can change the social hierarchies in communities, creating a new class of moneylenders, such as women whose husbands are abroad. Women take on new roles in the absence of their husbands, making decisions that previously would have been made by their husbands, or jointly. If women have more income because of their husband's migration, there tends to be more spending on education and health for children, which can increase human capital in the long run (Taylor and Martin, 2001). However, there is also a danger of dependence, as the relatives of migrants do less work at home assuming that remittances will continue to arrive, and children assume that they will go abroad to work.

The third R in the migration and development equation stands for *returns*. In the ideal virtuous circle

13. See also the figure "Resource Flows to Developing Countries" in the chapter "Migrant Remittances as a Source of Development Finance", and in Ratha, 2003.

14. See the World Bank's table "Remittances to Select Countries 1995-2001"; www.worldbank.org/prospects/gdf2003/gdf_statApp_web.pdf

15. Countries recounted their plans and activities to reduce remittance transfer costs. Canada intends to promote financial literacy among migrants to encourage them to open bank accounts. France pledged to expand its co-development strategy, which involves reducing remittance transfer costs and making loans to returned migrants. The US announced it would reduce the cost of remitting to the Philippines (receiving about half its USD 8 billion in remittances from the US in 2003) (www.g8usa.gov/).

16. Automatic stabilizers in developed countries, such as unemployment insurance, help to stabilize the flow of remittances to developing countries with the same economic cycles as the countries where their migrants work.

17. Ratha, 2003, noted that remittances to high-debt and less-transparent countries were more stable than those to middle-income open economies because the latter include more remittances destined for investment.

scenario, migrants who have been abroad return to their origin countries with the entrepreneurial energy and ideas needed to start or expand businesses there, or with the skills and discipline needed to raise productivity as employees.¹⁸ They generally tend to come from the ranks of the risk takers at home, and if their risk-taking behaviour is combined with skills and capital acquired abroad, the result can be an economic take-off. Take-off behaviour tends to be most common in countries poised for economic growth (including southern European countries in the 1960s and 1970s).

On the other hand, if migrants return to economies that have not changed, they may rest and retire rather than be a force for economic change, as has occurred in many African, Caribbean and Pacific island countries where improved housing is a visible sign of having worked abroad, but there are few migrant-inspired businesses that promise migrant children opportunities at home. Many migrants settle abroad and have their families join them, which limits their contribution to development in their country of origin.

As communications improve and transportation costs fall, migrants may engage in back-and-forth circulation, which can contribute to economic growth in both the sending and receiving countries (viz. the IT services in India). The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) provides a framework to liberalize the temporary international migration of natural persons to provide services.¹⁹ This sector accounts for up to 70–80 per cent of output and employment in the world's high-income economies, and tends to expand with economic development, e.g. when women work outside the home, they can generate a demand for day care.²⁰ Labour typically accounts for 70–80 per cent of service production costs versus 20 per cent for manufactured goods (Krueger, 1999). Thus, importing

service providers could raise incomes in developing countries, and reduce service costs in developed countries.

GATS negotiations stalled in 2004 over issues not related to the labour mobility of service providers. However, the mobility of service providers promises to become more important in trade negotiations, justifying closer examination of the relationship between easier access for service providers, and irregular migration. More attention also needs to be paid to the provision of services across borders without migration, as services once considered to be immobile have become mobile (e.g. the processing of bank and medical records, and software development). That discussion covers a range of possibilities from distance learning in education, to diagnosis in medicine.²¹

Earlier in this chapter attention was drawn to the fact that the three “Rs” can produce vicious or virtuous circles. There is clearly a need to generate more virtuous circles and fewer vicious circles linking migration and development.

The virtuous circle is perhaps best exemplified by the case of Indian IT workers, whose emigration led to the creation of a significant service export industry, that has improved IT services in India and created jobs there. In the mid-1980s, India had about 7,000 IT specialists, and a government hesitant about supporting IT expansion. Recognizing their skills, multinationals began to employ the specialists abroad, as did Indian firms such as Tata. But the latter soon began to return some work to India, and persuaded the government to introduce measures to bolster this budding global service within the country. Following the increased engagement of government,²² by 2003 there were around 700,000 IT workers in India, and the country had become world-renowned for low-cost, high-

18. See also the chapter “Enhancing the Benefits of Return Migration for Development”.

19. See also the Textbox 9.1 “Trade and Migration: GATS Mode 4”.

20. The demand for services is income elastic, which means that if incomes rise 10 per cent, the demand for tourism or health care services rises more than 10 per cent.

21. See *supra*, fn. 19.

22. The government supported the IT industry by reducing barriers to imports of computers, assuring reliable infrastructure, and allowing the state-supported Indian Institutes of Technology to use merit as a quality benchmark for education.

quality IT services. The benefits of this emigration-led growth included a sharp jump in science and engineering graduates and the provision of world-class IT services to private firms and government agencies in India.

In some African countries, by contrast, a vicious circle seems to link migration and development. Many former British colonies train nurses and other health care workers to world-class standards, which makes it easier for them to emigrate to fill jobs in expanding health care sectors, including the British National Health System (NHS). For Malawi, the wage gaps in 2004 were 16 to 1 (USD 31,000 a year for an RN to start in the NHS, versus USD 1,900 a year at home), and nurses seeking higher wages are emigrating. African leaders argue that the loss of human capital via emigration erodes the value of foreign aid.²³ As a result of African grievances, the World Health Organization has urged developed nations to negotiate recruitment agreements with developing countries that avoid “aggressive recruitment” of health care workers and include compensation for the lost investment in training nurses.

Why do some migration flows lead to virtuous and others to vicious circles? There is no easy answer. Clearly, health care and IT services are different sectors. Governments strongly influence the demand for health care via the provision of clinics and hospitals, and charges for patients and drugs, and they affect the supply of health care workers via subsidized training and by setting salaries and working conditions. IT services are largely produced and consumed in the private sector, and IT can be provided with brains and ever-cheaper technology, while the cost for health care services tends to increase.

TRADE AND THE MIGRATION HUMP

FOR MANY years, poverty was seen as a root cause of migration, and development the solution for unwanted migration. When workers move from lower to higher wage jobs, wages should rise more slowly in receiving economies and faster in sending countries, and this convergence should make migration self-eliminating under the factor price equalization theorem. This is what occurred in the late 19th and early 20th centuries between Europe and North America, with one economic historian concluding that “mass migration by itself may explain about 70 per cent of the real wage convergence in the late 19th century Atlantic economy” (Williamson, 1998).

Migration involves workers crossing borders for jobs, but jobs can also cross borders to workers, as when investment creates industries that produce goods for local consumption and export. The US Commission for the Study of International Migration and Cooperative Economic Development, searching for “mutually beneficial” ways to reduce unwanted migration in the late 1980s, found that freer trade was preferable to more migration, concluding that “expanded trade between the sending countries and the United States is the single most important remedy” (US Commission, 1990).

Trade means that a good is produced in one country, taken across borders, and consumed in another. Economic theory teaches that trade dictated by comparative advantage increases global income. This means that if countries specialize in producing the goods they can produce relatively more cheaply, and import the goods needed that other countries are comparatively better at producing, the residents of all countries engaged in trade will be better off. Trade and migration are substitutes in economic theory, which is why former Mexican President Salinas

23. South Africa says it has spent USD1 billion educating health workers who emigrated - the equivalent of a third of all development aid it received from 1994 to 2000 (Dugger, 2004).

argued in favour of NAFTA on the grounds that North American free trade means “more jobs... (and) higher wages in Mexico, and this in turn will mean fewer migrants to the US and Canada. We want to export goods, not people.” (quoted in the Bush letter to Congress, May 1, 1991).

Trade and migration are substitutes in the long run, but they can be complements in the short run. It is well known that there can be job-displacement in response to freer trade, as when TV factories in the US close, or Mexican farmers stop growing corn in response to a removal of trade barriers. The displaced US workers are not likely to migrate to Mexico, but since rural Mexicans were migrating to the US before freer trade in corn, some may migrate as a result of freer trade. The possibility that freer trade could be disruptive in emigration countries led the US Commission to warn that “the economic development process itself tends in the short to medium term to stimulate migration,” producing a migration hump when migration flows are viewed over time (US Commission, 1990).

A *migration hump* – trade and migration acting as complements – can be a political dilemma for governments since the same economic policies that can reduce migration in the long run may increase it in the short run. In the words of the US Commission, the possibility of a migration hump produces “a very real short-term versus long-term dilemma” for a country such as the US trying to persuade a sceptical Congress and public that NAFTA is the best way to reduce unauthorized immigration (US Commission, 1990). In order to make its case, the Commission argued that the short-run increase in immigration associated with freer trade was a worthwhile price to pay for policies that would reduce unwanted immigration in the long run.²⁴

The critical policy parameters in the migration hump are: a) how much does migration increase as a result of economic integration, b) how soon does this hump

disappear; and c) how much migration is “avoided” by economic integration? Generally, three factors must be present to create a migration hump: a continued demand-pull in the destination country, an increased supply-push in the origin country, and migration networks that can move workers across borders (Martin, 1993).

The Mexico-US case provides an example of economic integration when per capita income differences are more than 8 to 1. Migration was the major relationship between Mexico and the US for most of the 20th century, but legal immigration remained low until recently – 36 per cent of 20th century Mexicans arrived in the 1990s (2,249,421) and 34 per cent of the apprehensions of unauthorized Mexicans also occurred in the 1990s (14,667,599). This compares with 7 per cent arrivals and 4 per cent apprehensions in the 1960s, or 10 per cent arrivals and 19 per cent apprehensions in the 1970s (INS Statistical Yearbook).

NAFTA came into effect in January, 1994, locking in place policies that lowered barriers to trade and investment in Canada, Mexico and the US. Most benefits of this freer trade were expected to accrue to Mexico in the form of more foreign investment, faster economic and job growth, and increased exports. The most cited study of NAFTA’s likely effects concluded that Mexican employment figures, projected to be 30 million in 1995, would rise by 609,000, or two per cent, because of NAFTA. Mexican wages were projected to be 9 per cent higher with NAFTA, largely because of foreign investment (and Mexican money staying in Mexico), and it was expected to raise the value of the peso relative to the dollar, reducing the cost of imports (Hufbauer and Schott, 1992).

All studies agreed that most of the additional jobs due to NAFTA would be created in Mexico, and some anticipated simultaneous job creation and displacement in Mexico, predicting that the displacement of workers from previously protected

24. For a more detailed explanation of the Hump Theory, see also Martin, 1993.

Mexican sectors such as agriculture, could lead to additional Mexico-US migration (up to 600,000 illegally over 5-6 years).²⁵

Trade and migration were complements in the Mexico-US case in the 1990s. The major reasons include Mexico's failure to create enough formal sector jobs for the million new labour force entrants each year, and extraordinarily rapid employment growth in the US, especially in the late 1990s. There were about 109 million Mexican-born persons in 2000, and 8 per cent lived in the US; more importantly, 30 per cent of Mexicans with formal-sector jobs were in the US.²⁶

Past demographic growth presents Mexico with a major job creation challenge, but demography and economics offer hope that the migration hump may soon be past. The number of Mexicans turning 15, the age of labour force entry in Mexico, is expected to drop by 50 per cent between 1996 and 2010 from 1 million a year to 500,000 a year. At a sustained GDP growth of 5 per cent, employment growth is expected to rise from 0.9 to 1.3 per cent per year between 1996 and 2010, enabling formal sector job growth to average 3-4 per cent a year.

The combination of fewer work force entrants and rising employment forms an "X" when traced over time, with the intersection occurring where the falling number of labour force entrants equals rising employment growth. Projections made in the mid-1990s imagined the intersection would be reached in 2002, when labour force growth of 1.1 per cent matched employment growth of 1.1 per cent. GDP growth averaged less than 4 per cent, so the intersection is not likely to be reached until after 2005, but the larger point made by the X-diagram is clear – *emigration pressures in Mexico are likely to*

fall between 2005 and 2010 for demographic and economic reasons. The lesson for governments is also clear: if the massive border enforcement build-up is completed just as emigration pressures fall for demographic and economic reasons, it is important to keep these fundamental reasons in mind when evaluating governmental expenditure on enforcement.

Similar detailed analyses would be needed in other countries to evaluate the possibility and nature of migration humps with closer economic integration, and to explore ways to manage them cooperatively. Migration humps are another reason why optimal migration management strategies may be most likely to be found in bilateral and regional settings, although the best practices they develop may be applicable globally.

CONCLUSION

LABOUR migration is a natural response to widening demographic and economic differentials. The challenge and opportunity is to manage the already occurring labour in a manner that reduces these differences, so that economically motivated migration comes to a "natural end" or falls to sustainable levels. Common sense and history teach that slower population growth and faster economic growth lead to convergence, but there is no global consensus about which migration management strategy is best to help achieve this desired convergence.

The Mexico-US case shows how economic integration under NAFTA has led to a migration hump, and left the US with perhaps 10 million Mexican-born residents, half of them with irregular status. There is

25. Hinojosa and Robinson (1991), for example, estimated that NAFTA would displace about 1.4 million rural Mexicans, largely because NAFTA-related changes in Mexican farm policies and freer trade in agricultural products would lead some farmers to quit farming; and that 800,000 displaced farmers would stay in Mexico, and 600,000 would migrate (illegally) to the US over 5-6 years.

26. In 2000, 15 million of the 40 million-strong Mexican labour force were in formal sector jobs, with an additional 6 million Mexican-born workers in the US; 29 per cent of Mexicans in formal sector jobs are in the US. Many Mexican workers are self-employed farmers, unpaid family workers, or in the informal sector – the usual indicator of formal sector employment in Mexico is enrolment in the pension system (IMSS). (www.banamex.com/weblogic/svltC71930EstSE?LNG=1&SEQ=3&folio=5). With 5.5 million Mexicans employed in the US, and 13 million in IMSS in Mexico, 30 per cent of Mexicans with formal-sector jobs are in the US.

agreement that having so many irregular Mexican migrants is not optimal, but there is disagreement on how their status should be changed - should irregular workers be converted into guest workers expected to leave, or to immigrants expected to settle? Perhaps the most important aspect of the Mexico-US migration hump is that, despite rising Mexico-US migration, there has been no backtracking on the economic integration that is expected to eventually lead to economic convergence and less migration.

Migration is an age-old response by individuals to different opportunities either within or across international borders, to be managed by governments as an opportunity, not solved as a problem. The ideal world is one where there are few migration barriers and enforcement expenditures, because there is little unwanted migration. The challenge for governments is to understand the fundamental forces motivating migration, the virtuous and vicious circles that labour migration can set in motion, and policies that can hasten the economic convergence that makes migration more manageable. This chapter has attempted to arm the policymaker with some key data, arguments and examples to meet this challenge with well researched and workable policies.

TEXTBOX 9.1

TRADE AND MIGRATION – GATS MODE 4

The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) is a multilateral framework agreement covering the trade in services, which applies to all 148 WTO Members. It provides a framework for countries to decide which service sectors they want to open to foreign suppliers, and under what conditions. Mode 4 of GATS is the section most closely linked to some forms of temporary labour migration. Most significantly for the migration community, GATS Mode 4 represents the only multilateral treaty commitment concerning the movement of persons at the global level, albeit for a small range of persons. As such, it offers one approach to the international management of migration, even if limited in scope and applicability.

What is Mode 4?

For the purpose of making commitments to open markets, GATS divides trade in services into four modes of supply: cross-border supply (Mode 1); consumption abroad (Mode 2); supply via commercial presence (Mode 3), and supply via presence of natural persons (Mode 4). Mode 4 is defined as the supply of a service by a supplier of one WTO member, through the presence of natural persons in the territory of another member on a temporary basis. While there is some debate about what exactly this means, Mode 4 service suppliers generally:

- gain entry for a specific purpose (e.g., to fulfil a service contract, either as self-employed or as an employee of a foreign service supplier);
- are confined to one sector (as opposed to workers who enter a country under general migration or asylum programmes, who can move between sectors);
- are temporary – they are not migrating on a permanent basis, nor seeking entry to the labour market in the host country. The GATS does not define “temporary” but it does specifically exclude permanent migration. In practice, the timeframes set out in WTO member countries’ commitments on Mode 4 range from several weeks to 3-5 years, depending on the countries, sectors and professions involved.

Mode 4 only covers movement of people supplying services; there are no parallel WTO rules covering movement of people in other areas, such as agriculture or manufacturing. And while in theory Mode 4 covers service suppliers at all skill levels, in practice WTO members’ commitments are limited to the higher skilled. Generally, GATS Mode 4 is understood to cover:

- Business visitors: persons visiting the host country for the purpose of conducting or organizing business, but who receive no remuneration in the host country;
- Intra-corporate transferees: existing employees transferred within the same foreign controlled company;
- Contractual service suppliers (employees of companies): persons providing services where a foreign company obtains a contract to supply services to a host country client and sends its employees to provide the services;
- Contractual service suppliers (individuals/independent service suppliers): an individual who wins a contract to supply services to a host country client;

- Foreign employees of foreign companies established in the host country (but excluding nationals of the host country employed by these companies).

However, there is no agreement among WTO Members on whether Mode 4 covers *foreign employees* of domestic companies, as opposed to foreigners with a *contract to supply services* to domestic companies. This distinction can be complicated by the fact that some WTO Members deem almost all types of foreign temporary service suppliers to be employees for the purpose of bringing them under domestic labour law.

What is on the Table in the GATS Negotiations?

Even by the modest standards of services liberalization in the Uruguay Round, little was achieved on liberalizing Mode 4. GATS commitments are guaranteed *minimum standards*, so countries tended to be conservative, with most committing to a more restrictive regime than they were – or are – actually employing. There are high expectations among some WTO Members for progress on Mode 4 in the current Doha round of negotiations.

In general, proposals on the table in the WTO negotiations seek either to increase market access (mostly developing country proposals) or to increase the effectiveness of existing market access (supported by most major developed countries) and include:

- Greater clarity and predictability in WTO Members' commitments: e.g., by agreeing on common definitions for "managers, executives, specialists", and providing information on labour market tests, such as the criteria used and timeframe for decisions.
- Improving transparency: e.g., one-stop information points for all relevant procedures and requirements, prior consultation on regulatory changes.
- GATS visa: to facilitate entry to Mode 4 workers, the visa would be issued rapidly, be time-limited, include appeal rights and a bond, with sanctions for abuse.
- More market access: in sectors in high demand (e.g., ICT, professional services), better access for some groups, in particular intra-corporate transferees, and more access for other types of personnel, beyond the highly skilled.

What are Some of the Migration Issues Involved?

One major apprehension for both origin and destination countries, is that persons who move under Mode 4 will try to establish themselves permanently. Mode 4 can be a first step to permanent residence, either legally by changing visa categories, or illegally by overstaying. But overstaying is a risk with all temporary entry, including tourists, and increased Mode 4 movement could arguably help to discourage employers from using undocumented workers by making temporary foreign workers legally available for seasonal activities. Temporary workers legally applying to change status may serve as a useful pre-selection of candidates for future migration.

Second, while labour market conditions – and migration needs – fluctuate, GATS commitments do not. They guarantee minimum treatment from which a WTO Member will not deviate without compensating other members. Governments typically wish to maintain

maximum flexibility to regulate the flow of temporary entrants according to their needs, and are reluctant to commit in perpetuity to existing regimes. Further, Mode 4 movement represents a small proportion of the people crossing borders every day. The additional resources required to give special treatment to this group may be hard to justify, also in terms of the administrative capacities of some countries.

Third is the issue of whether temporary foreign workers should receive the same wages and conditions as nationals employed in the same industry. In many developed countries, this is a legal obligation, but some developing countries argue that this undermines their comparative advantage. Others argue that there is no justification for lower wages, given that temporary workers in the host country have to meet host, not home, country costs of living. Unions fear both the exploitation of foreign workers and the undermining of their own conditions. Even where foreign workers are not actually paid less, their presence is seen by some as a brake on reform – the availability of temporary foreign nurses is argued to have enabled governments to ignore the root causes of their nursing shortages, such as the need for better wages and conditions.

However, equal treatment does not always result in equitable outcomes. Some foreign workers are required to contribute to social security programmes from which they receive no, or minimal, benefits. While exemption from contributions would impact the competitiveness of foreign workers compared to nationals, there is a basic iniquity in workers contributing to benefits that they will never be eligible to receive. One alternative is for these charges to be paid into separate funds and reimbursed upon the workers' return to their home country.

Finally, brain drain, or the emigration of highly skilled workers leading to skill shortages, reductions in output and tax shortfalls, is of significant concern to countries of origin. Brain drain can reinforce the development trap, with communities of skilled persons in developed countries attracting other skilled persons, leaving weaker communities in developing countries even further depleted. Where skilled persons are educated at public expense, these countries also suffer loss of public investment in education.

While Mode 4 could exacerbate fears of brain drain, it is only *temporary* migration, and as such may pose fewer costs than permanent migration. The costs of temporary movement of skilled people can be offset by the benefits to their home country, when they return with enhanced skills and contacts in the international business community, and through their remittances from abroad, an important revenue for developing countries, often larger than either FDI or ODA flows.

However, where the need is great and skills are scarce, even the temporary loss of skilled persons can be a problem. This has been a particular concern in the case of health workers. Here the Commonwealth countries have developed a Code of Practice for the International Recruitment of Health Workers intended to discourage the targeted recruitment of such workers from countries which are themselves experiencing shortages.

Opportunities in the home country can be an important determinant of whether skilled workers move and when they return to their home countries. Some countries, often with the assistance of international organisations such as IOM, are taking steps to encourage the return of skilled workers, including via tax breaks and other incentives. Further, some developing countries see international outsourcing as an increasingly important means of creating jobs at home and an alternative to sending their qualified people abroad.

The text of the GATS and the market-opening commitments of each WTO Member are available on the WTO website (www.wto.org).

Source: Julia Nielson, OECD.

CHAPTER 10

DESIGNING VIABLE AND ETHICAL LABOUR IMMIGRATION POLICIES¹

The design of labour immigration policies has become one of the most contentious and divisive issues of public policy making in many countries. Public debates have been hampered by a lack, or distortion of facts about migration and its consequences, thus leaving policymakers in the difficult position of having to design labour immigration policies based on incomplete and highly contested evidence. Increasing the range and quality of information about the consequences of international labour migration must undoubtedly be one of the most important steps toward improving the quality of public debate and the policy choices for governments. It will, however, not be enough.

International labour migration generates a complex set of economic and social costs and benefits for the receiving country, migrant workers and their countries of origin. These consequences may sometimes be in conflict with each other, and therefore policies cannot be made without certain trade-offs. Difficult decisions need to be made about which of the multifaceted and interrelated consequences of international labour migration should be given more importance in the design of national labour immigration policies, and why. Labour immigration policymaking is an inherently moral exercise that requires a discussion of values and ethics, not just of facts.

There is therefore an urgent need for a framework for the comprehensive discussion of labour immigration policy that separates the normative from other

aspects, and places the debates and design of labour immigration policies on a more informed and reasoned footing. To this end, it is useful to distinguish between three fundamental questions that require separate discussions in the debate and design of a country's labour immigration policy:

- i) What *are* the consequences of international labour migration?
- ii) What *should be* the objectives of labour immigration policy?
- iii) What policies are best suited to achieve these objectives?

While some of the facts about migration and its consequences (question (i)), the values underpinning a country's labour immigration policy (question (ii)) and the resulting optimal national immigration policies (question (iii)) may be similar across countries, each of these questions requires answers that are country-specific. This is because the design and implementation of immigration policy remain principally the domain of *domestic* policymaking of sovereign and self-determining states.² Furthermore, there are significant contextual differences between countries that are manifest in differences in, for example, levels of economic development, regulation of labour markets, culture, establishment of democratic institutions, international relations with the migrant-sending countries and the world community as a whole, the role and independence of the judiciary, and the actual capacity of the state to act and implement certain policies.

1. The author of this chapter is Dr Martin Ruhs, researcher at the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at Oxford University. martin.ruhs@compas.ox.ac.uk. The chapter draws on Ruhs and Chang, 2004 and Ruhs, 2003.

2. Note that the existing regional consultative processes on international labour migration are all informal and non-binding; see Klekowski 2001.

Rather than suggest ready-made, one-size-fits-all answers based on “international experience” or “best practices”, this chapter aims to provide a framework for discussion of each of these questions in a structured and comprehensive manner, and to suggest basic policy principles for a general “shell” or set of guidelines for country-specific policymaking.

The first part of the chapter categorizes the main consequences of international labour migration and identifies the most important potential trade-offs between them.

The second part outlines some ethical issues to be addressed when evaluating these consequences and choosing policy objectives. It suggests five core considerations for a balanced approach that is both realistic, by taking account of existing realities in labour immigration policy making, and idealistic, by striving to improve existing labour immigration policies and outcomes for all involved, especially for the migrant workers and their countries of origin.

Based on this approach, the third part makes a case for liberalizing international labour migration through new and expanded temporary foreign worker programmes, especially for low-skilled migrant workers. It argues that such programmes are both desirable from an ethical point of view, and feasible in the sense that new and innovative policies could help avoid the adverse consequences associated with many past guest worker programmes.

IMPACTS AND TRADE-OFFS IN INTERNATIONAL LABOUR MIGRATION

INTERNATIONAL labour migration generates a complex set of economic, social, political, cultural, environmental and other consequences for individuals, communities and countries as a whole. At the risk of over-simplification, Table 10.1 categorises

the major types of impact (each indicated by an “x”) on non-migrants in the migrant-receiving country, non-migrants in the migrant-sending country, and on migrants themselves.

TABLE 10.1

TYPES OF IMPACTS OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR MIGRATION

	RC	SC	M
Economic efficiency	X	X	X
Distribution	X	X	
National identity	X	X	
RC citizens' rights	X		
SC Citizens' Rights		X	
Migrants' Rights			X

(RC=Receiving Country; SC=Sending Country; M = Migrants)

A comprehensive discussion of the consequences of international labour migration would need to consider all types of impacts identified in Table 10.1.³ In the context of this chapter, it suffices to explain their meanings and identify the potential trade-offs between them.

The consequences of international labour migration for *economic efficiency* and distribution in the receiving country and sending country include, *inter alia*, impacts on national income and its distribution among non-migrants (e.g. income per capita, economic growth, structural change, inequality, poverty rates); the national labour market (e.g. wage levels, unemployment rates, labour market participation rates, labour market segmentation), and the fiscal balance (e.g. public services, tax revenues, etc.). The “economic efficiency of migrants” is meant to capture migrants’ economic welfare, as primarily reflected by their wages and employment prospects.

National identity may be loosely defined as the shared beliefs and values of a country’s residents. The meaning and substance assigned to national identity – and thus the way in which international labour migration may impact on it – largely depend on how

3. Other chapters of this Report provide further discussion on the state of knowledge about some of those impacts. See, e.g., the chapters “Economic Costs and Benefits of International Labour Migration” and “Migration and Poverty: Some Issues in the Context of Asia”.

countries “see themselves”. For example, a receiving country that sees itself as culturally homogeneous, such as Japan and Korea, may view the immigration of people with different cultural backgrounds as “diluting” its national identity. In contrast, in countries with long histories of immigration, such as the US, Canada and Australia, national identity may, arguably, be partly defined by cultural diversity, thus making immigration a potential tool for preserving or even increasing that diversity.

At the same time, there is little doubt that large-scale emigration (such as from Mexico and the Philippines) also impacts on the national identity in sending countries, mainly through the return of emigrants who have acquired some of the receiving country’s values and habits, the activities and influence of diasporas on social and political affairs in their home countries, and through imported consumer goods purchased with remittances.

More recently, the above listed considerations of national identity have been further conflated with considerations of public order and national security, especially in the receiving country. For example, since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, national security has been a major concern in the immigration policies of the US, and increasingly also of other high-income countries, such as the UK. Similarly, efforts to “localize” the predominantly foreign labour force in most oil-rich Gulf states are largely motivated by security concerns about hosting a foreign population that is larger than the citizenry.

In addition to impacting on collective notions of economic efficiency, distribution and national identity, international labour migration also affects the *rights of individuals*. Most obviously, by virtue of their change in location and legal status (from citizens in their countries of origin to foreigners in their countries of employment), migrant workers necessarily experience a change in the range and scope of their rights – and obligations. For example, a migrant worker employed abroad under a temporary foreign worker programme is usually required to work only for the employer specified in the work permit,

which restricts the migrant’s right to freedom of movement in the labour market – a right that most people enjoy in their home countries. In other cases, employment abroad may increase the number and scope of rights enjoyed by migrants. This is typically the case where migrants come from undemocratic regimes and gain permanent residence or citizenship in more democratic high-income countries.

Immigration may also positively or negatively affect the rights of citizens of the receiving country. For example, granting migrants the right to own certain types of property, such as land, may adversely affect the value of the corresponding right of a citizen, who needs to compete with non-citizens in the market for land, and may thus have to pay a higher price. Similarly, extending the right to certain social security benefits or public services, such as free public health care, to non-citizens may adversely affect the value of the corresponding right of a citizen, who may have to wait longer before receiving medical treatment unless the capacity of the medical system is also increased. At the same time, when effective control of the border is economically and politically too costly, legalizing illegal foreign workers, i.e. giving illegal migrant workers the right to legal residence and employment in the receiving country, could enhance the rights of citizens, as migrant workers with more rights are less likely to undercut citizens in terms of wages and working conditions.

The impacts of international labour migration identified above are likely to be *interrelated* and potentially *conflicting*, which means that the relationship between them may be characterized by *trade-offs*.

One of the most frequently discussed potential trade-offs is that between the impacts on economic efficiency and distribution in the receiving country. Analysis based on the most simple model in labour economics suggests that, in the short run, immigration marginally increases national income (the *efficiency effect*) and, more significantly, redistributes national income from workers to the owners of capital (the *redistribution effect*) (Borjas,

1995). In other words, local employers and capitalists gain from immigration at the expense of competing local workers, whose wages are depressed by the employment of migrant workers. Trade theorists argue that some of these effects may disappear in the long run, when the increase in labour supply, and the subsequent decline in real wages may be counterbalanced by an increase in labour demand (Trefler, 1997). Empirical labour economists also point out that, in practice, the impacts of immigration on local workers are minor or insignificant (Dustmann, 2003; Card, 2004). Nevertheless, most observers would agree that, just like aspects of international trade and investment flows, labour immigration has the *potential* to adversely affect wage and employment outcomes of some competing local workers in the short run (Borjas, 2003).

The level of immigration that maximizes economic efficiency may also differ from that considered socially desirable, based on the perceived impact on national identity. This may especially be the case where national identity is defined in terms of cultural homogeneity. It may, however, also apply to already diverse and multi-ethnic societies who view further immigration as a threat to social cohesion and solidarity. The UK has recently seen a fierce debate about whether immigration is making Britain too diverse to sustain the mutual obligations behind a good society and the welfare state.⁴ A recent commentary by Samuel Huntington, entitled “The Hispanic Challenge”, recently ignited a similar debate in the US.⁵

Trade-offs may also arise in the context of the migration of highly skilled workers from less to more developed countries. For example, while potentially increasing economic efficiency in the receiving country and improving the economic outcomes for migrant workers themselves, granting highly skilled

workers permanent residence status may adversely affect the economy of the migrants’ sending countries through the potential permanent loss of human capital (“brain drain”) and likely decline in remittances usually associated with permanent emigration.

Another frequently ignored potential trade-off is that between the rights and economic welfare of migrant workers. In some cases, migrant workers experience significant restrictions of their rights in return for incomes that are multiples of what they would earn in their home countries. Two extreme examples are migrant workers from developing countries who choose to migrate temporarily to the oil-rich Persian Gulf states and Singapore, despite sharp restrictions of many of their employment-related and other rights. For a more recent example, since the recent EU enlargement on 1 May 2004, workers from the ten EU accession countries have been able to freely migrate and take up employment in the UK and Ireland.⁶ However, mainly due to pressure from the tabloid media and the opposition parties in the weeks preceding EU enlargement, they face extended restrictions on accessing certain social welfare benefits. Arguably, the latter were the “political price” the UK and Irish governments had to pay in order to sustain their liberal migration policies toward workers from the accession states.⁷

Finally, as already mentioned, extending rights to migrant workers may, in some cases, adversely impact the rights of citizens. The discussion above showed how extending rights to migrant workers may negatively, or positively, affect the *value* of the corresponding rights of citizens (e.g. the right to buy land). A more direct infringement of citizens’ rights may occur if the receiving country grants migrant workers access to the national labour market in the absence of an effective mechanism encouraging

4. See Goodhart 2004 and responses.

5. See Huntington 2004 and responses.

6. Together with Sweden, the UK and Ireland were the only ones among the pre-enlargement EU countries to open up their labour markets to workers from the ten EU Accession states immediately on 1 May 2004.

7. Phil Martin (2003) refers to the migrants’ welfare vs. migrants’ rights trade-off as the numbers-rights dilemma. He cites the conclusion of a classic study by Fisher on Californian agriculture in the 1950s: “The brightest hope for the welfare of seasonal agricultural workers [in the US] lies with the elimination of the jobs upon which they now depend” (Fisher 1953, p. 148). In other words, according to Fisher, the only way of improving migrant workers’ rights was to eliminate them from the workforce.

employers to first ascertain the availability of equally suitable local workers. This is most obviously the case where migrant workers can be employed illegally and without much fear of detection. The UK's decision to grant nationals from EU accession states immediate and free access to its labour market is another case in point. It could be argued that the right accorded to migrant workers to take up employment in the UK is a direct trade-off against local workers' preferential access to the UK labour market.⁸

It is important to emphasize that these trade-offs are not inherent to international labour migration. Sorting out potential from actual trade-offs is an important task for empirical research. However, where they are real, the various trade-offs in international labour migration need to be acknowledged and considered in the debate and design of labour immigration policy.

A BALANCED APPROACH TO THE DESIGN OF LABOUR IMMIGRATION POLICY

HAVING discussed the multifaceted and interrelated consequences of international labour migration, the next step in the design of labour immigration policy is to define its policy objectives. This requires policy makers to assign weights to the ten types of impacts listed in Table 10.1.⁹

In practice, the decision about which consequences of migration are more important than others is usually observed, and typically analysed, as the result of political negotiations and power struggles between the key political stakeholders and various interest groups. It is important to realize, however, that any politics of migration¹⁰ is conducted within a certain

ethical framework. This means that, although played out in the political domain, the assignment of weights to the ten types of impacts in Table 10.1 is, in the end, an inherently normative exercise. This opens up an important, but all too often neglected, discussion of the values and ethical considerations that inform, or *should inform*, the choice of policy objectives and the subsequent design of a labour immigration policy.

It is useful to distinguish between two key questions in this discussion of the ethics of labour immigration policy:

- (i) to what extent, if at all, should the outcomes for collectives, such as economic efficiency, distribution and national identity, and the economic welfare of individuals be given priority over individuals' rights, and
- (ii) to what extent, if at all, should the interests of citizens be given priority over those of migrant workers and their countries of origin?

The answers to these questions, which differ from one ethical theory to another, constitute an ethical framework. For a discussion of the desirable degree of consequentialism, i.e. the degree to which the ethical evaluation of public policies (or private action) should be made in terms of outcomes (ends) rather than processes (means), see, for example, Scheffler, 1998. For a discussion of the "moral standing" to be accorded to non-citizens, see, for example, Nussbaum, 1996 and Goodin, 1988. Different ethical frameworks naturally give rise to very different definitions of the objectives of a "desirable" labour immigration policy, as reflected in the different weights given to the impacts in Table 10.1. It could be argued that the policy principles espoused in the ILO's Migrant Worker Conventions or the UN's International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and the Members of their Families (MWC) are based on an ethical framework of "rights-

8. This trade-off is not necessarily undesirable, but it needs to be acknowledged.

9. One could argue that, if labour immigration policy is made at the national level, the process of assigning weights to the various migration impacts in Table 10.1 defines the "national interest". This framework for defining the national interest would be in line with Nye, who suggests that, (...) global interests can be incorporated into a broad and far-sighted concept of the national interest". See Nye, 2002.

10. For a recent discussion of the politics of migration, see Spencer, 2003. Spencer argues that managing migration is about trying to balance the following high-level objectives (some of which may be conflicting): achieving labour market objectives, protecting national security, minimizing public expenditure, promoting social cohesion, honouring human rights obligations and promoting international development and cooperation.

based cosmopolitanism”, which emphasizes the individual’s rights rather than the individual’s economic welfare, or the consequences for society, and accords a very high degree of “moral standing” to non-citizens. The outcomes for citizens and non-citizens are given (almost) equal weight in the ethical evaluation.¹¹

In contrast, the current labour migration policies of many migrant-receiving countries appear to be based on an ethical framework of “consequentialist nationalism”, which focuses on the consequences for the community, rather than the rights of individuals, and accords a significantly lower moral standing to non-citizens than to citizens. In other words, the preferred labour immigration policies of most receiving countries tend to place most weight on economic efficiency, distribution and national identity (including security) of their citizenry as collectives, less weight on individual rights (related to the employment of foreign workers), and least weight on the impacts on migrants and non-migrant citizens of sending countries. This is perhaps best illustrated by the popular appeal of “manpower planning exercises” behind many countries’ labour immigration policymaking,¹² and by the disappointingly low numbers of ratification of the three global legal instruments developed for the protection of migrant workers.¹³

Given the multitude of competing ethical theories, it needs to be recognized that there is no single most “correct” starting point for theoretical reflection in the ethical discourse on immigration (Carens, 1996). However, if the objective of the ethical discourse is to

yield practical policy implications, as is the case in this chapter, there is a strong argument to be made for adopting a *balanced approach* that is both *realistic*, in that it takes account of existing realities in labour immigration policymaking (such as the consequentialist nationalism underlying many migrant receiving countries’ current policies), and *idealistic*, by actively promoting the interests of migrant workers and their countries of origin (ibid). Such a balanced approach would be based on the following core considerations:

i) All the impacts in Table 10.1 may be *potentially legitimate* determinants of a viable and ethical labour immigration policy. This implies that discussions about labour immigration need to address the impacts of international labour migration in an explicit, well informed and open manner. This requires, among other things, a thorough understanding of the consequences of international labour migration, including relevant trade-offs, and active discouragement of the kind of “polarization” of immigration debates currently occurring in many countries.

ii) If one accepts the legitimacy of nation states, national policy makers have an obligation to assign more weight in their policy decisions to the impacts on residents and citizens than to those non-citizens. Thus, a balanced approach to the design of labour immigration policy would, at a minimum, require policies that protect a citizen’s right to preferential access to the national labour market;¹⁴ ensure that the receiving country derives net economic benefits from the employment of migrant workers, and prevent

11. In line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the rights contained in the UN’s MWC are intended to be universal (i.e. they apply everywhere), indivisible (e.g. political and civil rights cannot be separated from social and cultural rights), and inalienable (i.e. they cannot be denied to any human being and should not be transferable or saleable, not even by the holder of the right).

12. In immigration policy, manpower planning usually results in discussions about the number and type of migrant workers that will maximise economic benefits and minimise distributional consequences for the receiving country.

13. They include the Migration for Employment Convention of 1949 (ILO Convention No.97), the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention of 1975 (ILO Convention No.143), and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and the Members of their Families, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1990 (MWC). ILO Convention No. 97 (which came into force on 22 January 1952) has been ratified by 42 member states, while ILO Convention No. 143 (which came into force in 1978) has been ratified by only 18 member states. As of February 2004, the MWC had been signed by only 25 member states, most of which are predominantly migrant-sending rather than migrant-receiving countries.

14. Of course, there are instances in which citizens may collectively decide to waive this right. The freedom of movement and employment within the countries of the pre-enlarged European Union is a case in point.

immigration from adversely affecting national security, public order and the social and political stability of the receiving country.

iii) Migrant workers face particular vulnerabilities in international labour migration and their *interests* therefore need special promotion and protection. Furthermore, these interests are multifaceted, comprising both migrant workers' rights and economic welfare (see Table 10.1). Given that the promotion of migrant workers' rights and economic welfare may sometimes be negatively correlated, an extreme rights-based policy would imply that no level of improvement of foreign workers' welfare justifies the restriction of some of their rights. Considering that many migrant workers migrate for economic reasons, giving such minimal weight to their economic welfare seems unlikely to be in their overall interest.

At the same time, it is equally obvious that policies driven and justified by an almost exclusive concern for the economic welfare of migrant workers, with little or no regard to their most basic human rights (the voluntary slavery or sweatshop argument), would be equally objectionable in an approach that purports to be concerned with the overall interest of migrant workers. It is well known that international labour migration frequently takes place in an environment of exploitation, sometimes involving the violation of the most basic human rights of migrant workers.¹⁵ Rather than insist on a very comprehensive set of inalienable rights for migrant workers, as the UN's MWC currently does, a balanced approach would first identify and effectively enforce a basic set of rights that cannot be violated, and then give migrant workers at least some voice/agency in, and the necessary information for, choosing whether and how to balance an increase in their income with a restriction of their rights while employed abroad.

iv) The vulnerabilities of sending countries are significant and stem from inherent asymmetries in the

regulation of international labour migration. It is a human right to leave and return to one's country of origin, but there is no corresponding right to enter another country. As a result, there are relatively fewer opportunities for sending countries to regulate emigration than for receiving countries to regulate immigration. For example, receiving countries may effectively restrict the immigration of a highly skilled worker from a developing country if deemed necessary to protect the receiving country's labour market. In contrast, there is relatively little that sending countries can do to restrict the emigration of a highly skilled worker, even if the loss of human capital has significant adverse effects on the sending country's economy.

These asymmetries in the regulation of international labour migration create at least some obligation for receiving countries to make their labour immigration policies "development friendly" for sending countries. This could be achieved by creating legal and readily accessible channels for the flow of remittances, discouraging the permanent immigration of highly skilled migrant workers, where such migration would constitute a serious loss to the sending country, and by encouraging the return and/or circulation of migrant workers. The best way of promoting sending countries' interests in international labour migration would be to adopt a more inclusive approach in the design of labour immigration policies, and to cooperate with sending countries in at least some aspects of policy design.¹⁶

v) In order to avoid policy conflicts, the choice of the objectives of labour immigration policy should not be too dissimilar from those of policies regulating other aspects of a country's economic openness, such as international trade and capital flows.

International labour migration and international trade and capital flows are not symmetrical phenomena. While most of the purely economic

15. For a discussion, see, for example, Taran, 2000.

16. Weil, 2002, makes the case for a coherent policy of co-development based on more cooperation between migrant receiving and sending states, and migrants themselves.

effects could be similar, e.g. the labour market impacts of immigration could be similar to those of imports or investment abroad, the international flow of workers also generates a number of non-economic effects, e.g. on national identity and on the rights of individuals, generally not associated with international trade and capital flows. For this reason, there is no *a priori* inconsistency in receiving countries' policies of encouraging the liberalization of international trade and capital flows to a greater degree than that of international labour flows.

A balanced approach to the design of labour immigration policy would, however, ensure that the *degree* of asymmetry between the restrictions on international flows of labour and capital reasonably reflects the differences between their economic and non-economic impacts. Looking at the current globalization trends, it could be argued that the existing imbalances are significantly greater than such considerations of consistency would demand. As of 2000, the ratios of exports, and the stock of outward foreign direct investment, to world GDP were 22.1 and 18.7 per cent, respectively,¹⁷ while the ratio of the estimated *stock* of total migrants to total world population was only about 3 per cent (based on an estimated global stock of 175 million migrants, the great majority of whom are migrant *workers*).¹⁸

A balanced approach would include policies to encourage a greater degree of liberalisation of international labour migration, especially of low-skilled workers whose international mobility is the most restricted, than is currently the case. This would enhance consistency between international trade, investment and migration policies. Because the integration of international labour markets is significantly lower than the integration of

international markets for capital and commodities, such liberalization would also generate significantly higher economic benefits than those derived from a further liberalization of international trade and capital flows (Rodrik, 2002).

THE CASE FOR NEW AND EXPANDED TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKER PROGRAMMES

THIS CHAPTER argues that a balanced approach to the design of labour immigration policy calls for the liberalization of international labour migration through *new types* of temporary foreign worker programmes (TFWPs) for skilled *and especially for low-skilled foreign workers*. In contrast to the widely held arguments against such programmes, it is suggested that new and expanded TFWPs are both *desirable* from an ethical point of view, and *feasible*, since innovative policy designs, if effectively implemented and enforced, could help avoid the adverse and unintended consequences of most past and existing guest worker programmes.¹⁹

DESIRABILITY

The ethical argument against TFWPs typically rests on universalistic rights-based theories that emphasize the universality and priority of migrants' rights over narrowly defined national interests of receiving countries. Rights-based theories tend to oppose the *active promotion* of new policies that are based on an explicit distinction between the rights and entitlements of different categories of residents (such as temporary residents, permanent residents, and citizens) and on the idea that it may be desirable to trade certain personal rights against increases in their

17. In 2000, the ratio of FDI outward flows to total fixed capital accumulation was 17.8 per cent (UNCTAD, 2001). Of course, FDI figures are not strictly comparable to GDP and fixed capital accumulation figures. The idea here is to merely give an indication of the overall magnitudes under consideration, rather than identify the exact degree of the integration of international capital markets.

18. See UNPD, 2002. It is interesting to note that, while today's levels of international trade and capital market integration are roughly comparable to those prevailing in the early 20th century (Williamson, 2002; Baldwin and Martin, 1999; Taylor, 1996), the scale of international labour migration since 1950 has been significantly smaller (as a percentage of world population) than that prevailing in the "age of mass migration" of 1820-1913 (Hatton and Williamson, 1998).

19. Of course, the issues of desirability and feasibility are interrelated in practice. For example, it could be argued that it cannot be desirable (or ethical) to promote a policy which is clearly unfeasible to implement, i.e. desirability requires feasibility. The reason for separating the two concepts here is to facilitate a more structured discussion of the arguments for and against implementing new and expanded temporary foreign worker programmes.

and other peoples' economic welfare.²⁰ Criticisms of TFWPs based on rights-based theories also point to the strong presumption in liberal democracies that residents acquire rights over time. Within this framework, it is immoral to invite foreign workers to immigrate and take up employment, without at the same time enabling them over time to acquire the rights and entitlements typically granted to citizens.

A very similar argument is also made by some communitarian writers. For example, Michael Walzer, a communitarian who argues that restricting immigration could be ethically justified,²¹ suggests that if foreign workers are admitted into the political community, they must be given equal rights and opportunities and be set on the road to citizenship.²² Any other arrangement would constitute a 'family with live-in servants'. Walzer summarizes the issue of guest workers as follows:

'Democratic citizens, then, have a choice: if they want to bring in new workers, they must be prepared to enlarge their own membership; if they are unwilling to accept new members, they must find ways within the limits of the domestic labour market to get socially necessary work done. And those are their only choices. Their right to choose derives from the existence in this particular territory of a community of citizens; and it is not compatible with the destruction of the community or its transformation into yet another local tyranny' (Walzer 1983, p. 61).

Based on the discussion in the above two sections, it can be seen that some arguments against TFWPs are well served by ethical references that are narrow and place their emphasis on a relatively small subset of the migration impacts in Table 10.1. For example, and as mentioned before, migrants' rights advocates who

oppose TFWPs on the grounds that they restrict migrant workers' rights unacceptably, frequently fail to acknowledge that TFWPs typically increase the economic welfare of (often economically underprivileged) migrant workers. Similarly, communitarian arguments such as Walzer's are primarily concerned with the collective interests of the community in the receiving country, and less so with the interests of individual potential migrants (still in the sending country, and seeking employment abroad), or the interests of the sending country in general.

As a result of this narrow focus on a few selected migration impacts, critics of TFWPs have in fact contributed to maintaining the status quo, as characterized by restrictions on international labour migration, especially of low-skilled workers, and high levels of illegal immigration. Most illegally employed migrant workers are found in relatively low-wage jobs and have very few rights.

Based on a balanced approach, the ethical case for new and expanded TFWPs is motivated by the argument that a managed liberalization of international labour migration, especially of low-skilled workers for whom international migration restrictions and thus also international wage differentials are greatest, would benefit all sides; and that of all the possible ways to manage and liberalize labour immigration in a world of sovereign states, TFWPs are the most *realistic* policy option.

TFWPs could benefit receiving states by providing them with a highly motivated workforce that can carry out jobs in sectors and occupations where the following conditions are met: (i) local workers are unavailable to fill existing vacancies; (ii) existing

20. This assertion holds as a general statement about the nature of rights-based ethical theories (such as libertarian theories based on Nozick, 1974). It needs to be acknowledged, however, that some rights-based approaches, including the one embodied in the international human rights treaties and migrant worker conventions, allow for a (limited) distinction between different categories of residents based on legal status and citizenship (for a discussion, see, for example, Ghosh, 2003).

21. Walzer, 1983, suggests that the political community can be thought of as a national 'club' or 'family'. As clubs can regulate admissions, but cannot bar withdrawals, there is a legitimate case for national immigration restrictions that serve to 'defend the liberty and welfare, the politics and culture of a group of people committed to one another and to their common life' (p. 39).

22. This includes the right to family reunion. Walzer argues that the notion of the country as a 'family' suggests that 'one cannot admit them (foreign workers) for the sake of their labour without accepting some commitment to their aged parents, say, or to their sickly brothers and sisters' (p. 41).

vacancies are advertised at “decent” wages that are above the official minimum wage; (iii) a change toward less labour-intensive production technology is difficult in the short term; (iv) relocation abroad is difficult or impossible, and (v) the complete elimination of the occupation or sector is considered to go against the country’s national interest. Arguably, the number of jobs in high-income countries meeting all of the five criteria is significant.²³ They exist at both the high and low-skill end of the labour market and include jobs in the IT sector, health care, agriculture, food processing, construction and a number of service industries, including cleaning and, especially, hospitality.

In addition to filling genuine labour shortages that meet the above five criteria, TFWPs could also enable receiving countries to minimize the potentially adverse impacts of the employment of migrant workers on the wages and employment opportunities of the local workforce. This could be done, for example, by restricting the employment of foreign workers to sectors that suffer from labour shortages (a restriction impossible to impose on foreign workers with permanent residence status). Because of the possibility of protecting local workers, and the general expectation of return, TFWPs are more likely to be politically feasible than large-scale permanent immigration programmes. If effectively implemented, they are also more desirable than a policy of benign neglect towards illegal immigration,²⁴ which could easily lead to a race to the bottom in the wages and employment conditions offered in certain jobs, thus adversely affecting local workers and potentially discouraging employers from modernizing production processes.

While they do not adequately address fundamental issues of poverty and economic development in low and middle-income countries, expanded TFWPs may benefit sending countries through the increased inflow of remittances and return of workers with potentially more skills and knowledge about modern technology. The temporary nature of migrant workers’ employment abroad, and their eventual return home, prevents the permanent loss of human capital (brain drain²⁵) and the decline in remittances (which often sets in after the family joins the migrant worker abroad). There is thus a convergence of interests of receiving and sending countries in *temporary* labour migration.²⁶

From the migrant workers’ point of view, the main benefit from new and expanded TFWPs lies in the prospect of increased access to legal (but temporary) employment in higher-income countries. In a way, the creation of new and expanded TFWPs would increase the “choices” for migrant workers, offering them the opportunity to legally earn higher wages abroad at the (potential) cost of restricting some of their rights. It is a trade-off, but it may be a welcome one, especially for workers with little or no other opportunities to economically better themselves and their families.

It could also be argued that temporary employment is desirable, as it maximizes the potential number of migrant workers able to benefit from employment abroad. Long or permanent stays of workers currently abroad naturally make it more difficult for potential newcomers to gain access to a given foreign labour market.

23. The number of advertised vacancies in high income countries that meet only (i) is significantly greater than those meeting all five criteria cited in the text! This is why the extent of illegal immigration, or even the vacancy assessments by some employer associations, is likely to overstate the demand for migrant workers.

24. A frequently cited example of such benign neglect over the issue of illegal immigration is US policy towards undocumented workers in agriculture, where internal and border enforcement efforts have been systematically relaxed during periods of high labour demand (Hanson and Spilimbergo, 2001).

25. Note that encouraging return is not the only possible policy option to address the brain drain (although, if implemented successfully, it may be the most effective). Many recent contributions to the brain drain debate have focused on a “diaspora approach” that aims to mobilise migrants abroad to engage in activities that benefit their home countries (through, for example, remittances, investments and transfer of technology). For a discussion, see Wickramsekara, 2003.

26. It is important to recognise that – for the reasons mentioned in the text – sending countries are likely to prefer temporary emigration to a completely free international flow of labour.

FEASIBILITY

The second charge against TFWPs is that they are simply unfeasible. This argument is based on the fact that many of the past and existing TFWPs, most notably the *Bracero* programme in the USA (1942-64) and the *Gastarbeiter* programme in Germany (1955-73), failed to meet their stated policy objectives and instead generated a number of adverse, unintended consequences. The three most important adverse impacts included the exploitation of migrant workers in both recruitment and employment; the emergence of labour market distortions, and the growth of a structural dependence by certain industries on continued employment of migrant workers and, perhaps most importantly from the receiving country's point of view, the non-return and eventual settlement of many guest workers.²⁷

In light of these policy failures, it is indeed fair to say that past experience with TFWPs has been overwhelmingly negative. However, to conclude that such programmes are therefore inherently unfeasible ignores the fact that most failures of past guest worker programmes can be traced to a common set of mistakes in policy design. The remainder of this section identifies the three major policy mistakes of past programmes and proposes key policies to avoid them, and their adverse consequences, under new and improved TFWPs. It also acknowledges and addresses the significant challenges to implementing the proposed policies, including especially the need for effective enforcement of immigration and employment laws, especially those designed to combat illegal immigration and employment. Without the latter, any TFWP, including the policies proposed below, is bound to fail.

i) *First*, foreign workers' vulnerability to exploitation in employment mainly arises from the fact that work permits made available through TFWPs are usually specific to a job and employer. Programmes that allow migrant workers to change employers without leaving

the country typically require the new employer to apply for a new work permit – a time and resource consuming process. Unless they are willing to return home, foreign workers may thus find it difficult or impossible to escape unsatisfactory working conditions. The problem may be exacerbated by some employers' illegal practices of retaining migrant workers' passports and by the provision of "tied accommodation", i.e. accommodation provided by the employer to their migrant workers on the condition that, and as long as, the migrant continues to work for that employer. This may naturally lead to employers gaining excessive control over migrant workers, and to exploitation.

A first core policy element of new and improved TFWPs is to grant migrant workers at least some freedom of movement (and thus the freedom to choose and change employers) in the receiving country's labour market. This could be done, for example, by issuing work permits specific to a certain sector or occupation (rather than to a certain job and employer), where the work permit holder is allowed to change employers at will. Important supplementary policies would need to include making it a criminal offence for employers to retain their workers' passports, and providing information to migrant workers about affordable housing opportunities, if they exist, other than those offered by the employer.

Importantly, in addition to reducing foreign workers' vulnerability, granting foreign workers more freedom of movement also benefits the receiving country. It increases the efficiency of that country's labour market by enabling foreign workers to better respond to wage differentials, thereby helping to equalize the value of the marginal product of all workers across labour markets. This point has been made by Borjas, who argues that, "immigration greases the wheels of the labour market by injecting into the economy a group of persons who are very responsive to regional differences in economic opportunities" (Borjas, 2001). Efficiency gains may be particularly pronounced

27. There is a plethora of studies providing empirical evidence for these and other "policy failures" of past guest worker programmes. For overviews, see, for example, Castles, 1986; Martin and Teitelbaum, 2001; Martin, 2003; and Ruhs, 2003.

where the mobility of native workers is relatively low (such as in the EU).²⁸

None of the major existing and past TFWPs has ever experimented with granting migrant workers freedom of movement within certain occupations and/or sectors. The main obstacle appears to be resistance by employers who run the risk of losing migrant workers before the employers' recruitment costs have been recovered.²⁹ One way of addressing this problem could be to organize collective recruitment by all employers within the occupation and/or sector within which migrants are allowed to move freely.³⁰ A more modest policy alternative would be to offer migrant workers freedom of movement after a relatively short period of employment with the employer who initially recruited them (that period should reflect the time needed for the employer to recover recruitment costs).

ii) Labour market distortions and a structural dependence on the employment of migrant workers stem from the failure of many existing and past TFWPs to offer employers the right incentives to recruit migrant workers. Although under most existing TFWPs work permits for migrant workers can be issued only if an employer can reasonably demonstrate that no equivalent local workers are available, this so-called "labour market test", aimed at securing the important objective of protecting citizens' rights to preferential access to the national labour market, has typically failed in practice. Whenever necessary, employers have shown considerable ingenuity to ensure that no local workers are found to fill their vacancies (Martin, 2003).

In addition, the work permit fees employers pay under most past and existing TFWPs are relatively low.³¹ As a result, migrant workers tended to be both easily

accessible and available at relatively low cost to local employers. Although systematic empirical evidence on this issue is scant, an effectively "unlimited" supply of readily available and cheap workers may discourage some employers from modernizing production processes, and thus lead to a situation where inefficient companies and industries remain viable only because they are subsidized by a readily available and cheap immigrant workforce.³²

Another key policy principle for new and improved TFWPs is, therefore, to "get the price of migrant workers right" by charging employers a monthly fee for each foreign worker they employ. The fee would need to be set at a sufficiently level high to provide local employers with the necessary incentives to: a) search for local workers and avoid paying the fee (this would effectively help to protect the local workers' right to preferential access to the labour market), and b) look for alternatives, such as the mechanization of the production process, or outsourcing, before considering the recruitment of migrant workers. Something similar is occurring in Singapore, where the government sets and regularly revises flexible "foreign worker levies" specific to the sector of employment and the skill level of the migrant worker.

In addition to levelling the playing field, the revenues from work permit fees could also be used to generate funds for enforcement and integration assistance (Martin, 2003). They could also be used as a tool of industrial policy. For example, fees could be raised in order to encourage mechanization or technological change in certain industries. Fees could be set at prohibitively high levels in industries considered to have lost their comparative advantage relative to those in low-income countries. For most high-income countries, labour-intensive manufacturing and, more

28. In 2000, only 225,000 persons (0.1 per cent of the total EU population) moved their official residence to another EU country. This is only a fraction of the mobility observed in the US, where about 2.5 per cent of the population change states every year (European Commission, 2002).

29. Indeed, granting migrant workers freedom of movement within certain occupations and/or sectors may initially decrease the number of workers recruited, as employers become more careful about their "recruitment investments". It is, however, argued that this would be a desirable development as it would help to remove unacceptable risks of exploitation.

30. See Weinstein, 2002, for a discussion of this proposal.

31. The exception is Singapore, which is discussed immediately below.

32. See, for example, Martin and Olmstead's (1985) discussion of the mechanization controversy in US agriculture.

controversially, parts of agriculture, may be cases in point.³³

To charge a work permit fee could also serve another important purpose, namely, to reduce local workers' opposition to TFWPs by distributing part of the work permit revenues (e.g. through periodic hand-outs) to native workers in those sectors where the hiring of foreign workers has verifiably depressed wages and/or working conditions.³⁴ Under such a system, the government would need to carefully determine the appropriate level of such a fee able to compensate local workers while also leaving local employers better off.

Alternatively, in countries where union membership is high, a more market-based system under which native workers collectively decide on the compensation in exchange for their agreement to the employment of a certain number of foreign workers could be foreseen. Such a system would essentially be based on a bargaining process, where local employers, local workers and the government come together and collectively bargain over the number of foreign workers to be admitted and employed, and over the price (work permit fee) that native employers would pay to compensate local workers.³⁵ This system has, in part, been operating in Australia, where the government consults interest groups and the public about the size and composition of migrant intakes.

Where direct compensation of local workers is considered to be undesirable, for example, because of the potentially adverse impact on the perception of immigration as inherently threatening the employment prospects of local workers, the revenues raised through fees could still be used to mitigate the potential adverse impact on local workers by funding their retraining and skill development.

To implement fees effectively, two main challenges need to be overcome. First, the government of the receiving country needs to accept the proposition that the merits of micro-managing the employment of migrant workers by setting employer fees justify and outweigh the costs associated with increased government intervention. This may be difficult for governments with a strong preference for *laissez-faire* and minimal intervention in the domestic economy. Second, there is a danger that some employers will illegally deduct work permit fees from migrant workers' wages. If this happens, the fees will achieve none of their intended objectives and simply reduce the wages of migrant workers. To prevent this, work permit fees need to be effectively enforced with credible and stiff penalties for employers who pass the fees on to their workers.

iii) One of the biggest policy mistakes under past guest worker programmes, and especially in the German *Gastarbeiter* programme, was the assumption that guest workers were essentially available on tap, i.e. that their numbers could be increased or decreased at will, depending on the economic needs of the receiving country. This assumption was based on the idea that guest workers were labour units without agency, i.e. without the capacity to make independent decisions or revise their decisions based on new information and circumstances (Castles, 2004). In practice, changing expectations on the part of the foreign worker, and pressures on liberal and democratic receiving countries – by the judiciary and civil society – to grant workers employed for a certain number of years the right to family reunion, create dependencies that limit the receiving country's ability to reduce the number of admitted foreign workers at will.³⁶

33. European and US agriculture is heavily subsidized not only through price supports but also through cheap immigrant labour (sometimes from the very countries that would be most efficient at producing these agricultural products in the first place).

34. It should be acknowledged that, given disagreements within the theoretical and applied literature about the effects of labour immigration on the labour market outcomes for locals, this is likely to be a formidable and highly controversial exercise.

35. For a more detailed analysis of this mechanism, see Weinstein, 2002.

36. Compare the discussion in ILO, 2004.

It should therefore be recognized already at the stage of policy design, that some foreign workers may apply to remain in the host country on a permanent basis and to bring their families. The implementation of new and improved TFWPs must therefore include transparent mechanisms and rules for a *regulated* and *conditional* (i.e. *non-automatic*) transfer into different and “better” programmes that grant *some* foreign workers permanent residence status and the right to family reunion. This could be done, for example, through a points system that places particular emphasis on criteria considered essential for the long-term integration and employability of the migrants in the receiving country. Proficiency in the receiving country’s language may be a case in point.³⁷ Such points-based programmes have been tried and tested, as a means of direct entry, for decades in Australia and Canada, and have helped to give immigration policy a semblance of certainty and measurability.

At the same time, new and improved TFWPs must necessarily remain based on a *general expectation* of *temporariness* of employment and stay of the majority of migrant workers who join the programme. To make this a realistic expectation, policies should discourage a situation in which a foreign worker decides to overstay a temporary work permit because his/her savings target could not be achieved during the period of validity of the work permit. This requires strict enforcement measures against employers and recruiters who give foreign workers wrong information about employment conditions and living costs in the receiving country, and steps to prevent the illicit sale of visas.

A mixture of incentives and enforcement is needed to facilitate the return of migrant workers who exit TFWPs without changing their status to permanent programmes. For example, migrant workers with a valid work permit need to be given the right and opportunity to travel freely, or at least without too

many restrictions, between the sending and receiving countries. This will help them maintain networks in the home country, which in turn will increase the probability of their return.

Financial return incentives could include the transfer of migrant workers’ social security payments to the workers’ sending country. Another policy would be to create special savings accounts which offer migrant workers the opportunity to save part of their wages at special high interest rates subject to the condition that the savings will only be released to migrant workers upon their return to their home countries. Such financial return incentives have been tried before with mixed success. The most infamous example is the Mexican *Bracero* programme that required a portion of migrants’ earnings to be deducted for retirement in Mexico. The policy ultimately failed as migrants never received the money, and their claims for deferred wages have been under investigation for decades.

Clear and effective procedures to remove migrant workers who illegally overstay their temporary worker visas are needed, as well as to penalize employers who employ migrant workers without valid work permits. This is primarily a question of political will and depends on the resources made available for internal enforcement measures such as detection, persecution, enforcement of employer sanctions, and deportation. The record of most liberal and democratic receiving countries in enforcing employer sanctions is less than encouraging.

The success of any TFWP ultimately depends on the receiving country’s willingness to strictly enforce the law against all parties, recruitment agents, employers and migrant workers, who circumvent the programme.³⁸ In the absence of effective law enforcement, employers and migrant workers may have very few incentives to join the TFWP and prefer

37. Great sensitivity is needed to use proficiency in language as a criterion for improved status: the government has to provide adequate and accessible courses, and ideally insist that workers get time off to do them; and it must address the needs of special groups, especially women with child-care responsibilities.

38. In fact, some critics of TFWPs agree that the list of policies outlined above may, in theory, make a TFWP work. They argue, however, that the policies are simply impossible to enforce and, therefore, ultimately unfeasible.

(the continuation of) illegal employment arrangements instead.³⁹ Also, the toleration of illegal immigration and employment will obviously undermine any policy to encourage the return of migrant workers upon the expiry of their work permits. Between 1998-2002, only eight employers were found guilty of illegally employing migrant workers under Section 8 of the UK's Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, the law preventing illegal work in the UK (Home Office, 2003). Similarly, in 2002, only 53 employers were fined for immigration violations in the whole of the US (Cornelius, 2004).

There are two compelling arguments in favour of effective enforcement of the proposed policies and measures against illegal immigration. First, the ethical case for new and expanded TFWPs – which includes a strong economic argument – could provide a politically powerful justification for devoting resources to law enforcement, and for implementing measures sometimes deemed undesirable in a liberal democracy, such as restricting some migrant workers' rights in exchange for greater access to legal employment opportunities abroad. In other words, if it can be successfully argued, as suggested in this chapter, that a well functioning TFWP is an ethical immigration policy in the interests of all actors involved, one could realistically hope for a more serious commitment to enforcement. This is why the discussion of the ethics of labour immigration policy is of critical importance.

Second, given the convergence of interests of migrant receiving and sending countries in ensuring the temporariness of migrant workers' employment abroad, those countries may find it mutually advantageous to cooperate in supporting and implementing immigration control measures necessary to make a TFWP work. The sending country could, for example, take measures to regulate its migrant worker recruitment industry and assist with the return of migrant workers who have been

apprehended and deported by the authorities of the migrant receiving country. Receiving countries could only solicit such support from sending countries if they operate liberal and orderly TFWPs for migrant workers from those countries.

At a minimum, these are sufficient grounds for taking the idea of new and expanded temporary foreign worker programmes seriously, and for testing some of the above policy options. The UK's Sector Based Schemes (SBS) for employing migrants in selected low-skill jobs in hospitality and food processing are a welcome case in point. While lacking most of the policies outlined above, they are a welcome step towards experimenting with new policies for temporary migrant workers in low-skill jobs.⁴⁰

CONCLUSION

IN AN EFFORT to order what are currently fairly confused debates about labour immigration, this chapter identified three issues for consideration in the design of labour immigration policy: the *consequences* of international labour migration for the receiving country, the sending country and migrants themselves; the values and *ethical considerations* underlying any evaluation of these consequences and informing the choice of policy objectives; and the *policies* best suited to implement the objectives.

Having reviewed the main types of migration impacts and potential trade-offs between them, a case has been made for a balanced approach to evaluating the consequences of international labour migration and subsequent design of labour immigration policy. The key elements of such an approach include:

i) an open, transparent discussion of all economic, social, cultural and other impacts of international

39. This has been one of the main criticisms voiced against President Bush's proposal of introducing a new guest worker programme-cum-amnesty for Mexican workers seeking employment, or already employed, in the US. The argument is that the policy will be ineffective unless illegal immigration is brought under better control.

40. For more information about the SBS, see www.workingintheuk.gov.uk/working_in_the_uk/en/homepage/work_permits/sector_based_schemes.html.

labour migration for migrants and non-migrants in receiving and sending countries;

- ii) the acknowledgement of the need for national policymakers to give at least some preference in their policy decisions to the interests of citizens;
- iii) the recognition that the interests of migrant workers need to be actively protected and promoted, including both migrants' rights and economic welfare, two factors that may sometimes conflict;
- iv) the responsibility of receiving countries to make their labour immigration policies "development-friendly" for sending countries, and,
- v) the need to avoid policy contradictions by aligning the objectives of labour immigration policies more closely with those of international trade and investment policies.

It has been further suggested that these considerations can be used to make an ethical case to liberalize international labour migration through new and expanded temporary foreign worker programmes, especially for low-skilled migrants. To make such programmes feasible, the policy mistakes of past guest worker programmes must be avoided. Three key policies are needed:

- i) some freedom of movement for labour migrants in the receiving country's labour market;
- ii) regulation of employers' costs of migrant workers by setting flexible work permit fees, and,
- iii) mixed incentives-enforcement measures to encourage the return of migrants on expiry of their work permits.

As stated, these policies will be difficult to implement, and their success will ultimately depend on effective enforcement, especially of the laws against illegal immigration and the illegal employment of migrant workers. While intensely contested, the feasibility of effective enforcement could be greatly enhanced by making a convincing ethical case for a well functioning and mutually beneficial Temporary Foreign Workers Programme, and by greater cooperation between receiving and sending countries in the design and implementation of appropriate migration laws and policies.

The discussion of the ethics of labour immigration policy, the potential trade-off between migrants' rights and their economic welfare, and the attendant feasibility of temporary foreign worker programmes raises questions that are inherently difficult and contentious. That is precisely why they are frequently avoided in labour immigration debates. It is important to close this "values gap" in the discussion. One may not agree with the policy recommendations made in this chapter, but it is important to address and answer these hard ethical questions, and to have the courage to follow through their policy implications, particularly for innovative temporary migrant worker programmes, that many countries already urgently need.

TEXTBOX 10.1

ILO ACTION PLAN ON LABOUR MIGRATION

At its 92nd session in June 2004, the International Labour Conference adopted a resolution for a comprehensive Action Plan on Migrant Workers. This was prompted by government concerns about the growing numbers of migrants in an irregular status, the spreading menace of trafficking of persons, abuses against migrant workers in some countries, and the worrying signs of racism and xenophobia in others. International norms and standards, while relevant, were considered inadequate to ensure protection of migrant workers in these circumstances.

The Action Plan was seen by governments as a practical and timely way of responding to the emerging problems posed by growing cross-border movements of people. The ILO report to the Conference, "A Fair Deal for Migrant Workers in a Global Economy", argues that a sound rights-based management of labour migration is the key to effective protection of migrant workers.

The Action Plan lists a number of elements, including an expanded role for tripartism and social dialogue, capacity building and normative activities. But at its centre is a "non-binding multilateral framework for a rights-based approach to migration", which would comprise international guidelines based on best practices in the following areas:

- Expanding avenues for regular labour migration, based on labour market needs and demographic trends.
- Promoting managed migration for employment, and addressing such aspects as admission procedures, flows, social security, family reunification possibilities, integration policy and return.
- Supervision of recruitment and contracting of migrant workers.
- Preventing smuggling and trafficking of persons, and preventing and combating irregular labour migration.
- Promoting decent working conditions and protecting the human rights of all migrant workers, as well as promoting awareness of those rights.
- Promoting measures to ensure that all migrant workers benefit from the provisions of all relevant international labour standards.
- Improving labour inspections and creating channels for migrant workers to lodge complaints and seek remedies without intimidation.
- Reducing the cost of remittance transfers and promoting the productive investment of remittances.
- Ensuring that all migrant workers are covered by national legislation and applicable social laws.
- Encouraging return and reintegration into the country of origin and the transfer of capital and technology by migrants.
- Guidelines for ethical recruitment and mutually beneficial approaches to ensure adequate supply of health and education personnel that serve the needs of both sending and receiving countries.
- Reducing the specific risks for men and women migrant workers in certain occupations and sectors with particular emphasis on dirty, demeaning and dangerous jobs, and on women in domestic service and the informal economy.

- Promoting social integration and inclusion, reducing discrimination and combating racism and xenophobia.
- Facilitating the portability of social security entitlements, and
- Promoting recognition and accreditation of migrant worker's skills and qualifications.

While there was extensive debate about the interpretation of a "rights-based approach", or what was to be done regarding irregular migrant workers, the resolution marked a clear agreement on many issues that in the past had proven contentious. These include the need to expand avenues for regular labour migration; the need for all migrant workers, regardless of their legal status, to benefit from international standards and to be covered by national legislation and applicable social laws, and the need for "ethical recruitment guidelines" and bilateral and multilateral agreements to avoid negative consequences for sending countries.

The framework is intended to be non-binding, but is also part of a broader Action Plan that seeks to engage all parties – governments, workers and employers organizations, the ILO and other international organizations – in a continuing effort to establish a more humane migration regime for the benefit of all concerned.

Source: Manolo Abella, ILO.

CHAPTER 11

BALANCING THE BENEFITS AND COSTS OF SKILLED MIGRATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION¹

In the end what matters is people... Labour productivity, critical for economic growth, depends on workers' knowledge, skills, motivation, and health...A well educated, healthy workforce is essential for economic growth.

INTRODUCTION²

HUMAN capital is increasingly the most important form of wealth for many countries and regions, with those richest in intellectual resources tending to achieve the highest rates of economic growth and most rapid development of their science and technology sectors. Such resources not only produce wealth, they are vital in dealing with many social and environmental aspects of modern living. Yet in many developed countries, a combination of factors – high demand in certain sectors, lack of adequate training facilities, people making different career choices – has led to major skilled labour shortages. Hence the need for policies that encourage the immigration of skilled labour³ and draw on ready-trained science and technology personnel, often from developing countries, to meet these shortages. Such policies, however, have mixed consequences for the countries of origin.

On an individual level, current policies tend to widen the opportunities for those with suitable skills to emigrate. At the macro level, these may be precisely the skilled personnel most needed in developing

countries. Skilled emigration clearly has both positive and negative impacts on economies, but this is not systematically taken into account in development planning. It has been argued that, “if appropriate global development strategies were in place, then international (especially temporary migration) could be factored into (and make an important contribution to) the development process” (Appleyard, 1992).

Similarly, there is as yet insufficient policy consideration of such social issues as gender. Skilled occupations tend to be heavily male-oriented, although women now account for an increased proportion of total highly skilled migrants (Ouaked, 2002). However, there are still few analyses of their economic participation (Kofman, 2000; Raghuram, 2000).

This chapter analyses the benefits and costs for a selection of countries/regions in the Asia-Pacific of high-skilled labour mobility. It looks at the benefits that flow from skilled immigration to some of the larger immigrant receiving countries (Australia, the US, Canada, Japan and others) and the complexity of the costs and benefits for some source countries/regions at various stages of evolution of emigration management (Taiwan, China mainland,

1. The author of this chapter is Dr Robyn Iredale, Associate Professor, School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Wollongong, Australia.

2. For the purpose of this chapter, Asia includes the following geographic designations: China (which includes China mainland, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China -- hereafter referred to as Hong Kong, Macao Special Administrative Region of China -- hereafter Macao, and Taiwan Province of China -- hereafter Taiwan), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (hereafter North Korea), and the Republic of Korea (hereafter South Korea).

3. Definitional issues make this a difficult area to describe accurately, but highly skilled workers are generally taken to be those who possess a tertiary qualification or have equivalent experience (Iredale, 2001). However, most of the policy interest and collection of statistical data has focused on Human Resources in Science and Technology (HRST), that has been seen as driving the demand for skilled labour. HRST covers science, engineering computing and life and health sciences.

Vietnam, Bangladesh, India and Fiji). It also reviews the policies of these countries to counter the negative effects of skilled emigration. The conclusion highlights some key policy issues for governments and the wider international community if countries of origin are not to be seriously and permanently disadvantaged.

IMPACTS OF IMMIGRATION – GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

THERE has been a strong policy orientation in many developed regions towards attracting highly skilled immigrants, the “brightest and the best” on the global market. Traditional receiving countries are refining existing policies and making them more flexible in anticipation that high-skilled immigration will be a major factor in their future development. Other countries like Germany, the UK, France, the Netherlands, Japan, South Korea and Singapore are also developing new policies to attract highly skilled workers. Permanent intakes are not on the increase, but there is a significant level of temporary movement of highly skilled labour, particularly in certain sectors (IT, medicine, nursing and teaching).

One notable area of increased flexibility can be seen in the overseas student programmes. Studying abroad can lead to future migratory behaviour, and many students even go abroad with the intention of staying after completing their studies (Phillips and Stahl, 2000). In the US and Canada, this change of status has been relatively easy for some time, and Australia has also recently opened this avenue to students.

AUSTRALIA

Australia today places a high priority on skilled immigration, and has an active, flexible selection policy to capture the best for its needs, both from abroad and from foreign student ranks within Australia. Selection is on the basis of economic expediency and a points-based assessment of the propensity of migrants to settle and integrate in Australia. Selection criteria are generally objective, excluding race as a factor,⁴ and focusing on such “settlement” prospect indicators as language, education, qualifications, work experience and the like. The first points system,⁵ introduced in 1979, has been progressively fine-tuned to adapt the mix of migrants to evolving priorities of the government and pressures exerted by professional, training and union bodies in Australia. Consequently, educational standards among migrants have risen: between 1991 and 2001, the proportion of new immigrants with university degrees was twice as high as for persons born in Australia. According to the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia,⁶ 43 per cent of adult migrants in 1999–2000 were university graduates.

There has been a major reorientation of Australian international migration policy in recent years to include temporary as well as permanent skilled immigration. The Temporary Resident Programme increased to reach 163,700 in 2002, of which 43,300 were in the Economic Programme (OECD, 2003). This component has not been subject to the same rigorous “skills recognition” testing as for permanent entrants (except in medicine),⁷ and the decision is left to employers. Much of the push for temporary entrants

4. With the end of the White Australia Policy in the early 1970s, new selection criteria excluded race as a factor.

5. The points system covering skills, age, work experience, English language ability and sponsorship (if applicable) is applied in different ways to the following three major categories: Offshore General Skilled; Onshore General Skilled, and Onshore New Zealand Citizens. For full details see the DIMIA website: www.immi.gov.au/migration/skilled/index.htm

6. The Longitudinal Survey of Migrants to Australia (LSIA), commissioned by DIMIA, was first carried out on a sample of 6,960 primary applicants/spouses, Cohort 1, who arrived between September 1993 and August 1995. They were surveyed 6, 18 and 42 months after arrival. Cohort 2, consisting of 4,181 who arrived from September 1999 to August 2000 were also interviewed 6, 18 and 42 months after arrival.

7. The policy in the late 1990s–2000 to admit permanently only those with qualifications and experience ‘recognized’ in Australia was the most recent strategy to reduce the labour market adjustment problems of skilled migrants.

has come from employers who want 'fast track' mechanisms to obtain workers. Despite the separate categories, there is a high degree of crossover between temporary (particularly student) and permanent entrants, with the former often becoming permanent after some time.⁸

According to the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA), the benefits of these programmes to Australia include employment creation, enhancement of Australia's skill and technology base, growth of cutting edge technologies and industries, increased competitiveness and expansion of international trade and trading links.

However, their real impact needs to be measured against the increase in permanent and temporary departures of both Australia- and overseas-born in recent years. During the 1990s, there was a 146 per cent increase in permanent and a 41 per cent increase in temporary departures of persons born in Australia, of whom over two-thirds were managers, administrators, professionals and paraprofessionals. On balance, there is a net "brain gain" but some experts feel that emigration removes the "best of the best", while immigration brings in less than the best (Hugo et al., 2003). They see a disproportionate loss of Australians with superior training and skills and call for policies to attract some back, or at least encourage their circulation back to Australia.

There have also been fears about the negative impact of foreign professionals on the domestic market, in part based on research findings that skilled immigrants can reduce the relative incomes of Australians with similar skills in certain sectors (Garnaut, 2003). These and the above concerns about the emigration/immigration imbalance have led to protective or restrictive practices by national professional bodies and the government in selection

and skills recognition (seen by some as potential barriers to implementing policies of diversity or non-discrimination). (See also the chapter "Oceania Migration Dynamics".)

Overall, Australia benefits from skilled migration in terms of higher average incomes (Access Economics, 2001), although not as much as it might if there were a more open attitude to other training systems. In 2001, the unemployment rate for migrants with university degrees was more than double that of graduates born in Australia (Garnaut, 2003). This is apparently due to the time necessary to adjust to the labour market, and/or to poor English language skills, but it does not fully explain the situation (Chapman and Iredale, 1993). Studies have found a clear wage differential that has disadvantaged overseas-trained university graduate workers over time.⁹

On the economic side, government-commissioned research on the economic benefits of permanent and temporary migration shows that these potentially accrue from the intake of higher skilled migrants, and range from improved living standards to increased tax revenues that can raise Commonwealth income and productivity owing to additional high-income earners (DIMIA, 2004). More broadly, large-scale migration from Asia and elsewhere has greatly benefited Australia's economic, social and political interactions with these countries. Though these gains have not been quantified, they are acknowledged as significant. They include a diversity of languages and cultures, a greater "openness" to the rest of the world and a range of attitudes, values and mores, which have all contributed significantly to Australia's culture and way of life.

Reports prepared for the government indicate little concern about the impacts of skilled migration on the countries of origin (Hugo, 2003; Garnaut, 2003). They challenge the government to achieve the "double

8. In 2002-03 more than 50 per cent of 37,735 successful General Skilled Migration Offshore and Onshore (points-tested) applicants claimed points for an Australian qualification (DIMIA, 2004). Immediate labour market entry becomes a means to demonstrate skills and expertise and can lead to more formal recognition later.

9. See the study of these factors by Chapman and Iredale, 1993. Research into benefits to the Australian budget over time also shows that skilled immigrants generate greater gains than family or humanitarian entrants.

bonus” of attracting foreign skilled people while retaining and regaining the best of Australia’s own talent (Hugo, 2003). Thus, on the one hand, the government should not lose sight of the ethical and practical issues raised by the “brain drain” experienced by poorer countries (Garnaut, 2002) and, on the other, it is compelled by globalization to attract its share of talent from the rest of the world, including from among former immigrant students of Australian tertiary institutions (Garnaut, 2003).

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (US)

The US is the first choice for many migrants. It has a more liberal approach to skilled migration, as it garners skills from a wide range of sources to fill gaps and fuel economic growth, and is less concerned about the outcomes for immigrants than meeting the needs of US employers, and stimulating growth and innovation. The 1990 *Immigration Act* aimed at broadening the focus on the economic skills and potential of immigrants, while preserving the overriding commitment to family reunion.¹⁰ Selection in the skills categories relies heavily on:

- an offer of employment, and
- the protection of existing standards regarding wages and conditions.¹¹

There have been debates on how to measure an alleged shortage and whether the government should accept employers’ decisions about the best-qualified employees. In 1995–96, the former U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform (CIR) and some political leaders attempted to move to a points-based system, but this failed since it would have required a major

change in immigrant selection processes and greater cooperation between business, worker advocates, government regulators and other groups.

The US has the largest temporary (non-immigrant) intake, with the major provisions for entry being:

- the H-1B visa scheme, requiring no assessment of qualifications but possession of a university degree;
- the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA);
- the L-1 visa scheme for movement within multinational enterprises, and
- the O-visa category for workers of distinguished abilities.¹²

Total visas issued under these categories have consistently numbered more than half a million per annum in recent years, and in 2001 they reached over one million (OECD, 2003). As with Australia and Canada, overseas students have also become a significant source of skilled migrants in the US, and the number of university student entrants rose from 553,900 in 1998 to 689,000 in 2001 (OECD, 2003).

There have been some attempts to measure the gains from skilled migration and to quantify the benefits generated for the US economy by the ties skilled migrants maintain with their home countries. Research at the University of California at Berkeley revealed a significant correlation between the presence of first-generation immigrants and exports from California to their home country: a one per cent increase in the number of first-generation immigrants generated a 0.5 per cent increase in exports from California to the respective country. This pattern is particularly pronounced as regards the Asia-Pacific

10. It expanded employment-based permanent immigration by increasing the annual allotment for the worker preference categories from 54,000 to 140,000 (including accompanying dependants), with an emphasis on attracting professionals and skilled workers. 179,200 people were admitted under worker preferences in 2001 (OECD, 2003).

11. Initially, it is determined whether there are insufficient qualified workers available in the US, and that the wages and working conditions of similarly employed US workers will not be adversely affected.

12. The number of H-1B visas was 195,737 in FY 2002 and most of them were taken up by males in the IT and science sectors. L-1 visas allow multinationals to transfer executives, managers and employees with specialized skills from a foreign to a US location. They are easier and less costly to obtain than H-1B visas (which cost employers USD 1,000 each), employees need not be paid award wages, they allow the person to remain in the US for up to seven years and there is no limit on the numbers that may be issued. In 2002, 57,721 were issued of which around one-third went to Indian nationals. The stock of L-1 visa holders was 328,480 in 2001. A debate broke out in Florida about US firms bringing in Indian IT workers under the L-1 scheme, and then placing them with other firms.

region (Saxenian, 2001), and compares with the findings of research commissioned by the Australian government into the economic benefits of permanent and temporary migration.

CANADA

Canada selects permanent migrants for their generic skills, but is increasingly concerned about the large number of people who are unable to enter the occupations of their training once they arrive (Tolley, 2003). Canada recently liberalized its approach to attract well-qualified, versatile migrants, and introduced a new *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA) in June 2002, that no longer included occupations, and instead emphasized education, knowledge of official languages (English and/or French), experience, age, arranged employment and adaptability in its points system. Canada's proximity to the US places it in a unique position to compete for skilled migrants. There is little pre-migration assessment of qualifications and no matching of occupational qualifications to jobs.

Recognizing the importance of women in the migration process, Canada is one of the few countries that apply a gender-based analysis to immigration policy (Kofman, 2003; Tolley, 2003). This adjusts selection criteria to the specific circumstances of women, making their chances of entry as skilled workers more equitable (see also the discussion on gender implications below).

Under the employment authorization scheme to attract skills in short supply the number of temporary skilled entries to Canada, including seasonal workers and re-entries, has risen from 79,800 in 1998, to 87,908 in 2002 (OECD, 2003, CIC, 2003a). Of these, NAFTA entrants average 6,500 per year and are mostly in a defined list of professions. The proportion of temporary workers in managerial, professional and skilled/technical occupations rose to a peak of 57.2

per cent in 2002 and, though there are no statistics on the value of this intake, it clearly is a very productive addition to the workforce (CIC, 2003b). To date, Canada does not seem to have undertaken the same studies as Australia on the economic benefits of migration in terms of increases to average income, and additions to the budget and tax revenue.

JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA, TAIWAN, SINGAPORE, HONG KONG

Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan are major importers of temporary skilled workers to meet specific labour market shortages and, increasingly, to gain new ideas, technologies and initiatives. The recent immigrant response to a shortage of nurses and the entry of "entertainers" has led to a feminization of these flows. In 2001, Japan admitted 141,900 temporary skilled entrants, 83 per cent of whom were "entertainers". Japan's import of "entertainers" as skilled workers, although it is generally known that many of them work in the sex industry, is a major anomaly.¹³ Owing to Japan's economic slowdown, the number of visas issued to highly skilled workers declined from 3,500 in 2000 to 2,100 in 2001 (OECD, 2003). Recently, the *White Paper on International Trade in 2003*, under the subtitle "Revitalization of the Japanese Economy Through Input of Foreign Dynamism", clearly identified the need for "capable human resources from all over the world. (...) the improvement of MRA,¹⁴ conclusion of bilateral social agreements and improvement of working environments for foreigners are essential" (Morita, 2003).

South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore all have skilled inflows to fill vacancies, though they were affected by the 1997 Asian financial crises. South Korea recently revised its *Immigration and Emigration Law* to enable unlimited stay and simplified administrative procedures for professionals. The number of entrants rose from 12,592 in 1999 to 16,000 in the first eight

13. Note that in November 2004, the government announced plans to impose stricter work visa requirements on foreign entertainers, and lower the numbers of Filipinos on such visas (from 80,000 to 8,000 a year), in a bid to fight trafficking.

14. MRAs are "Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs). See also discussion below and fn. 14.

months of 2000. In mid-2003, a new Act on Foreign Workers' Employment was introduced and, since August 2004, a dual system is in place to bring low-skilled foreign workers into the country (the pre-existing industrial trainee system and an employment permit system) and to grant them equal labour rights with local workers.¹⁵ Of the more than 380,000 foreign workers present in the country at the end of 2003, over a third were in the country irregularly and only six per cent were skilled.¹⁶

The new open door policy is likely to be further extended in the future (Yoo and Uh, 2001). Taiwan enables skilled workers to enter, and allows employers to make their own selection, usually through subsidiaries or business partners in Japan or elsewhere in Asia.¹⁷ The return of overseas Taiwanese on a permanent or temporary basis is dealt with in the next section. Singapore encourages the entry of highly skilled professionals with a number of incentives, including permanent residence, and in 2000 administrators/managers and professionals accounted for 12 per cent of the 612,000 foreigners employed there. The fact that 24 per cent of the resident population (nationals and permanent residents) are in these occupations indicates that many professionals from overseas, particularly India, have acquired permanent residence (Yap, 2001).

The number of workers with special skills who had entered Hong Kong since its return to the People's Republic of China declined slightly from 16,561 in 1997 to 14,521 in 1999 (Chiu, 2001). The recession led to the increased scrutiny of entrants and, only when a vacancy cannot be filled locally and the applicant possesses "outstanding qualifications, expertise and skills which are needed but not readily available in Hong Kong", are they admitted (Chiu, 2001). Because the drop also coincided with the Hong Kong's return to China, it is not easy to clearly identify the cause of the decline.

In addition to, or in place of these movements, are flows that are likely to result from future growth of trade in services under the GATS Mode 4, or the movement of natural persons (MNP). Countries are free to choose the sectors they wish to open to foreign temporary service providers and this is most likely to happen in areas where there are skill shortages and where foreigners are less likely to compete with domestic service providers. The wages and conditions available in developed countries are likely to attract skilled service providers from developing countries, but mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) are needed to ensure transferability of qualifications and skills.¹⁸

The likelihood of many developing countries negotiating MRAs with more developed countries is slim, except where there are historical structural ties (e.g. among Commonwealth countries) or similar levels of development (Iredale, 2003). For example, two MRAs were due to be signed in 2004: one between Japan and Australia in engineering, after seven years of negotiations (UNCTAD, 2003), and one between the Philippines and Malaysia in architecture, also following four years of discussions (ASEAN Secretariat, 2004). This means that, if trade in services from less developed to more developed economies in the region is to increase, other mechanisms will need to be found for assessing/accrediting training and skills.

IMPACT OF EMIGRATION – GAINS AND LOSSES FROM SKILLED DIASPORAS AND RETURN MIGRATION

RESEARCH on the impact of skilled emigration, or "brain drain", has been ongoing since the 1960s. But recently the emphasis has shifted to skilled return migration and the potential benefits from "brain

15. For more details, see the Textbox "Labour Migration in South Korea".

16. *Ibid.*

17. Formal qualifications must be translated and submitted to the government before a work visa is issued.

18. The World Trade Organization's GATS Mode 4 states that in skilled occupations MRAs should be developed between countries or groups of countries to deal with the issue of the recognition of foreign qualifications.

circulation” for developing countries. Some argue that the “brain drain” is depriving developing countries of valuable human resources and hindering the application of new technologies, inhibiting research and development, and generally holding back development. Others argue that this is overstated, and stress the benefits of skilled emigrants for countries of origin and of destination. With this in mind, research was undertaken between 2000 and 2002 in four countries in Asia to examine the trends and the impacts of skilled migration (Iredale et al., 2003).

The study found potential benefits of emigration and eventual return migration at three levels:

- a) The micro level for individual migrants, families and communities, through improvements in individual or family income, acquisition of capital to invest, development of skills through training or work experience, and improvement in family security and social status. These benefits also have second-round effects on the wider economy and society, as demonstrated by the new economics of labour migration researchers (Taylor, 1999).
- b) The intermediate level for some industries/sectors, through the investment of remittances in, for example, agriculture or business activities, and the stimulation of local economies through such investment or money brought/sent home by permanent or temporary migrants and returnees. Migration networks and collectives are vital mechanisms for achieving these benefits.
- c) The macro level for economies and societies as a whole, including the use of remittances to improve balance of payments, reduce foreign debt, fund imports; improved human capital at the national level; strengthened international trade and trading links, and innovative approaches to economic development through exposure to more advanced industrialized societies.

The benefits under a) and c) have received most attention in the relevant literature. The macro level is

the most difficult area to analyse, as it is not easy to separate the impact of migrants on the economy and society from other exogenous influences, such as the information revolution, technology, research, and similar developments.

Few countries or regions have been able to accurately measure any of these benefits, therefore their possible magnitude can only be estimated. Many countries do not know the true volume of their skilled emigration or the return rates, either permanent or temporary. Research has shown that skilled emigration may not necessarily be replaced by immigration or return migration (often referred to as “migration transition”) (Iredale et al., 2003). It is instructive to see where emigration countries like Bangladesh, Vietnam, China and Taiwan currently stand on the migration spectrum ranging from stage 1: predominantly experiencing emigration, through stage 2: emigration and start of return migration, and to stage 3: emigration, immigration and circulation.

Stage 1

- Bangladesh is still predominantly at the “brain drain” stage, and struggling to become a “globalizer”.

Stage 2

- Vietnam experienced a brain drain reversal in the late 1990s, but the sluggish economy, the impact of the Asian financial crises and the slow rate of reform of both state-owned enterprises and the bureaucratic sector have all worked to discourage potential returnees (early stage 2).
- China began to experience a brain drain reversal in the mid-1990s, so that skilled return migration occurred as China’s open door policies gained momentum, the economy took off and entry to the WTO had become a reality (middle stage 2).

Stage 3

- Taiwan entered stage 2 in the 1980s as the economy soared. Return did not equal outflow, but became substantial in actual numbers. The openness of the Taiwanese economy and its globalization has taken it into stage 3 in the 1990s, characterized by skilled

outflows and inflows and an increasingly high level of temporary and intermittent circulation of nationals.

Clearly the benefits/costs of skilled emigration need to be analysed on an individual country/region basis. The following case studies show that “brain drain” is no longer a major problem for Taiwan, as return migration and brain circulation have become more significant. This is increasingly the case for China mainland, although it is still a long way from repatriating the number of skilled overseas Chinese that it needs or would like. Vietnam is somewhat unique, because of the high level of government control over students going abroad and the lack of attractive work options on their return. For Bangladesh, however, the costs manifestly outweigh the benefits at this time.

India and the Philippines are also included as examples of large-scale, expanding government-backed senders of skilled workers that are currently over-training for the export markets. Fiji is also discussed, because of some analogies to Bangladesh, although it may be experiencing even greater relative costs.

TAIWAN

Taiwan is a good example of an economy that has been networking globally, largely as a result of the emigration of students since the 1950s. It has derived great benefits from attracting back highly skilled Taiwanese, although the return flow has amounted to only 20 per cent of those who left. They have been encouraged to return by a wide range of incentives and policies, as well the growth of the Taiwanese economy since the 1960s. But these policies have also provided opportunities for Taiwanese at home to better access research and academic careers (Iredale et al., 2003).

The bridges built between expatriate communities and Taiwan have enabled the return flow of capital, skills

and technology. These bridges are now incorporated into wider transnational Taiwanese communities, and many social networks have led to more formal business partnerships. Taiwan now offers world-class manufacturing, flexible development and integration and access to key customers and markets in China mainland and Southeast Asia for companies based in the US (Tsay, 2003). This type of integrated or symbiotic relationship has taken 40 – 50 years to develop and is the result of foresight and appropriate policies, and close relations between the US and Taiwan over this period. The relationship is likely to intensify as Taiwan continues to provide access to the market in China mainland for US firms. Taiwan’s story is unique, but its attention to long-term policies is a valuable lesson for other countries.

CHINA (PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF)

Since the introduction of the open-door policy in the late 1970s, the Chinese government has allowed students and scholars to study overseas in the hope that they would return to help modernize the country. As the government reports, no more than 25 per cent of the more than 700,000 overseas Chinese students returned in the period 1978–2003.¹⁹ The seriousness of this became quite evident, but instead of trying to stem the outflow, Chinese officials began to foster the return of “overseas talent”.

Cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and other coastal cities have become popular destinations for highly educated returnees, and local administrations are actively trying to attract them. In 1999, for example, the Beijing municipal government issued a provisional regulation to encourage overseas Chinese students and scholars to return to work there. Returnees were entitled to a number of benefits: simplified application and registration procedures for setting up a business; waiver of business taxes in high-tech areas; eligibility to apply for special research funding and low-interest loans to establish private businesses; eligibility to import tax-free equipment, materials and other goods for

19. See the Textbox 6.3 “Migration in the People’s Republic of China”.

research/business, and eligibility to import some durable personal items tax-free.

While many returnees have not taken advantage of the policies introduced to attract them, their return has been encouraged by the positive gestures of the Chinese government (Luo, Huang and Guo, 2003). Taking their cue from other countries, the government also created science and technology parks in Chinese cities and Special Economic Zones, many of which have become points of attraction for Chinese returnees. Returnees have also been placed in key positions in universities or research institutes and many play an important role as advisers to decision makers and policy design.

Returnees from overseas have evolved into a special category in Chinese society. This seems inevitable and is probably the only way that significant numbers can be encouraged to return home. (Luo, Huang and Guo, 2003). While not rich in financial terms, many returnees are “rich” in terms of resource channels and opportunities, and those employed by foreign enterprises or have their own business also enjoy a much higher income. Financial assistance and subsidies from employers or government programmes are much more generous than the income of their domestic counterparts. Many are granted special conditions even before signing their employment contracts, such as paid overseas visits/holidays and opportunities to attend overseas conferences. All this can create tensions between returnees and their local counterparts.²⁰ Many of the *émigrés* who have returned and played a major role in China’s development have been those already long settled abroad who wanted to return to their roots.

Joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) is expected to improve China’s economic and social environment further, and to attract more *émigrés* home to take advantage of the opportunities. Those

who decide not to return frequently cite a lack of freedom and other non-economic factors as the reason for their decision. But there are also recent reports about increasingly gloomy prospects for returnees with high salary expectations after working abroad (*China Daily*, 25 June, 2004). With the economic slowdown as of mid-2004, the government will need to watch its effects on circular migration.

VIETNAM

Vietnam has a similar history to China of strict state control, but in Vietnam this lasted into the 1990s. Refugees who fled after 1975 provide a reservoir of people overseas, and some of these are returning to establish businesses or set up NGOs. Vietnam predicts that emigration will increase as its economy develops. It welcomes this trend, and in 2000 the government allocated the equivalent of USD 7 million to send students abroad. Many international organizations, universities and enterprises assist their young cadres financially to study abroad. However, a recent study shows that returnees find it difficult to adjust on their return (Dang, 2003).

Vietnam imposes an obligation on individuals whose period abroad was funded by the state or their organizations, to return to their former employers. Many work in universities, research institutions, state-owned enterprises and managerial posts. Some move from state agencies to non-governmental and international organizations in search of higher salaries, more challenging work and better working conditions.

Skilled returnees, especially scientific researchers, tend to bring back a strong sense of responsibility, a good command of foreign languages and new skills. But low salaries,²¹ a certain resentment towards them and low access to decision-making in the workplace, tend to limit opportunities for promotion, dampen

20. The popular nickname for overseas returnees, “sea turtles”, reflects some resistance from the locally educated people who, on the other hand, are called “land tortoises”. In public debates and the media, the terms “sea turtles” and “land tortoises” are frequently used to distinguish the place where a person received his/her formal education. This, in turn, is seen as determining their views on certain issues.

21. Salary scales are generally based on seniority and managerial posts rather than skills and expertise.

any creative spirit among returnees, and generally waste their expert resources (Dang, 2003)

Vietnam's dire need for qualified scientists calls for special policies and preferential treatment to attract people back (Dang, 2003). Improved conditions will also encourage people to stay and work more effectively. In particular, women returnees face more hurdles than men in readjusting to the Vietnamese work place. Overseas Vietnamese also need to be attracted in greater numbers. Regulations and permits need to be changed to provide returning expatriates equal access and treatment to locals when opening a business. The government may also need to address the potential regional inequalities that occur if more returnees prefer to settle in the south than in the north of the country.

BANGLADESH

The situation in Bangladesh is so serious that some observers feel it is almost superfluous to analyse the benefits of emigration or of return migration.²²

Many returnees to Bangladesh are active in the NGO sector, and most of the well known and large indigenous NGOs were founded by them in the 1970s, some directly contributing to the economic development of their home countries. Some notable returnees include Professor Mohammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank, and Dr. Zafrullah Chowdhury, founder of the People's Health Centre. Others have joined university or research centres, where they bring new perspectives and attitudes to their work and their students.

The major issue of concern regarding Bangladesh is how to discourage emigration and encourage return migration. There is a desperate urge to emigrate and no incentive to return on the part of most middle class *émigrés*. The only way to begin addressing this

problem is to tackle the root causes of emigration. However, there is no real plan or programme in Bangladesh, such as, for instance, the Return and Reintegration of Qualified Nationals Programme by IOM in the 1970s (Rozario and Gow, 2003).

Bangladesh is not gaining from the emigration of students and skilled personnel at this stage, and it will take a massive effort to turn this situation around. Women face more hurdles on their return than men, not just in their work, but in society generally. How they cope with this depends on many factors, but major changes to living arrangements often ensue, and female returnees become very active in civil society and in the efforts to change practices that discriminate against them. Experts have recommended some policy changes to foster targeted return programmes, high quality training institutes, incentive payments, more effective civil society operations, the engagement of international organizations, compensation or aid from countries that benefit from skilled Bangladeshi immigrants and attention to the specific needs of female returnees (Rozario and Gow, 2003). It is clear from this list that major reforms are needed, not just in relation to employment opportunities.

INDIA

India is seen as a modern success story in terms of the gains it has made from skilled emigration. From the 1980s, India targeted the IT sector as a priority in its larger development agenda, and the export of software has become the fastest-growing sector in the Indian economy. IT exports rose from USD 150 million in 1990 to USD 4 billion in 2000 (World Bank, 2004).²³ India encourages its students to go abroad to complete high-tech degrees, especially in the US, from where they bring home money, new knowledge and, above all, an "entrepreneurial bug" (Gardner, 2000). Students and researchers seek out prestigious

22. Santi Rozario, a Bangladeshi living in Australia, writes that the "general social and political malaise makes people self-centred and relatively unconcerned with the welfare of the society at large, with no interest in the wider agenda or the future of the country" (Rozario and Gow, 2003).

23. A significant portion of India's IT exports involves Indian workers employed on short-term contracts with foreign firms, by means of a process known as "body shopping" in the US, Singapore, Canada, Australia, Japan and elsewhere. To these temporary workers must be added those who make the transition from a student visa to an H-1B visa or to a green card (permanent residence). This constitutes a significant number, especially among postgraduate students.

institutions in the US and UK in order to join their elite networks (Mahroum, 2002).

Many skilled non-resident Indians (NRIs) who work or have business interests in India, do not return home permanently, partly because of differences in the standards of living, partly because of some frustrations of doing business in India. Returning Indians often experience feelings of resentment towards them – resentment related to India's long-standing hostility to foreign corporations. This makes NRIs want to “circulate” rather than return, unlike migrants from Taiwan who have increasingly returned home to start businesses or to work in established companies. Indian workers in the IT industry often serve as intermediaries, especially in the US, for the outsourcing of work to India.²⁴ Whether they send home remittances or not depends on whether entire families have moved with the principal workers. If they moved together, the flow of remittances tends to dry up (Khadria, 2002).

India is now actively seeking skilled labour markets for its IT workers, nurses, doctors and financial personnel. The “globalization of Indian talent and skills” is being hailed as a huge benefit for the country (Khadria, 2002). After the IT bust in the US, European Union countries were viewed as more sustainable destinations, and East/Southeast Asia also became a major destination.

Skilled workers typically come from upper-caste and upper-class families, and they benefit considerably from India's education system. Besides the economic returns mentioned above, NRIs also put their resources (money and time) into establishing organizations and networks that benefit other Indians,²⁵ particularly in the IT sector. But the extent

to which all this helps to alleviate the high illiteracy (52%) and poverty rates (40%) in India still needs to be more closely examined.

The lack of a trickle-down effect from the IT sector to other parts of the Indian economy has caused experts to call for a major paradigm shift (Khadria, 1999). This entails replacing existing expectations about the exogenous return of resources (remittances, technology, return migration) with a new focus on enhanced productivity of the resident work force. NRIs' money, materials, skills and vision should be channelled into the health and education sectors, rather than into business and industry, work and living infrastructure or other multifarious development targets (Khadria, 1999). The World Development Report of 1996 supported the call for strategies and institutions to achieve this.²⁶

In this way, the resources of NRIs “would help to restore the human capital taken away from the system and may some day even produce a break to the first generation negative effects of the brain drain” (Khadria, 2001). This long-term, societal and economy-wide outlook is quite different from the narrow focus on encouraging returnees to invest in businesses. The role of networks and associations of NRIs takes on a new dimension in terms of the contributions they could make to basic education and health services.

THE PHILIPPINES²⁷

The government of the Philippines feels that the country has suffered from the negative consequences of “brain drain” for decades, a concern underscored when, in the 1990s, the “number of professional workers who went abroad exceeded the net additions

24. *The availability of skilled labour at home makes it feasible for NRIs to consider outsourcing from their own firms in the US, or setting up subsidiaries of American companies or their own companies in India. They act as “cultural interpreters”, best able to negotiate the complex bureaucracy and infrastructure deficits of the home country (Saxenian, 2001).*

25. *One such organization, The Indus Entrepreneurs (TIE) founded in 1992 in Silicon Valley, organizes conferences, meetings and other sessions for NRIs in the US and for regional branches in Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Mumbai. The plan by TIE to contribute USD 1 billion to Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) was based on IITs becoming less “ beholden to national caste-based affirmative action policies” (Chakravartty, 2001).*

26. *“In the end what matters is people ... Labour productivity, critical for economic growth, depends on workers' knowledge, skills, motivation, and health ... A well educated, healthy workforce is essential for economic growth” (World Bank, 1996).*

27. *For more details on the Philippines, see the chapter “Filipinos Working Overseas: Opportunity and Challenge”*

to the professionals in the workforce” (Alburo and Abella, 2002). Many of those who emigrated, either temporarily or permanently, were already in the labour force and were therefore experienced workers. Many did not go to skilled jobs abroad, but to jobs as domestics, nurses, construction and manufacturing workers, and entertainers. Their actual professional skills were either not, or not fully utilized offshore.

The Philippines is now in a similar category with India as the country actively seeks skilled overseas labour markets. This has been called a “brain response”, or the alignment of labour deployments with global needs and increased training, often in private colleges, targeting specific overseas labour markets (ibid). This deployment has mainly been in engineering, nursing and, increasingly, the computer/ICT area (60% of physicians and 30-50% of IT professionals go abroad).²⁸

The implications of these trends for the domestic labour market are significant. By 1989, 11 per cent of Filipino hospital and public health positions were vacant. As many nurses left to work overseas, more nursing colleges continued to open in response to public and political pressure. But the conditions and standards were poor, many trained nurses, medical staff and deans had left and students graduated with little clinical exposure or experience (Ortin, 1994). By 2002, the National Health Scheme in the UK employed 30,000 nurses of foreign origin, including about one-quarter (7,235) from the Philippines, and the target is to recruit another 25,000 (approximately) from overseas by 2008 (OECD, 2004). The US, Canada, Australia, Japan, South Korea and others, are all looking for nurses and, as a result, some doctors in the Philippines who trained first as nurses before going on to earn their medical degree, are brushing up on their nursing skills and applying for overseas nursing positions.

Some commentators believe the situation continues to have serious consequences for the economy and that

continued brain drain carries heavy social costs for the country (Alburo and Abella, 2002).²⁹ This is in spite of the money sent back to the Philippines as remittances each year. In 2003, the total amount of remittances received was USD 7.6 billion; this represented 16 per cent of the country’s total current receipts and 10 per cent of GDP, and a rise of 6.3 per cent over 2002, even though the number of new expatriate workers declined. The amount of remittances sent by professional and technical workers, who made up 32.7 per cent of new expatriate worker intake in 2003, is not known, as separate data are not available by occupational level. Other potential gains, such as additional savings and investment, the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises and gains in human capital, are also not known. What is known is that the appropriate reintegration of skilled return migrants is limited, and many people subsequently remigrate.

The Philippines has long argued for compensation from destination countries for the skills that the latter gain from its workers. But destination countries are unwilling to cooperate, even in terms of increased aid for education and training for the source country, and this is no longer seen as a viable option. Instead, outsourcing the development of regional labour markets and enhancing management of remittances may help to mitigate some of the negative effects (ibid).

FIJI

Skilled emigration from small (island) states of Oceania, such as Fiji, is not perceived as positive, and is rather regarded as detrimental to sustainable development in the long term. Fiji loses more through the outflow of its human capital than it gains through remittances. The outflow of scarce human capital impacts on development as human resources are very limited, and demand exceeds supply (Reddy, Mohanty and Naidu, 2002). The gaps created by skilled emigrants have often been filled by less well trained

28. See also the chapter “Filipinos Working Overseas: Opportunity and Challenge”.

29. Despite the fact that tertiary education in the Philippines is mostly private sector driven and therefore privatized, since elementary and secondary education are predominantly publicly funded, the number of professionals among temporary migrants has increased rather than diminished the problem of the brain drain.

people, and the impact on motivation and the quality of future human resources cannot be ignored. Skilled outflows have been heavily skewed in favour of Indo-Fijians (89%), following Indo-Fijian ethnic tensions since 1987. Professional, technical and related workers – teachers, architects, engineers and health workers – accounted for at least 15 per cent of emigrants over this period. Where such occupations are already in short supply, or where particular ethnic groups rely on professionals of their own ethnicity, this has had serious consequences.

A unique attempt has been made to quantify the economic cost of emigration for Fiji, based on all persons emigrating (5,510 per year on average) between 1987–2001 (Reddy et al., 2002). Although a more refined analysis of only skilled emigrants would have been preferable for the purposes of this chapter, it is, nevertheless, a good starting point for further analysis. The study calculated the costs of human capital in terms of:

- public education and training expenses for the migrants;³⁰
- financial capital that left with the migrants;³¹
- recruitment of expatriate professionals with high wages and all other cumulative direct and indirect costs, and,
- income foregone through migration.³²

The total loss from migration to Fiji in the short term is estimated at F\$44.5m (equivalent to 4.7% of total government revenue) every year. The loss in output is some F\$60.3 million per year (ibid).

The consequences of skilled emigration on civil society, the private and the public sector are estimated to be major (ibid). In particular, the quality of health care is deteriorating as patient/health worker ratios increase, and the migration of teachers, nurses and

engineers has severely affected educational standards, health services and public utilities. The loss of health professionals has been raised as a matter of grave concern by the World Health Organization (WHO). Its Western Pacific Regional Office recently commissioned a study into this topic (Connell, 2001), which concluded that migration was not an “overspill” but a definite loss to the country, and the negative outcomes are both financial (loss of training costs) and social. In medical terms, the shortage or complete absence of doctors in some regions or areas of specialization will jeopardize progress towards healthy communities, possibly leading to a reversal of recent gains, especially as degenerative diseases become more prevalent. The situation is analogous to that in Africa, where the effects of the “brain drain” have been a major factor in contributing to a health workforce crisis (WHO, 2002).

GENDER IMPLICATIONS

THE GENDER dimension requires special attention in any discussion of benefits and costs of skilled migration. In Asia and elsewhere little data or information are available on gender divisions of skilled and professional labour. Nevertheless, it is clear that women feature in skilled migration streams only when selective administrative policies are developed for their preferred occupations, e.g. the previous H-1A visa system of the US to recruit nurses and caregivers, and recent policy changes in Japan to attract nurses. Also, because women move more often as dependants, rather than as principal applicants, their skills may not be counted and they may not gain access to settlement services. When women arrive at their destination, they often face more additional accreditation and employment hurdles than men, but these are rarely documented (Iredale, 2004). In relation to qualifications and skills recognition, it has

30. Calculated from: a) annual average national per capita expenditure (F\$388.33) on health and education and, b) an assumption that scholarships were awarded to half (264) of the 528 professionals on average who left each year.

31. Particularly the capital and productive assets lost through business migration, an average of F\$40m from 1994–2001 (figures obtained from the Reserve Bank of Fiji, quoted in Reddy et al., 2002, p. 56).

32. Calculated from the discounted value of the output foregone over the period in which the worker is not replaced.

been shown that skilled women frequently sacrifice their own career for the sake of their family, or they may be disadvantaged in the recognition process due to gender bias.

In Australia in 1994, it was found that selection for immigration under the skills category was based on an interpretation of skills potentially disadvantageous to women, and that the definitions of skills needed to be re-examined to include those that more often characterize women (Fincher et al., 1994). Women were less likely to be selected in skilled migration categories in the early 1990s.³³ Major official reports on migration (including the longitudinal survey sample data) do not always include comprehensive data for eligibility categories by sex.

In the US, in fiscal year 2002, males accounted for 53.3 per cent of total non-immigrant admissions but for over 85 per cent of intra-company transferees, nearly 76 per cent of visitors for business and 75 per cent of temporary workers and trainees (USCIS, 2003).

Canada's gender-based analysis of immigration policy is a good example of how selection criteria can be actively adjusted to ensure a more equitable skills intake (Kofman, 2003; Tolley, 2003). Before 2002, the designation of (mostly) men as principal applicants relegated women to the status of dependants and devalued their occupations and qualifications. With the increase in points threshold in 2002, the following gender-related adjustments were made:³⁴ restrict the number of years of experience to a maximum of four years, to reflect women's greater likelihood of interrupted careers, and include spouses/common-law partners' education. Thus, while in 2001 fewer than one in four (24.53%) skilled workers were female, by 2002, women accounted for 34 per cent of the foreign

worker intake.³⁵ There is now also a greater emphasis on education than on paid work experience, likely to be advantageous to women (Tolley, 2003), and the lack of points for specific occupations should also help make women's entry as skilled workers more equitable.³⁶

At the other end of the migration spectrum, if and when skilled women return home, they often face a range of problems associated with tensions and a disjuncture between their own aspirations as highly skilled and educated returnees seeking to participate in nation-building and socio-economic transformation in their country, and local gendered expectations and gendered modes of discrimination that inhibit the realization of those aspirations (Rozario and Gow, 2003). Further research is needed into how women construct or reconstruct their gender identity in the country to which they migrate, and how they renegotiate this when they return home. Current tensions are sometimes causing women to remigrate or make an inappropriate adjustment to the labour market. In this way, human resources are lost, regardless of the outcome.

Kofman wrote in 2003 "women and men circulate differently in the global economy. At the skilled end, men overwhelmingly form the mass of those moving within transnational corporations and in the information technology and scientific sectors (HRST), upon which the notion of the highly skilled has been constructed (OECD 2002), and for whom movement was facilitated until the IT bubble burst. Women, in contrast, have tended to go into what can be broadly classified as the welfare professions (education, health, social work) which have been largely closed (with the partial exception of the UK) to migrant labour" (Kofman, 2003).

33. In 2000-2001, the proportions of males among first-arrival primary applicants in the Points-based visa categories Business (long stay) and Business (short stay) were 77.2 per cent and 73.2 per cent respectively, and the proportion of males among independent executive primary applicant first arrivals was 80.2 per cent in 2000-01 (Khoo et al., 2003).

34. Based on the gender-based analysis of Bill C-11, which preceded the IRPA, 2002.

35. However, there is no breakdown of skill levels by sex among foreign worker arrivals, and so it is not possible to see if there were equivalent skill profiles between men and women.

36. In 2001, only 24.53 per cent of principal skilled worker applicants were female (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2002), and a slightly lower percentage of these had university degrees (77.62%) compared to men (83.2%), but female dependants of skilled workers were more educated (51.63%) than men (41.81%) (Kofman, 2003).

The skills and knowledge of skilled women are just as valuable as those of men, but women have been underemployed and often exploited in many economies. While there are some data available on the remittance amounts attributable to women, these do not represent their real contribution, only their actual one. Their skills have been wasted, as they have mostly been hired in the “3D” jobs, or other female dominated occupations, such as nannies, entertainers and caregivers. Further research is needed to measure the extent of their wasted skills and assess the loss to sending countries in terms of unused training costs and the wages lost in receiving countries through undervaluing of workers and lower productivity.

An analysis of the different approaches to migrant selection, and the rare gender-based analyses of immigration policies, suggest that the inclusion of specific occupations or the emphasis on recent work experience in selection points schemes are likely to disadvantage women. It may still be too early to fully evaluate the impact of new immigration policies, such as those in Canada, on the presence of skilled female migrants in labour migration. But there is some evidence of an improvement in the gender balance in the temporary foreign worker intake in Canada, e.g. in 2002 over 2001. This may, however, only be in the caring occupations. In general, the collapse of the IT boom, combined with increasing global shortages in services such as education and health, should have a positive impact on the gender balance of skilled migratory flows.

GATS AND TRADE IN SERVICES³⁷

WHILE many people trumpet the gains to be made from expanding trade in services under the WTO’s GATS Mode 4, the World Bank cautions that trade and flows of skilled labour can only be “complementary” to such expansion of trade. Under these circumstances, “measures to increase the mobility of skilled workers can reinforce the initial comparative

advantage of the trading countries, so that skill-abundant countries become even more skill-abundant, while labour-abundant countries become even more (low-skill) labour-abundant. Trade expansion, combined with the unrestricted mobility of skilled workers, could conceivably put the accumulation of human capital beyond the reach of many developing countries” (World Bank, 2003). Some experts disagree with this and argue that skilled emigration improves the welfare of those left behind (Stark and Wang, 2001; Stark, 2004).

The World Bank’s caution is important, because the apparent temporary nature of movements under GATS Mode 4 is touted as offering protection against losses. If temporary workers remit earnings and then return with enhanced human capital, this should be advantageous for countries of origin. But the key to achieving this are “changes in the trade and immigration policies of receiving countries and stepped-up efforts by sending countries to increase *return migration* of skilled workers while enhancing temporary movement of lower-skilled workers in developed country markets” (World Bank, 2003). The problem with the first part of this statement is:

- the lack of will on the part of destination countries, as pointed out in this chapter, and
- difficulties in fully integrating returnees.

There is still great resistance by developed countries to opening their labour markets under GATS Mode 4 to less skilled workers from developing countries. This renders GATS a blunt instrument for the aspirations of many labour-sending countries.

37. See also the Textbox 9.1 “Trade and Migration – GATS Mode 4”.

CONCLUSION

THIS CHAPTER has illustrated how in the Asia-Pacific countries/regions studied, skilled migration can bring vastly different benefits and costs to source and receiving countries, as well as the migrants, depending on a range of complex, often country-specific conditions. Skilled migration is occurring on a large scale, often through globalized recruitment by the private sector, via Internet, or through student schemes. Labour markets are changing, and government policies in developed countries are adjusting accordingly, both to maximize the benefits of migrant labour and strengthen the self-sufficiency of domestic labour forces through training and development schemes.

But developing countries with labour surpluses often do not keep pace with this – and cannot complete their own transition through the “stages” identified above from simple emigration through to diversified circular migration, to fully benefit from their diaspora communities. Many Asia-Pacific countries/regions are stalled at stages 1 or 2 and experience serious losses from skilled emigration. While the long-term detrimental effects of this are more likely in countries where conditions exacerbate the basic problems that led to the emigration in the first place (Lowell and Findlay, 2001), many new countries are being added to the list of skills exporters, and the potential gains of skilled emigration cannot be guaranteed.

The case studies show that national policies need to be comprehensive if they are to address the issue to everybody’s benefit; but, given the relative absence of these, there is also a need for global action. There are clearly country-specific reasons for emigration, and each source country/region must design development and other policies to address its specific economic, political, social and environmental conditions to make skilled emigration gainful for all. The strategic support of receiving countries and the international

community can spread those gains across the global supply and demand spectrum.

Obvious policy options for source countries/regions include the “Six Rs”: *returns*; *restricting* emigration; *recruiting* replacements; *reparation* for the loss of human capital; *resourcing* diasporas, and *retention* through education policies and economic development (ibid). While some of these are not viable at all, others are not viable for particular places. The Taiwanese experience in the region shows how, over many decades the careful planning of circular migration management, in close cooperation with the receiving country (US), can bring rewards for the migrants and their places of origin. It also shows that once there is something to which to return, rates of return increase. Others like China mainland reap benefits from the positive actions taken by the government to “re-circulate” skilled *émigrés*. For the less economically advantaged countries, more global support is needed.

Developed countries must find creative ways to support the development or replenishment of human capital in developing countries with severe skills losses, even while they are restructuring and retooling for longer-term self-sustainability of their own domestic labour markets. But most of the countries studied – at both ends of the skilled migration spectrum – are not taking these actions in a concerted way. Receiving countries accept no obligation to pay for their newly acquired human capital, and the implications of their policies for source countries receive little attention. Global policies could take account of the impacts on poor countries unable to achieve significant gains in terms of remittances, outsourcing, investments or returnees.

Since compensation has never been a viable option (Bhagwati and Humada, 1974), and increased aid packages to the source countries of many skilled migrants have not been forthcoming, attention is turning more to the possibility of “ethical migration” policies and programmes. Some specific national and

international initiatives are being taken to protect certain professional sectors, like health in developing countries.³⁸ The UK has issued a Code of Practice for NHS Employers Involved in International Recruitment of Healthcare Professionals and several other organizations are drawing up their own codes of practice, including the Commonwealth Council of Health Ministers. The OECD calls for such codes to be global in perspective, but also predicts limited results for a range of reasons.³⁹ It recommends that such codes of practice be accompanied by increased development aid earmarked for human resources development in the health sectors of developing countries.

In the meantime, and considering the longer-term structural domestic reforms being considered by destination countries, developing countries suffering from “brain drain” must find ways of keeping their own people at home, encouraging more returnees and tapping their diasporas. In relation to the former, proposals have been made for country-specific training programmes that make people less internationally mobile, as well as for bonding and taxing schemes. Bonding arrangements that tie training to a longer period of service, or exchange programmes that enable overseas travel/work as a reward for domestic service could be examined. But other solutions that are not detrimental to human resource development are needed. Policies to encourage permanent or temporary return have been canvassed above. In a globalized environment, destination countries and the international community can only benefit from ensuring migration governance strength at source.

For example, the Committee on Science and Technology in Developing Countries (COSTED, 2001)⁴⁰

has proposed the establishment of an Intellectual Resources Management Fund (IRMF) to address two issues in developing countries: losses from “brain drain” and improving the standards of science and technology professionals. The concept is that monies collected from receiving countries benefiting from skilled immigration could be used towards additional training, exchanges and collaboration, and better working conditions in the developing world. The idea was not taken up in 2001, but could now be revived, as time is short for some countries. Unless this kind of global cooperation increases, the future is uncertain for those countries losing out on the international mobility of their highly skilled.

38. For example, WHO in 2002 called for a Commonwealth Code of Practice for International Recruitment of Health Workers to overcome the crisis in Africa due to skill shortages. The OECD's Trends in International Migration 2003 (2004) addresses the international mobility of health professionals and points to the case of South Africa, which has lost around USD1 billion in public costs of training health professionals now working overseas. There are now major shortages in that sector, due to emigration, poor working conditions and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. To keep scarce human resources at home, South Africa has, since 1995, banned the recruitment of any physicians or nurses from SADC countries, except under specific bilateral agreements (OECD, 2004). Since 2001, this also extends to G77 and Commonwealth countries.

39. As “soft law”, none of the codes are binding; they rule out recruitment campaigns, although recruitment still occurs over the Internet or in some other way; their scope is limited to certain countries; and surpluses will eventually run out in countries from which it is deemed “ethical” to recruit (OECD, 2004).

40. COSTED was part of the UN's International Council for Science until 2002.

CHAPTER 12

FILIPINOS WORKING OVERSEAS: OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGE¹

BACKGROUND²

ANY PHENOMENON that affects millions of people will have its share of opportunities and challenges, and overseas employment is no different. The Philippines is one of the major labour exporting countries in the world, with some seven million Filipinos, or almost nine per cent of the population, living outside the country, more than half of them on temporary contracts.³ The rest have settled permanently, either as residents or as citizens of a country where they were not born.

Overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) are hailed as heroes, because they work hard, often under conditions that are difficult and significantly different in terms of culture and work practices they knew back home. At the same time, they risk separation and alienation from their families, a condition that goes against the grain of traditional Filipino values. It is considered a necessary sacrifice to provide a better future for the family.

For the most part, therefore, the push for contract migration is economic. While wages in the Philippines are generally higher than in comparable countries in

the Asian region, the skills, training and education of Filipinos command a premium in the more developed economies, where there are skill shortages.⁴ The prospect of better wages, the generally mobile character of Filipinos, as conditioned by the archipelagic character of the country and the desire for adventure and new experience, are the triggers for the decision to migrate, particularly for work of a temporary nature.

Overseas employment is driven by two essential forces: the demand for particular skills in one country, and the availability of skilled manpower in another. It may not be tied to surplus or shortages, but to requirements engendered by a specific national situation. Examples include countries emerging from conflict situations; or with educational systems that do not equip them for faster integration into the global market. Whichever condition prevails, the fact is that both for sending and receiving countries this movement of contract labour can bring mutual benefits. The receiving country gains skills for which it did not invest in terms of infrastructure and human resource development, and it enables the sending country to alleviate its unemployment levels. But, migration is not a neutral phenomenon, and it exacts a social and economic cost.

1. This chapter was written by Dr Patricia A. Santo Tomas, former Secretary of Labor, Philippines, and currently Commissioner on the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM). The information derives from the Department of Labor and Employment.

2. For the purpose of this chapter, note the following Asian geographic designations: China (which includes China mainland, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China -- hereafter referred to as Hong Kong, Macao Special Administrative Region of China -- hereafter Macao, and Taiwan Province of China -- hereafter Taiwan), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (hereafter North Korea), and the Republic of Korea (hereafter South Korea).

3. About 80 per cent of the estimated 44,000 Filipino workers emigrating each year are land-based, and the remaining 20 per cent are seamen, constituting almost one quarter of the world's seamen on commercial vessels. Compare the Philippines population of 81 million in 2003. Destinations include Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong SAR of China, Japan, UAE, US, Canada, Taiwan Province of China, Kuwait, Singapore, Australia, Italy and others. Some 25-30 per cent of overseas workers are female domestic helpers, maids, amahs, nannies or caregivers.

4. There were some 2.6 million students enrolled in higher education in 2000.

For the Philippines, the costs are in terms of family separation, which affects the very fabric of Philippine society, founded as it is on close family ties and an extended system of support and protection. This can engender cultural dysfunction that comes with assimilating into a radically different environment – extreme weather conditions, different religions, different legal systems and, in some cases, the absence of international standards or protocols on the rights of expatriate workers. There is also the risk of exploitation, an issue that shapes transnational policy and programme responses.

Given the large numbers and the spatial spread of Filipinos abroad, contract migration is an issue closely wired to the national nervous system. Any unnatural occurrence overseas – a suicide bombing in Israel, the sinking of a ship, internal strife, a train accident – alerts the national community to possible injury or death of one of its own. Such an incident often sparks a debate about whether overseas employment is good, bad or just plain ugly.

This chapter looks at the “investments” by the Philippines government in closely regulating its overseas foreign worker programme, and explores the benefits gained from this approach – for the migrants, the sending and receiving countries, and Philippine society. It draws some useful lessons for other countries embarking on this form of mutually beneficial migration management.

THE BENEFITS

CATCHBASIN FOR DOMESTIC UNEMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMY BOOSTER

The Philippines has one of the highest birth rates in the Asian region (2.34 per cent as of mid-2004). Consequently, its labour force is relatively young. A well developed education system also ensures a high

percentage of graduates, who contribute annually to the country’s surplus of educated unemployed. While job creation has levelled off at an average 1 million jobs per annum for the last three years, the net annual addition to the labour force has continued at 1.4 million. Unemployment has therefore remained at 11 per cent. It is clear that overseas employment has mitigated the lack of jobs locally. Ninety-five per cent of those who leave for overseas jobs have been employed in the Philippines prior to departure and, on average, have 3-5 years of local working experience. Their sally into the international job market therefore creates opportunities for new entrants, who can fill the jobs that the OFWs leave behind.

The dollar remittances of OFWs also help keep the economy afloat. Remittances, as a percentage of GNP, have grown from 2.7 per cent in 1990 to 10.2 per cent in 2003.⁵ During the negative GDP growth years of 1991 and 1998, the GNP managed a small positive growth, primarily due to the dollar inflows from overseas workers. These remittances translate into money for building houses, educating children and general consumer spending. Data show that at least six per cent of Filipino families receive income from abroad, and that six out of ten of these families are located in urban areas and are relatively better off than their counterparts, who make a living from local resources.

THE GOOD LIFE

At the micro level, the favourable effects of remittances on an overseas worker’s family income and savings are enormous. The remittances are acknowledged to have made it possible to send children or siblings to reputable schools, pay for relatives’ medical needs, build decent houses, and to have helped with the acquisition of appliances and other amenities. OFWs and their families are looked upon as the emerging middle class, and have been accorded respect and awe by the local community. They are invited to participate in civic and church

5. Remittances from OFWs averaged USD575 million a month in 2003, a total of USD7.5 billion for the year. They account for ca. 10 per cent of the Philippines’ USD80 billion GDP. The remittances came mainly from the US, Saudi Arabia, Japan, UK, Hong Kong, Singapore and UAE.

functions and are often courted by local politicians, or actually become local politicians themselves. They have become the new “influentials” in Philippine society.

SKILLS AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Overseas employment also facilitates skills and technology transfers to the country through the

migrant workers’ exposure to superior forms of work organization and state-of-the-art technology in the more industrialized host countries. Upon their return, they use their expertise to orient and train other local workers in these technologies. For some, these new skills or acquired technology provide the basis for entrepreneurial ventures, funded with the savings from their overseas employment.

TEXTBOX 12.1

RETURNING HOME

Edgar Cortes worked as a casting operator overseas for 14 years before returning to the Philippines. He set up the Pioneer Aluminium Industries by using his savings to buy machines and tools necessary for metal fabrication. He then borrowed 100,000 pesos from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) and proceeded to manufacture aluminium side wheels for tricycles. Today, his shop is located in one of Manila’s most depressed areas and employs four people.

Sotero Owen was a welder in Saudi Arabia until a 20 per cent cut in salary made him decide to return home. With his wife, he set up a loom weaving operation in Baguio City with the support of loans from OWWA. With income from his business, he has been able to see his children and two nephews and nieces through college. He was also able to build his house and buy a five-hectare property, on which he has started to farm.

Source: Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) files.

THE COSTS

BRAIN DRAIN AND DE-SKILLING

The exodus of skilled and semi-skilled Filipino workers has caused some measure of brain drain for the Philippines. It has removed the talents of many highly skilled professionals, who may have been useful in the Philippines, but have chosen to work in other countries. This may include teachers, doctors, scientists and highly trained technicians. Some professionals have even “moved down” to take on jobs for which they are overqualified, like licensed doctors who attend nursing schools to gain an overseas job as a nurse. These professionals may receive higher

compensation elsewhere, but the cost of training them plus the need for their services locally represent an underutilization of skills and eventual de-skilling and investment loss to the country.

THE RISKS OF THE JOB

Regardless of the economic rewards of overseas employment at the macro and micro levels, empirical studies have also shown that there are risks, costs and problems that accompany working and living in a foreign environment. The most common problems encountered by OFWs are violations of their basic rights, such as:

- lack of redress of legitimate grievances;
- discrimination at various stages of the migration process;

- fraud and deception at the recruitment stage;
- non-enforcement of contracts at the job-site;
- difficulty in adjusting to a foreign culture (e.g. language, value systems and local ethos);
- poor working conditions;
- inadequate support services at the worksite.

In addition, overseas workers often suffer suspicion and hostility on the part of their host communities, loneliness and anxiety over the families back home; and a cold reception from family members, who have been estranged from them over long periods, when they return. Those in risky occupations, like entertainers and domestic helpers, frequently also experience physical and/or sexual abuse and serious attacks on their reputation, self-esteem and morale. This is especially true in the case of undocumented or otherwise illegal workers.

The families who are left behind also have their share of suffering, not just because of anxiety over loved ones abroad, but also in terms of family displacements and juvenile delinquency. Studies and reports from welfare cases handled by the government and NGOs directly link these social problems to the long separation between spouses and from children.⁶ The absence of authority figures in the home can force children into decisions that, with proper guidance, they may not normally make. Similarly, separated spouses form other relationships that may eventually break up homes and families.

The safety and welfare of its OFWs are a primary concern to the government, both as a practical and a political necessity. Since overseas workers today have absentee voting rights, they have become an important political force, possibly with as much influence and voice as the church, media, political parties and civil society.

CREATING THE APPROPRIATE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

WHEN overseas employment was introduced as a measure to ease domestic unemployment in the 1970s,⁷ the Philippine government created agencies specifically to cater to the needs of overseas workers – the Overseas Employment Development Board (OEDB), the National Seamen’s Board (NSB), and the Bureau of Employment Services (BES). In 1982, all three agencies were merged, eventually to give rise to the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA).

Believing that a good welfare and protection programme benefits the worker as well as the receiving country, the Philippine government has crafted a programme that looks at the employment process from beginning to end, from application for an overseas job to a worker’s reintegration upon return.

RECRUITMENT AND PRE-DEPARTURE STAGE

Initially, the government sought to regulate the market by acting as the sending agency for all departing workers. It decided to downscale its placement function in 1982, realizing that market demand was so significant that intermediation would be more efficient. The government currently operates a licensing system for recruitment agencies deploying land-based workers and for manning agencies that place Filipino seafarers on ocean-going vessels.⁸ Foreign employers undergo accreditation, where the Filipino labour attaché onsite verifies the existence of the principal/project and its manpower requirement. Employers who are documented as having violated the contracts of their workers, or abused or exploited

6. This is especially problematic given the fact that women constitute the majority of migrants (60%), working as domestic helpers, caregivers and nurses, many of them on five-year contracts.

7. The Labor Code of 1974 was introduced as the basis for regulating the recruitment of Filipinos abroad. It established minimum standards for their work contracts and a system to verify the contracts.

8. There are almost 1,200 licensed recruitment agencies in the industry; they must be 70 per cent Filipino-owned.

their workers, are suspended or eventually blacklisted, barring them from hiring Filipino workers.

POEA also regulates the placement fees charged by recruitment agencies to the workers, which have been maintained at one month's salary for every employment contract. Violation of this rule is a ground for cancellation of the recruiter's licence. POEA also holds the recruitment agency and foreign employer jointly liable for claims by OFWs, to ensure that recruitment agencies choose their principals well. Given the differences in legal systems between sending and receiving countries, this provision also enables redress of legitimate grievances in the Philippines, where the contract was signed.

All private entities wishing to engage in international manpower supply are required to place 1 million pesos in an escrow account to address workers' claims, and as a reserve fund for penalties against recruitment violations. They must maintain a minimum capitalization of 2 million pesos. Advertising for jobs, even for purposes of manpower pooling, has to be approved by the POEA to ensure that there are, in fact, job orders that need to be filled, and prospective applicants are not duped.

Applicants for skilled or semi-skilled jobs are required to submit authenticated certificates from the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) attesting to their level of skills and competence. Professionals submit proof of completion of the requisite course from the Commission for Higher Education (CHED). Where licensure is necessary to practise, such as for nursing or engineering, proof of having passed the requisite Board examinations is also submitted. After applicants have been selected for their skills, technical proficiency or professional credentials, they must prove that they are physically fit for the job. This is arranged through clinics or hospitals accredited by the Philippine Department of Health. After receiving their visas, which signals approval by the host country for them to work abroad, they must attend a Pre-departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS) that briefs them on the laws, customs and practices of their country of destination, their rights

and obligations under the employment contracts, and how to adapt to the overseas situation.

Prospective job applicants for overseas work are also given pre-employment orientation to enable them to assess their suitability for overseas work. They learn about country-specific practices and cultural differences that need to be respected in a foreign country; and about illegal recruitment, legally permissible fees and telephone numbers available to the general public for grievances. All this helps them make an early decision about their ability to cope with these factors.

These activities are meant to protect workers who, under labour surplus conditions, may choose to take unnecessary risks to work abroad. While people continue to fall prey to illegal recruiters, the numbers have dwindled over the years, helped no doubt by a massive public information campaign. There is also a relatively low incidence of trafficking of persons from the Philippines. Overseas, employers and governments alike acknowledge that Filipinos are generally well selected and have fewer problems than some of their counterparts from other countries. At the same time, employers are assured that the workers bring the necessary credentials for the job.

Institutions accredited by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), recruitment agencies and certified trainers administer these orientation sessions. Some recruitment agencies have developed in-house pre-departure orientation facilities, while NGOs have specialized in orientation courses, particularly for the more vulnerable occupations.

A standard employment contract is prescribed by POEA based on minimum standards of terms and conditions of overseas work. Some of these terms and conditions are negotiated with host countries as part of the bilateral agreements concluded with them. The peculiarities of destination countries or occupations must also be taken into account in the contracts. For instance, some contracts provide for shorter timeframes (entertainers and seafarers); others involve added risks, e.g. in war zones or in risky

situations requiring the handling of chemicals. In these instances, a policy of “full disclosure” is activated, so that compensatory mechanisms like higher insurance coverage or hazard pay may be incorporated into the contracts.

The underlying premise is that in a free and open society, information is the best means to protect workers and manage their movement abroad. All workers processed through the POEA are required to be members of the OWWA, which allows them to be covered by mandatory insurance for death, disability and accident, entitles them to loans for pre-departure expenses or for money to be left behind with their families, scholarships for dependants and the worker him/herself, repatriation costs, burial benefits and initial capitalization for the funding of small business ventures as part of the reintegration process.

Still part of the regulatory mechanism is a Labor Assistance Center, which acts as an extension of the POEA at the airport to assist workers during the final checking of their documents, and provide extra protection to guard against trafficking of workers.

ONSITE OR ON-THE-JOB ASSISTANCE

Overseas, a network of more than 200 labour attachés and welfare officers worldwide provides assistance to OFWs by responding to and monitoring their problems, complaints and queries. They act as advocates for the OFWs, ensuring that the Filipino workers in their area of responsibility are treated and paid in accordance with their contract. In certain countries, a Workers’ Resource Center is maintained, which serves as a halfway house for OFWs who have run away from intolerable situations. The centre also offers a social facility for Filipinos and a training venue to upgrade skills for better career mobility and compensation. Preliminary business counselling is also undertaken on the premises, particularly for returning workers.

Meanwhile, to ensure more comprehensive welfare, support and rescue services for overseas Filipino workers, whether documented or undocumented, the

officers, representatives and staff of the Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), and other government agencies posted abroad have adopted a “one country team approach”. This means that under the ambassador or the consul general, all members of the team ensure that the interests of the country and its nationals are adequately articulated and protected.

Doctors from the Department of Health (DOH) and social workers from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) also assist overseas labour offices in responding to the workers’ medical and psycho-social problems. This was particularly evident in destination countries affected by the SARS problem in 2003.

In addition to the above services, the Philippine embassies, consulates and labour offices abroad support and encourage the organization of Filipino worker communities. Experience shows that wherever Filipino workers and other compatriots band together, the support system for all Filipinos is stronger. The company of other Filipinos can mitigate the loneliness, worry and pain of adjustment and separation.

MORE ASSISTANCE OFFSITE

There are also continuous efforts to forge and upgrade bilateral or multilateral arrangements or agreements with host governments. These are pursued vigorously, despite some partner governments’ apprehensions that a commitment to one labour-sending country may induce others to expect similar treatment, or to claim that this is unnecessary since their own laws adequately protect foreign workers. Experience shows that, whenever the entry of Filipino workers into a host country is governed by a bilateral agreement or arrangement, the country is able to attend more effectively to workers’ complaints and problems, rendering them less vulnerable.

To date, the Philippines has negotiated 13 bilateral agreements with the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, South

Korea, Taiwan, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Qatar, Norway, Switzerland and the UK. These agreements commonly promote the protection and welfare of OFWs, observance of terms and conditions of the employment contracts, and regular meetings to raise issues of mutual concern. The latest agreement, signed on April 23, 2004, with the South Korean government in many ways represents a breakthrough, because it stipulates parity with Korean workers holding similar jobs, in terms of both salaries and social benefits. It also specifies recruitment through a government agency that does not charge fees for placement services. The government has also signed social security agreements with nine countries as a further safety net for Filipinos working and living abroad.

In response to the need to maintain the supply of qualified workers for both local and foreign labour markets, the public and private sectors have intensified their skills training activities and continuously develop programmes to meet the demands of labour markets. For seafarers, upgrading of skills is supported by the Maritime Training Council which includes, among others, the Philippine Coast Guard, the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), in order to reinforce the present niche carved by Filipino seamen in international seafaring.

On the other hand, in order to control the quality and quantity of Filipino entertainers going abroad, the overseas performing artists (OPAs) are required to undergo training and testing and to acquire an Artist Record Book (ARB) prior to their deployment. This requirement not only helps to upgrade the quality of entertainers going overseas, but also to minimize trafficking of women.

In April 2003, POEA established the Philippine One-Stop Shop Center (POSC) in Manila to simplify the documentation process. By grouping under one roof all government agencies that issue or process documents related to the deployment of overseas workers, it has reduced the processing time for contracts and overseas employment certificates

considerably. It has since been replicated in two other provinces as an added service to OFWs in those areas.

An OFW Electronic Card – a permanent identification card for all OFWs – is also issued free of charge by the Labor Department. This serves a multitude of purposes: it proves a worker's legal status as an OFW and his/her membership of OWWA; facilitates access to OWWA benefits and services and issuance of the Overseas Employment Certificate, and exempts the OFW from airport and travel taxes. It also serves as an international ATM card or a debit card, in case the OFW decides to open an account with accredited banks, and provides a permanent ID card number, that will link OFWs to information necessary in dealing with various government and private agencies.

OWWA's emergency and medical services are part of the on-the-job assistance to OFWs. Welfare Officers are part of the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) and operate under the labour attaché.

REINTEGRATION

THE GOVERNMENT runs several economic and social reintegration programmes to address the negative effects of overseas employment on the worker and her/his family. These include:

- social counselling both for OFWs and their spouses;
- skills-training, micro-credit and business management skills development;
- educational assistance for the children and,
- on and offsite investment counselling services.

In 2002, a network of OFW families and their dependants was established that now serves as a mutual support group to facilitate access to government social services. The network, known as "family circles" helps empower families, facilitates speedier repatriation of OFWs as the need arises, and arranges psycho-social support to the returning worker to aid his/her eventual reintegration into the family and community. Family welfare officers act as

links between families and government service providers, and are posted in provinces and cities with significant OFW populations.⁹

Additional services available to OFWs and other interested parties – such as researchers, policy makers, academics – are the interactive databases and the short-messaging service. The former contains the list of licensed recruitment agencies (both active, closed down and banned), job vacancies (local and abroad), pending court cases, and seafarers' certification. There are also on-line market updates regarding trends, restrictions and opportunities, new rules, laws and policies on foreign labour in host countries.¹⁰

ECONOMIC SECURITY UPON RETURN

Not all OFWs who spend their prime years working in a foreign land return home prepared to reintegrate into their former communities. Many are unable to sufficiently prepare for re-employment or foresee and plan for a shift in their personal economic plans. POEA and OWWA, together with the Social Security System (SSS), Pag-ibig Fund/Home Mortgage Development Fund and the Local Government Units (LGUs) have joined forces to integrate their respective welfare and social programmes for OFWs.

The SSS provides cover for overseas workers on a voluntary basis to ensure that, after finishing work abroad, they have the basic social support of old age pension, sickness benefits and access to salary and housing loans. At the same time, SSS has a special Flexi Fund available only to overseas workers, an investment fund earning higher than normal interest rates. Contributions to this fund can be withdrawn at any time. The provident fund for healthcare (Philhealth) and OWWA have also made membership available for medical and hospital care, including for catastrophes.

The Pag-ibig Fund has helped many housing efforts to tap the overseas market. Housing fairs have been conducted regularly overseas, and membership in the Pag-ibig fund allows overseas workers to tap the fund for housing loans, which can be repaid on a long-term basis. It is estimated that at least 25 per cent of new housing development in the country involves overseas Filipino workers.

Banks have also been very aggressive in supporting OFWs with, e.g. education, pension and even memorial plans. These products, and others, curtail the consumption tendencies of OFWs and force them into savings programmes that help prepare them for life after overseas employment.

The OWWA reintegration programme is premised on a number of assumptions: first, that many OFWs return to the Philippines at an age when they would have difficulty returning to productive employment; second, where they are able to find work, it is usually at much lower salary levels than they are accustomed to, and third, starting a business is not a preferred alternative, since most Filipinos are trained from an early age to take the least risky option of wage and salary work after finishing college or equivalent courses.¹¹ The reintegration programme of OWWA has thus shifted its focus of attention from the worker to the family left behind.

BENEFITS OF WELFARE PROGRAMMES

WHILE most countries engage in regular marketing of their available manpower, the Philippines believes that the best marketing for Filipino talent is an effective welfare and protection programme. Where workers are covered by the protective mechanisms

9. Family welfare officers also encourage families to engage in bulk buying to benefit from discounts and commissions on all consumer goods. When family circles have gathered enough experience in bulk buying, they can access much higher interest-free loans for repayment over two years and subject to additional capitalization. They or their members may in time graduate to loans of up to a million pesos for larger business enterprises.

10. See www.poea.gov.ph, a phone-enabled inquiry facility for information on recruitment agencies, job vacancies, and other data on POEA and overseas employment.

11. There are private businesses that work to attract OFW investors, but some of them are scams. Some migrant cooperatives have been set up, but these are private initiatives on which the government only has anecdotal data.

outlined above, they are able to work with a minimum of distractions because their basic rights are covered. A mechanism with built-in safety nets minimizes possible costs associated with unplanned events like medical emergencies, sudden deaths, or unexpected repatriation because of war, earthquakes, floods, or other events. During the wars in Iraq, or the SARS epidemic in Hong Kong, Filipinos organized programmes that focused on relocation and disease prevention and containment. This is essentially a shift to prevention rather than reactive programme interventions.

Providing comprehensive and fully integrated welfare services can benefit not just the sending country and its people, but also host countries, which may not have the requisite regulations to take care of guest workers. While ideally host countries should take responsibility for workers within their jurisdiction, overseas Filipinos enjoy the immediate protective mechanism of their own government through programmes that operate at recruitment, on the job and upon return. Likewise, the integrated welfare system and regulatory structure ensure that workers are predisposed to return at the end of their contract period.

CONCLUSION

THE EMIGRATION of Filipinos to work abroad is not expected to abate for many decades yet, despite the rise in per capita income and reduction in poverty in the Philippines. OFWs will continue to be in high demand, because of their sound education, training and work ethic. In the meantime, there are lessons to be learned from the Philippine migration for work experience.

The first is that there is no substitute for good governance in migration management. Because of labour-surplus conditions in many source countries and competition among sending states, there is a need for clear regulations and appropriate structures. The Philippines takes the position that a good programme to ensure the health and wellbeing of its workers is more useful than any expensive marketing strategy.

For practical and political reasons, programmes that address welfare considerations are better appreciated by officials of host and sending countries, as it minimizes tensions at both ends, and potential social costs at the receiving end.

Good governance in this case requires a “comprehensive and inclusive government” effort. While the Department of Labor and Employment may manage the deployment process itself, the Department of Foreign Affairs represents the country onsite and oversees negotiations concerning problematic areas. The education system receives inputs on manpower demand and consequently responds through curricula revisions to ensure the competitiveness of Filipino manpower. The Department of Finance looks at incentive packages for overseas contract workers, the Department of Interior and Local Government disseminates information to prospective applicants, and the Department of Justice prosecutes wrongdoers, whether illegal recruiters or erring workers.

The second lesson is that regulation must continue if the basic safety nets are to be ensured. Contract migration in the Philippines is admittedly heavily centrally managed and regulated. This situation will likely remain until international protocols or conventions respected by both sending and receiving countries are able to provide sufficient protection to people who leave their countries for fixed periods of work elsewhere. While some measure of irregular migration takes place, principally through people dissimulating their intentions by leaving as tourists, pilgrims or students, and taking on work in another country, or by overstaying beyond their contract period, the government takes the position that all Filipinos are entitled to representation and protection by their government, whatever their residence status may be.

The third lesson is that global competitiveness in the area of labour migration needs to take account of all the potential benefits of overseas employment. It cannot be achieved only through depressing working standards or lowering wages. Skills, productivity and the ability to adjust to a new workplace together with respect for its new and possibly different cultural environment are

key. Anything less contributes to a perception that labour is commoditized, like consumer goods.

Thus, managing overseas migration requires collective efforts internally and internationally. Bilateral negotiations help, but they do not provide the balanced and consistent action that orderly movements of people require. It is ironic that movements of goods are covered by meticulous and detailed specifications of what is or is not allowed; or the movement of capital is covered by agreements that are binding on most countries, while people, the most vulnerable of “goods”, seldom find themselves with the protective mechanisms accorded money or consumer products.

Both sending and receiving countries have significant mutual interests and benefits to derive from the

highly integrated and regulated structure of the Philippines. As demonstrated above, comprehensive support at all points along the labour migration cycle ensures that migrants will return at the end of their contracts. A lack of capacity to jointly manage such critical issues to mutual benefit would be detrimental to all. Joint management efforts must both support the value of orderly movement over irregular migration, and acknowledge the increasing desire of overseas migrants to participate in the activities of their new host countries. This, without denying the right of independent states to prescribe appropriate conduct and behaviour of people seeking to settle, temporarily or otherwise, in their territories – but still giving due regard to the important new role of labour migrants in the growth and development of economies at both ends of the migration spectrum.

TEXTBOX 12.2

BILATERAL LABOUR AGREEMENTS: EFFECTIVE TOOLS FOR MANAGING LABOUR FLOWS?

Bilateral labour agreements (BLAs) can be an effective way to regulate the recruitment and employment of foreign short- and long-term workers between countries. They can take the form of formal treaties or less formal memoranda of understanding, or even very informal practical arrangements, e.g. between the national employment agencies of two countries.

Most global labour flows take place outside the scope of bilateral labour agreements, some within immigration or emigration programmes set up unilaterally by receiving countries, others through regional agreements. Many labour migration flows are irregular and clandestine in nature.

But BLAs allow for greater state involvement in the migration process and offer human resource exchange options tailored to the specific supply and demand of the countries involved. By encouraging orderly movement of labour, they promote good will and cooperation between sending and receiving countries. They can also address the thorny issue of the temporary nature of migration by including terms and procedures for return, and flexible visa arrangements where longer-term or permanent options exist.

BLAs hark back to the second half of the 20th century, when large emerging economies in the New World chose to meet their huge labour market needs via immigration. They sought bilateral agreements with countries of origin to overcome labour scarcity during the war or in its aftermath. Between 1942 and 1966, for example, the US admitted some 5 million farm workers under the Bracero programme with Mexico. Canada, Australia and Argentina also admitted large numbers on the basis of agreements with mainly European countries. In the 1950s and 1960s, European countries such as Germany and France actively recruited so-called

guest workers, especially from Portugal, Spain, Turkey and North Africa. These programmes came to an end with the economic downturn of the 1970s triggered by the oil crisis.

During the last ten years, there has been renewed interest in bilateral agreements. Among OECD countries, their numbers quintupled in the 1990s, and today stand at 173. In Latin America, half of the 168 agreements signed during the last 50 years have been concluded since 1991. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Central European, East European and Central Asian countries developed a wide range of agreements – some within the region, some with neighbouring EU countries, others with EU countries that had evolved from emigration countries to immigration countries, such as Portugal or Spain. A number were also signed with overseas countries, for example between Ukraine and Argentina.

BLAs abound between neighbouring countries (e.g. between Switzerland and EEA countries on the free movement of persons, enforced in 2002; between Argentina and Bolivia and Peru, signed in 1998), or between continents (e.g. Spain with Ecuador, Colombia and Morocco in 2001, and Dominican Republic in 2002). Asia has been less engaged in such agreements with receiving countries from other regions. As of October 2004, the Philippines, one of the major labour sending countries of the region, had managed to sign only 11 agreements with Asian destination countries, and none of them is with a main recipient of Filipino labour.

ILO has been promoting BLAs since the 1949 Migration for Employment Convention, No. 97; and offers governments a ready-made model for temporary and permanent migration (Recommendation No.86 annex (1949)), which has been used by various states ranging from Argentina to Rwanda, Tajikistan and Uruguay. ILO identifies 24 basic elements of a bilateral labour agreement (ILO, 2004), including selection procedures, entry documents, residence status, the contract, work permit, working conditions, the role of unions, remittances, family reunification and monitoring of the agreement. Some items included in the model, such as social security or irregular migration, tend to be dealt with by states in separate agreements (e.g. the bilateral social security agreement signed by the US with 20 countries, or the readmission agreements signed between several European countries and sending countries).

Receiving Country Perspective

For the receiving country, bilateral agreements can meet labour market needs quickly and efficiently – whether for low-skilled seasonal workers in the agriculture, tourism and construction sectors, or more skilled medical, educational, and other personnel needed to meet more structural labour market shortages. They can also usefully support broader regional commercial and economic relations by aiding the development of the sending country and facilitating its regional integration. Notable examples of this are the various agreements for temporary labour migration signed by Germany and other EU members with Central and Eastern European countries.

BLAs can help combat irregular migration by offering alternative legal channels to migrate for employment, which, in turn, can be a negotiation tool to secure country of origin

willingness to cooperate on managing irregular migration (particularly the readmission of their nationals). In 1997, Italy and Albania signed a labour agreement in parallel with a readmission agreement, by which Albania accepts the return of its irregular nationals. Some past agreements between Argentina and its neighbours (Bolivia, Peru) also offered regularization of status for undocumented migrants.

Finally, BLAs help strengthen ties between countries that share some cultural or historical links. For example, the UK and other Commonwealth countries have mutual "Working Holiday Maker" programmes, which allow young persons to live and work part-time or casually in the other country for an extended holiday of up to two years.

Sending Country Perspective

Sending countries see BLAs as a useful vehicle to increase access to the international labour market, and to negotiate appropriate wages, living conditions, and job security for their nationals abroad. They offer the certainty of agreed definitions and terms of implementation and monitoring of workers' rights and entitlements. They can also facilitate the acquisition or enhancement of vocational skills and qualifications, e.g. through training programmes for young professionals.

Bilateral agreements can also provide a basis for sustained remittance flows, technology transfers and the general development of human capital, all of which constitute important contributions to the development of countries of origin. Sometimes the agreements include measures for return migration or the repatriation of skills and knowledge. Bilateral agreements signed by Spain with Colombia and Ecuador, for example, provide for projects to facilitate the voluntary return of temporary migrants through training and recognition of the experience acquired in Spain, as well as the creation of small and medium enterprises, the development of human resources and the transfer of technology.

Agreed quotas for highly skilled workers can also form an integral part of the sending country's human resource development strategy. They give the country a share in the international labour market, while managing the depletion of scarce human resources needed at home. In 2002, the Dutch and Polish ministers of health signed a letter of intent for the implementation of a project entitled "Polish nurses in The Netherlands, Development of Competencies", in order to prepare nurses for employment in the Dutch health care system for a maximum period of two years, and to facilitate their return and reintegration into the Polish health care system after return.

A further aim is for employers to arrange for pre-departure training of their labour immigrants in the sending country. This is reflected in agreements signed by Spain, and in second-generation agreements in Italy (these are signed after a readmission agreement).

How Effective are Bilateral Agreements?

The effectiveness of bilateral agreements is difficult to measure, as they often pursue several objectives simultaneously, and give different weight to different policy priorities. There has also been little research on the implementation and impact of such agreements.

Do BLAs improve the management of labour migration? They can create more certain, formal mechanisms by involving the key players at different stages of design and implementation of the agreement, as Italy has done by involving employers groups, trade unions and others in setting quotas. The Spain-Ecuador/Colombia agreements involve selection committees in the sending country that include embassy and employer representation. Built-in encouragements for temporary migrants to return, such as in Canada's seasonal agriculture workers programme, which allow the migrants to be selected again by the same employer, seem also to have had a positive effect on potential irregular migration (see also the chapter "Filipinos Working Overseas: Opportunity and Challenge").

Despite this, some 25 per cent of bilateral agreements in OECD countries are apparently not implemented. The most operational ones seem to be those that principally follow the demand-supply imperative, rather than just political objectives. Among them can be counted the Canadian seasonal agriculture programme and the UK agreements on foreign nurses with Spain, India and the Philippines. The extent to which employers will utilize BLAs depends on the efficiency of the system, the geographic location of the workers (if the travel cost is borne by the employer), the number of available irregular migrants, and the employer-friendly nature of other immigration programmes (e.g. despite the Spain/Ecuador BLA, Spanish employers may prefer to hire temporary workers from countries closer to Spain, such as Poland).

BLAs may thus also constrain the migrant workers, perhaps even exclude them from regular migration programmes, e.g. through age limits, quotas and language requirements. The Hungary-Romania agreement on labour seems not to have been entirely successful because, given the common border, most Romanian applicants seem to prefer quick cross-border commuting and undeclared work.

Future Prospects

In a world where labour markets are increasingly globalized, but where there are few multilateral mechanisms to deal with the massive labour flows, bilateral labour agreements are proving to be a useful way of bringing certainty and clarity to the issue. They can help all interested parties (not least the migrants themselves) to ensure that labour migration programmes are orderly, efficient and protective of the rights of migrant workers. Their well defined structures also help increase public confidence in (labour) migration. To be workable, however, they need to be realistic and flexible, and build on the lessons of past programmes.

Source: Labour Migration Service Area, IOM, Geneva.

MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 13

MIGRATION AND POVERTY: SOME ISSUES IN THE CONTEXT OF ASIA¹

“Migration is the oldest action against poverty. It is good for the country to which they go; it helps to break the equilibrium of poverty in the country from which they come.”²

(John Kenneth Galbraith)

INTRODUCTION

THERE IS fast growing understanding at national and international levels of the critical nexus between migration and poverty; but, as yet insufficient data exist to inform a coordinated policy approach (UK House of Commons, 2004). Migration can be both the cause and the result of poverty, while poverty itself can be both alleviated and exacerbated by population movements. But the actual respective impacts are relative and vary according to levels of development and the particular policy environment of the area under consideration.

In some locations and under certain conditions, poverty may be a root cause of migration; in others, under different conditions, the poor may be the last to move. In some areas, migration may offer a way out of poverty; in others it can make the poverty worse. The situation is further complicated by the different types of “migration” and differing levels of “poverty” that exist, each defying accurate definition or measurement. Understanding the complex interplay between migration and poverty is important for policy makers and donor agencies, particularly in their ongoing efforts at poverty reduction, and can help put migration on the development agendas of the world.

This chapter looks at some key issues at the interface between migration and poverty that need to be further pursued to fill the current data gap. All forms of human population movement are considered under “migration”, or more appropriately “population mobility”, including: internal and international migration; short-term circular movements, and more permanent migration. Under “poverty”, distinctions are drawn between chronic, absolute poverty and the more subjective “relative deprivation”.

The chapter examines the migration-poverty interface at the personal, national, regional and international levels, and cautions against drawing simple causal links between them. It shows how migration can reduce absolute poverty in some communities, and migrants abroad can act as agents of development for their home communities. It also shows how migration can increase the sense of relative deprivation in some communities, and in turn trigger more migration. It considers some policy strategies to harness the benefits of migration for poverty alleviation, including the incorporation of migration issues into national and global development agendas, such as the UN Millennium Development Goals. Finally, it highlights areas for further study in support of these strategies.

1. This chapter has been drafted by Professor Ronald Skeldon, Professorial Fellow at the University of Sussex in the UK and Honorary Professor at the University of Hong Kong; and is a modified version of an article that first appeared in the *Asia-Pacific Population Journal*, vol. 17, No. 4, December 2002 (modified in consultation with IOM).

2. Cited in Harris, 2002, p. 119.

For illustration, the chapter focuses mostly on the Asia-Pacific region³ and the experiences of countries of origin like Bangladesh, China, India, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

MIGRATION AND POVERTY: AMBIVALENT RELATIONSHIPS

IN THE 1990s, absolute poverty declined in China, the Philippines and Thailand and increased in parts of South Asia and throughout the new republics of Central Asia, with little change in poverty levels in Indonesia over the same period (ESCAP/UNDP, 2002). The figures for China need to be taken with some caution: from 1979 to 2001 some 220 million in China's rural areas reportedly came out of poverty,⁴ but in 2003, the population in poverty had increased by 800,000 nationwide for the first time in the past two decades.⁵ At the end of 2003, the total population in poverty was 29 million.⁶ Restructuring has caused a large loss of jobs in the state sector, a trend set to continue after China's accession to the World Trade Organization in 2001. For example, some 26 million workers have been laid off from state enterprises since 1998, and the real unemployment rate in 2002 may have been in excess of 20 per cent in some sectors.⁷

Another way to look at poverty is through the proportion of a population that is undernourished. The UN Human Development Report of 2003 shows

that in the decade 1990-2000 the share of the undernourished in the populations of Southeast Asia declined, indicating a trend towards poverty alleviation in those countries. In comparison with South Asia, where the improvements were not so dramatic, the data for Southeast Asia are more extensive, and show notable improvements in such long-term depressed countries as Vietnam, Lao PDR and Cambodia, although as regards the latter from a much higher base.⁸

But compared with the uncertain estimates of poverty, migration can be even more difficult to measure. Available data suggest that, despite lower relative poverty in Southeast Asia, population movement is likely to have increased from all Asian economies under consideration in the 1990s.⁹ However, in several cases these figures either omit or severely underestimate the number of undocumented migrants, which for some countries is substantial.¹⁰ In Malaysia, for example, some 2.1 million were apprehended between 1992 and 2000 (Hugo, 2002), and estimates of the stock of undocumented migrants in that country before the 1997 financial crisis were as high as 1.43 million (ILO, 1998). The vast majority of these came from neighbouring Indonesia.¹¹

Even more difficult to estimate is the number of internal migrants. Data in Thailand, where poverty levels declined markedly during the 1990s, even taking into account the impact of the 1997 financial crisis, suggest that internal migration may have

3. For the purpose of this chapter, Asia includes East Asia [China (which includes China mainland, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China -- hereafter referred to as Hong Kong, Macao Special Administrative Region of China -- hereafter Macao, and Taiwan Province of China -- hereafter Taiwan), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (hereafter North Korea), Japan, Mongolia, and the Republic of Korea (hereafter South Korea)]; Southeast Asia (Brunei, Cambodia, Timor Leste, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam); and South-Central Asia (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka).

4. See Lu, 2001, who was then the Head of the Poverty Reduction Office of the State Council of China.

5. See J. Liu, 2004, currently the Head of the Poverty Reduction Office of the State Council of China.

6. See F. Liu, 2004, Director General of the Department of Legal Affairs of the Poverty Reduction Office of the State Council of China.

7. Data cited in the Migration News, May and July issues, 2002.

8. The UNDP's Human Development Report 2003 shows how the population proportions of undernourished persons in developing countries have changed between the periods 1990-92 and 1998-2000, e.g. Bangladesh 35 to 35 per cent; India 25 to 24 per cent; Pakistan 25 to 19 per cent; Sri Lanka 29 to 23 per cent; Cambodia 43 to 36 per cent; Lao PDR 29 to 24 per cent; Philippines 26 to 23 per cent; Thailand 28 to 18 per cent and Vietnam 27 to 18 per cent.

9. See the discussion of UN data on this in the chapter "International Migration Trends".

10. Estimates of these are likely to be based on the number of apprehensions on attempted entry or persons arrested in-country, with assumptions about the number of those escaping the official net.

11. Undocumented migrants are part of the large number of "illegal" migrants in Asia who do not enter a country through a formal, legal channel, which in Asia are quite limited for all except skilled migrants. Most unskilled migrants moving from one Asian country to another do so illegally.

slowed in the 1990s. Preliminary figures from the 2000 census indicate that the percentage of the population that moved in the five years before the census was lower than in 1990, or 13.9 per cent in 2000 compared with 16.8 in 1990 (Thailand, 2002). But to conclude that a relative reduction in mobility might be conducive to a reduction in poverty would be deceptive or simply incorrect.

First, the population census only captures a part of total population movement, omitting most circulation and short-term migration. Studies in Thailand following the 1990 census showed that a change in the reference period used to define “migration” from three months (as used in the census) to one month (as per the National Migration Survey of Thailand) increased the numbers of recorded migrants by over one fifth (Chamrathirong et al., 1995).

Second, and more critically, despite the overall drop in poverty in the 1990s, the number of poor in Thailand increased from 6.8 million at the beginning of 1997 to 7.9 million at the end of 1998 as a result of the financial crisis. This is an increase in the proportion of total population classified as poor from 11.4 to 12.9 per cent (UNDP, 1999). But it would be deceptive to conclude that this increase in poverty had caused the observed decline in internal migration in this period. More likely, the crisis stimulated an increase in precisely the types of mobility that censuses and general surveys are least able to measure, i.e. short-term mobility, as people looked for alternatives to job losses in the urban sector or market losses in the rural sector. Mobility could have increased, rather than decreased in that time, and been more of a survival strategy than a pathway to better opportunities. There are no records to prove or disprove this.

Thus any attempts to draw clear causal links between volume and patterns of migration and poverty based on existing data are likely to be problematic.

POVERTY AS A ROOT CAUSE OF MIGRATION

MIGRATION is often seen simply as a flight from poverty: there are no opportunities available locally, so people migrate in order to survive. Flight from a devastating famine appears to be the classic example of this. But such cases are generally confined to the poorest parts of the world, principally in sub-Saharan Africa. In the vast regions of Asia, they are still found in some pockets, but have become less common given the rapid economic development over the last half of the 20th century. Historic examples include the “Great Hunger” in China, 1959-1960, when millions moved in the desperate attempt to find food, although millions more were prevented from doing so by the authorities. The real impact on migration of this last great famine in China has yet to be reported, although there is some discussion of it (Becker, 1996; Banister, 1987).

Survival migration of the poorest is likely to be mainly local, or regional at most, and primarily intra-country. In apparent contradiction to the logic of survival migration, most studies of migration in non-disaster situations generally show that it is not the poorest who move, but those with access to some resources. Migration always involves some transportation costs and the abandonment of many of the few possessions the poor might have. The poorest of the poor cannot afford either risk or movement, and starvation mostly tends to occur at home. Even in the Great Famine in Ireland of 1845-1850, it was rarely the poorest who emigrated to North America. The more able-bodied could perhaps reach the United Kingdom (UK), but many among the rest perished. Emigration rates from the hardest hit countries were often significantly lower than from countries not so affected (Miller, 1985).¹²

In a different continent in a different era, the majority of those who fled from China mainland to Hong Kong,

12. See also the chapter in this report, “International Migration Trends”, which shows that emigration rates are in fact lowest in the least developed countries.

China, after the victory of the communist forces in 1949 might have had a “well-founded fear of persecution”, but over half claimed that they had moved for “economic reasons” (Hambro, 1955). They were not among the poorest in China at the time. This is not to deny that poverty is an important cause of migration, but to show that there are often other factors at play.

With the exception of particular areas and at particular times, it is often not absolute poverty *per se* that is significant in accounting for migration, but whether people *feel* that they are poor.

MIGRATION AS THE RESULT OF POVERTY

POVERTY as the root cause of migration, and migration as a result of poverty might appear to be the same thing, but there are significant differences. Migration as the result of poverty can shift the focus to the issue of feeling poor, i.e. relative rather than absolute deprivation. Migration, either of outsiders into a community, or of natives out of their community, establishes linkages between origins and destinations. These linkages spread knowledge about conditions in a wider world that can transform the characteristics of communities from “subsistence affluence” (Sahlins, 1974) to “relative deprivation”, without any significant real change in the quantity of subsistence in the community.

What changes here is the less tangible, subjective sense of quality of life, where people compare their own condition to those of people living elsewhere, and the potential for migration increases with the perception. Migration of family and friends can create both the conditions that lead to people perceiving themselves as poor and further migration as they move to satisfy new-found aspirations. This process is perhaps at the root of most migration. It gives the impression that poverty is the driving force, while in

reality it is the desire to better oneself according to new standards rather than the result of actual deprivation. Migration is thus both the creator and the product of poverty.

People who move are often the more innovative, better-off, better educated and hence better informed in any community, even if these qualities themselves are relative (Skeldon, 1990). In an isolated rural community, for example, the better educated might be those with basic primary education among the many with no formal education at all. Migrants are also targeted and selected by labour recruiters or other expanding urban-based groups for their relative skills and capabilities. For example, in the huge contract labour recruitment drives between South/Southeast Asia and the oil-rich countries of the Middle East, recruiters are unlikely to select the weakest or poorest members of any group (Zachariah, Kannan and Rajan 2002).¹³ Whether the loss of these people contributes to poverty will be considered below. (It is also very evident from many countries that the regions producing the highest number of migrants are often not the poorest, e.g., Fujian province.)

MIGRATION AS A CAUSE OF POVERTY

THERE ARE ways in which migration can directly increase the number of absolute poor. The clearest example is where people are forced to relocate without adequate planning and support. In many cases, forced relocation is an unintended consequence of development, mainly through the creation of lakes and reservoirs resulting from the construction of dams, although displacement for roads and urban expansion is also an important trigger. For example, it is estimated that 90 – 100 million people globally were involuntarily displaced by infrastructure development projects during the last decade of the 20th century (Cernea and McDowell, 2000). In India alone, some 20 million people are thought to have

13. In one of the most significant flows of contract labour in recent history, as at 1998 over 2 million people have moved from the State of Kerala in India alone, the overwhelming majority to the Middle East (also known as West Asia).

been displaced over 40 years, the majority of whom became impoverished (Cernea, 2000), while in China over a similar period, more than 30 million have been thus displaced (Meikle and Zhu, 2000). The Three Gorges Project, currently under construction on the Yangtse River, is estimated to have led to resettlement well over a million people by the time it is completed.

A key factor separating forced population displacement due to development policy from other types of migration is that the numbers moving and the timing of the movements are known. Thus, if poverty is the result of forced migration, it is likely to be the fault of inadequate planning rather than of the migration itself.

There is no cogent reason for the migration to lead to increased poverty, although this often appears to be the result in Asia and elsewhere (Cernea and McDowell, 2000).¹⁴

BRAIN DRAIN

More difficult to assess is the loss of innovative and educated community members, or the “brain drain” that can occur at national or village levels in countries of origin. It has proven difficult to demonstrate empirically a fall in macro-level economic indicators, when there is a major exodus of educated persons at the national level. Equally, it is difficult to prove that rural-to-urban migration at the village level causes a decline in either agricultural production or productivity. Adding to this difficulty is the fact that migration is often circular. Both the educated at the national level, and workers moving from village to town, either return at a later stage, or move to extend the resource base of their families by adding new resources elsewhere.

The so-called “brain drain” argument is difficult to sustain at the macro-level in East Asia. Tens of thousands of students left Japan, South Korea, Taiwan

and Hong Kong for study overseas from the 1960s at precisely the time that these economies began to grow rapidly (Skeldon, 1997a). It is difficult to prove that these economies could have grown even faster if the students had stayed home. Over time, increasing numbers returned and there clearly was a “brain gain” rather than a brain drain in these economies. In Taiwan, it is estimated that the return rate of students increased from 5 – 10 per cent in the 1950s and 1960s to 20 – 25 per cent in the 1980s (Tsai 1988), and that the number of returnees has further increased since then. The majority of them were highly educated and returned to participate in the new industrialization, particularly in the north, in Taipei, and in Shinchu City, which emerged from the late 1980s as Taiwan’s Silicon Valley (Tsay and Lin, 2003).

The shift from brain drain to brain gain experienced by Taiwan is also increasingly the case in other major growing economies in Asia with significant government support for attracting back skilled émigrés, such as China, India and the Philippines. China, for example, is actively seeking to redress the massive loss of its educated in the 1980s and 1990s with government and private sector-backed incentives, such as research grants, salary supplements, housing support and educational assistance for children among others (Zweig and Rosen, 2003). The government encourages overseas Chinese entrepreneurs to open high-tech firms in China and has eased residence and other migration restrictions for returnees. These efforts have been hugely beneficial, for example the government records that more than 60 per cent of all overseas investments in China in the past two decades came from overseas Chinese investors.¹⁵

But this scenario is not typical of many developing countries. The loss of even relatively small numbers of educated from marginal economies can contribute to slower or even declining growth. The “brain drain” is for some the most obvious way in which migration

14. Some experts point to the possibility that the exodus of much-needed skills may hold some governments back from structural changes necessary for development. This needs to be further examined (Ellerman, 2003).

15. See also the Textbox 6.3 and the chapter “Balancing the Benefits and Costs of Skilled Migration in the Asia-Pacific Region”.

can potentially harm the development prospects of a country, particularly when those providing services to the poor – doctors, nurses, teachers, etc. – leave and cause critical shortages of human capital. Some stark examples of this can be found in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Central Asian Republics (Harris, 2002).¹⁶ In Asia, there are huge differences in losses and gains from migration, ranging from the skills drain on Bangladesh to the highly profitable brain gains of Taiwan.¹⁷

While the impact of the loss of highly educated and skilled persons needs to be assessed on a region-by-region basis, a critical factor will always be whether there is something for the educated to return to in their economies of origin.¹⁸ Where there is little to return to, brain drain is more likely to occur, but where origin economies are more dynamic, a brain gain may be the result. This is country-specific, even region-specific within a country. For example, while East Asia is the most dynamic region in Asia, and China a key part of this, North Korea, and the huge hinterland of China are not, and are likely to distort any regional overviews of this issue.

At the local level, assessments of the impact of out-migration on production are equally problematic, although few studies support the idea that there is a negative impact on farm production (Simmons, 1984). An assessment in China has shown that the loss of labour due to out-migration can have a negative impact on incomes from cropping, but has no impact on crop yields (de Brauw et al., 2001). Where the impacts become intense in marginal areas, and

emigration grows to such an extent that the reproductive capacity of a village is eroded, leading to ageing and declining populations, then pockets of deprivation may emerge even in the most developed societies. For example, the severely depopulating areas (*kasō*) in Japan challenge the policy makers to supply adequate services to ageing populations.¹⁹ It is in the poorer economies that those left behind are most likely to experience “chronic poverty” (Kothari, 2002), with poverty thus a residual effect of migration.

But there is a growing awareness among countries of origin and destination that policies on labour migration from developing countries could be adjusted to:

- i) better regulate the recruitment of skills that are rare and needed in these countries;
- ii) create incentives to promote return migration, and,
- iii) maximize the development contribution of migrant communities, including via remittances.

Some destination countries, like the UK, have established codes of conduct for recruitment in the health sector, to better engage the countries of origin and avoid a drain of essential skills. Other policy options include the establishment of guidelines for employers in destination countries regarding more ethics-based recruitment, training and skills enhancement, a global database on countries most vulnerable to skills losses and tighter regulation of international recruitment agencies and their practices.²⁰

16. Some 60,000 highly skilled workers are reported to have fled African economies during the last half of the 1980s (Ghana losing 60 per cent of its doctors) (Harris, 2002). In Central Asia, the return of large numbers of Russian or Ukrainian technicians to their “home” republics was also a likely factor in the rising poverty observed in these countries. (Note: the skilled exodus was just one migration among many in that region following the disintegration of the Soviet Union and causing suffering and deprivation (Whitlock, 2002).)

17. See the scale of “returns” from emigration in Asia in the chapter “Balancing the Benefits and Costs of Skilled Migration in the Asia-Pacific Region”.

18. Some observers feel countries of origin need to make it attractive for their educated citizens to stay (or get the diaspora productively re-involved in their home country) rather than expect countries of destination to pay subsidies or compensation (Ellerman, 2003). But this may be too simple in light of the open market dynamic of globalization.

19. Agricultural income in these areas was 70 per cent of the national average in the mid-1990s. They covered almost half of the total land area of the country but represented only 6.3 per cent of the total population (Skeldon, 2001).

20. It has been suggested that education reform in sending countries could also play a key role in combating brain drain. Some strategies have been proposed, and tried, to “tie” the educated migrant to his/her home country, e.g. through a repayable education loan. But they have been hard to implement. Models to link educational reform to migration management have been debated, and warrant further investigation by policymakers (Ellerman, 2003).

Mitigating the brain drain in sectors critical for the development of sending countries can also effectively be achieved through bilateral development cooperation projects such as IOM's MIDA Ghana Health project commenced in 2004 between the Netherlands and Ghana.²¹ Such projects can help recruit migrant professionals for short-term assignments back home. Similar projects have been tried under UNDP's TOKTEN or IOM's Return of Knowledge projects in earlier years, e.g. in Thailand and the Philippines.²² They can usefully form part of a country's human resources development strategy policy.

In sum, the brain drain issue, in particular its impact on poverty, is not as straightforward as it might appear. For one, the very developing countries experiencing crippling brain drain also urgently need to find international outlets for their surplus labour. In Bangladesh, for example, despite (or perhaps because of) the brain drain challenge, the government has set up a new ministry to deal with overseas contract labour and the diaspora, and is actively trying to reorient its education and training programmes to produce people with the necessary qualifications to enter specific foreign labour markets. For another, it is not entirely clear whether the basic health indicators in some places really show a deterioration of conditions (rising morbidity, decreasing longevity, etc.) as a direct result of the medical exodus.

International research on these issues is still too seminal to provide answers to such questions, but the answers may also not be as blindingly obvious as many may assume or hope.

URBAN POVERTY

Another key issue for countries of origin and destination is whether migration concentrates the

poor in destination areas, primarily in the largest metropolitan centres of the developing world. Even if it is not the poorest who migrate from the villages, relative to city people in the destination areas they are often poor, and their ghettoization may be a further hindrance to development. Again, evidence supporting such a statement is far from conclusive. There are insufficient data to suggest that migrants are over-represented among the urban poor (but we do know they have higher unemployment rates, and that is not a bad proxy). EU-15 data show this (see EC Communication on Integration). Indeed, migrants can tend to have higher labour force participation rates than native-born in cities in the developing world.²³ This does not imply that the living conditions of all migrants in towns are satisfactory, or that they do not appear among the ranks of the urban poor.

Many occupations filled by migrants, and particularly those held by poorly educated migrant women, are badly paid, insecure and require work under appalling conditions. However, given that migration has not generally been the principal component of urban growth in the developing world (natural increase has usually been more important), and that migrants tend to have higher rates of employment than the local urban-born, the principal causes of urban poverty are to be found in the metropolitan regions themselves rather than in migration to them.

POVERTY ALLEVIATED BY MIGRATION

THE PREVAILING assumption behind much of the debate on this subject to date is that the relationship between migration and poverty is negative: migration is the result of deprivation or it leads to the impoverishment of certain areas. Developing countries of origin have responded to this with measures to reduce the outflow

21. IOM and the Ministry of Health are working together to recruit émigré professionals abroad for temporary assignments back in Ghana, to teach, provide advisory services and logistical support to projects, mostly as medical specialists, nurses, managers, IT specialists, or finance specialists. The average assignment is 2-3 months.

22. The Return of Knowledge and Talent (RKT) project was begun by IOM in Manila in the late 1980s. The Thai Expert Programme (TEP) was started in 1993/1994, and by way of example, assisted some 15 to 20 Thai experts abroad to travel to Thailand *inter alia* to engage in technical discussions and collaboration with Thai educators, researchers and professionals at various universities, research and technical institutions around the country.

23. There is a huge body of literature on this, much of it summarized in Skeldon, 1990.

of highly skilled, e.g. through exit controls or taxes (Lopes, 2002), but have found these difficult to implement. While it cannot be completely discounted, there is a lack of empirical data to support such a general negative assumption. Recent evidence by the World Bank and others supports the conclusion that population movement can significantly lower per capita and national poverty.²⁴

The principal reason for this lies in the nature of the migration process itself, which is rarely just a movement from A to B, but a complex circulation between two or more destinations. Also, migrants rarely operate in a social vacuum, but are meshed into family and community networks. Rather than just being individual income maximizers, they are seen as part of a communal risk-minimizing strategy. Such an interpretation falls within the so-called “new home economics” approach to theories of migration (Massey et al., 1993; Stark, 1991).

Migration can therefore be seen as a system linking origins and destinations, in which also money and goods flow. New destinations broaden the resource base of a household, perhaps allowing a more optimal deployment of labour, as those underemployed during the slack part of the agricultural cycle can find work on a plantation or in town. Migrants can be agents of development, strengthening cooperation between home and host societies, helping to alleviate immediate poverty effects at the family and community levels through remittances, investment and the introduction of new production skills, and the like.

By extending their resource base through systems of circulation, transnational or internal, people minimize their exposure to risk and thus reduce the probability of falling into poverty. Circular/temporary migration

for the poor is a basic livelihood strategy that uses migration positively to avoid the poverty trap.

DIASPORA AND REMITTANCES

More recent studies show how migrant remittances are an indispensable part of the economic survival of many countries, and at local levels can lift people out of poverty (Nyberg Sorensen, 2004; Adams and Page, 2003). But like so much about migration and poverty, this is notoriously difficult to measure accurately. Unless specialized surveys are undertaken, estimates of the amounts of money and goods remitted by internal migrants are virtually impossible to make. Some estimates of international remittances do exist, but they only reflect the official flows. Much more is transmitted informally through relatives or when the migrants return. Because of the way data are captured, remittances can be underestimated by international sources on the one hand, and overestimated by governments on the other.²⁵

As discussed in greater detail in other chapters of this report, the volume and importance of officially recorded flows have more than doubled between the 1980s and the 1990s, and are likely to surpass USD 100 billion by 2005,²⁶ much higher than global official development assistance (ODA). If flows through unofficial channels were to be included, they would be much higher, with estimates for Bangladesh suggesting that less than half of remittances flowed through official channels (Siddiqui, 2003).

India and the Philippines were among the top three beneficiaries of migrant remittances in the developing world (alongside Mexico) in the period 1995-2000.²⁷ In Asia, the Philippines is the labour exporter *par excellence*, with some 7 million émigrés, of which half are estimated to be working on contract, around 60

24. Recent World Bank research shows, for example, that on average a 10 per cent increase in the number of international migrants in a country's population can lead to a 1.6 per cent decline in per capita poverty and that a 10 per cent increase in the share of remittances in a country's GDP can lead to a 1.2 per cent decline in poverty (see the global study for the World Bank by Adams and Page, 2004).

25. International agencies like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) could underestimate the transfers by not including informal transactions, and official government statistics could overestimate them because other financial repatriations, including illicit ones, cannot always be distinguished from remittances. See also MPI (2003).

26. See also the chapter “Economic Costs and Benefits of International Labour Migration”.

27. See World Bank statistics at: www.worldbank.org/prospects/gdf2003/gdf_statApp_web.pdf (p.198).

per cent being women. In 2000 alone, more than USD 6 billion in foreign exchange were remitted to the Philippines (Go, 2002). For India, the annual remittances for the past five years have consistently been more than USD 9 billion, and have significantly expanded the earnings and employment opportunity of the middle class, and helped India's entry into the global economy (Newland, 2004).

But remittances are also important for many other Asian labour exporters such as Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. For Pakistan in the mid-1980s, they represented about 9 per cent of GDP and were an important factor in allowing Pakistan to sustain the highest growth rate in South Asia through most of the 1970s and 1980s (Addleton, 1992).²⁸ In the Indian state of Kerala in the 1990s, remittances accounted for 21 per cent of state income (Kannan and Hari, 2002). Even Vietnam, a relatively recent entrant into regional and global labour markets, had around 300,000 workers overseas in 2000 remitting USD 1.25 billion annually (Nguyen, 2002).

Although the important dimension of foreign exchange earnings is missing in remittances from internal migrants, these, too, are significant for communities of origin. The National Migration Survey of Thailand in 2000 shows that over one-quarter of internal migrants had sent money or goods back to their households of origin during the 12 months prior to the survey (Osaki, 2002). The numbers remitting tended to increase, as they spent more time away from home, and one-third of those who had been away for longer than 10 years were still sending money home (*ibid*). This is an important difference between internal migration and international migration.

Given that the number of internal migrants in any country vastly exceeds the number of those going overseas,²⁹ the volume of money sent back to the rural sector from cities in the developing world is

significant, even if amounts sent by overseas migrants are greater on a per capita basis since, on average, they earn more than those at home. In China, households that send out internal migrants appear to increase the per capita income of those left behind by between 14 and 30 per cent (de Brauw et al., 2001). However, the marginal propensity to save appears to be generally higher in the case of remittances from international migration (Ratha, 2003) and, in the example of the State of Kerala in India, these remittances appear to have reduced the overall poverty rate in the state by three per cent, and by over six per cent among the most deprived (Zachariah, Kannan and Rajan, 2002).

More critical than the actual amounts, however, are the uses to which the monies are put, the likely impact of remittances on areas of origin of migration and, in particular, whether they actually help alleviate poverty. At one level, remittances tend to be used for conspicuous consumption rather than investment; e.g. for house construction or the sponsoring of weddings and other such purposes, rather than improvements likely to lead to increased agricultural productivity. At another level, they also pay for the education of the next generation, and that does appear to be a clear investment strategy.

Some communities use remittances more for education than others (although, as in the case of the Philippines, this education can be used by the children to better prepare future emigration for work abroad.) But expenditure on house construction can also stimulate local building enterprises and generate employment and trade in materials (if they are not imported). Even something as obvious an example of conspicuous consumption as wedding feasts generates demand for local foods, supports local musicians, etc. The Philippines can show how in some towns remittances have strengthened the local medical infrastructure and boosted banks' holdings in order to increase local loans.³⁰

28. The Asia Development Bank estimates some USD 1.6 billion remitted annually to Pakistan; the Pakistan Ministry of Finance believes it to be as high as USD 6 billion (Nyberg Sorensen, 2004); and the World Bank cites USD3.5 billion for 2002 (World Bank, 2002a).

29. For example, in Vietnam some 4.3 million people moved internally during 1994-1999, as compared with 300,000 who emigrated in this period (Skeldon, 2003).

30. See the 2001 report on the impact of remittances on the rural city of Pozorrrubio, with a large émigré community abroad, which concludes: "remittances can help raise a community from poverty - often more effectively than governments" (Wall Street Journal, 2001).

Thus, there can be important indirect benefits of remittance money to towns and villages, although there is still much information lacking on this area. The dynamics across large emigration countries can also differ widely. In China, remittances from abroad are not proportionate to the huge Chinese diaspora, when compared with the remittance performance of India or the Philippines, *inter alia* because of where the diaspora generally hails from (e.g. the more prosperous coastal towns). The government has also aimed its policies more at attracting direct investments and trading opportunities through its diaspora (see below).

At the family and village level, this means that there may be less direct person-to-person benefit derived from international remittances than could be expected of such a massive diaspora, and which would be so crucial for addressing immediate poverty needs at family and community levels. By contrast, recent research by China's Agriculture Ministry shows that internal migration is better able to boost economies in the poorer rural sector; and that remittances from the country's fast-growing urban labourers are likely to surpass agriculture as the biggest income generators in the rural areas they left to find work. The research found that an estimated 98 million rural residents, who worked away from their villages, sent or carried home a total of Rmb370 billion (ca. USD45 billion) in 2003, an increase of 8.5 per cent over the previous year (Kyngé, 2004).

While clearly there is personal and community growth through such consumption, particularly in some rural areas (funded by internal migrants) and the more prosperous migrant-sending regions (funded by the international diaspora), the extent of actual and long-term poverty alleviation and development support from remittances remains unclear. The general conclusion about remittances is that they can boost development overall in poor countries, and subsequently benefit the poor. Migrants and their families generally tend to use their wealth wisely, and the benefits appear to more than counterbalance

costs.³¹ But it is likely that in many instances these do not flow directly to poor households, if the poorest do not migrate, or if supporting policies are more focused on larger, macro uses of remittances.

More information on these linkages and effects is needed; and is now, laudably, being pursued by some international donor agencies and partner governments (World Bank, DFID). For the governments, the immediate challenges will be to balance the roles to be played by the different sectors in overall national growth; and ensure that policies to leverage the effect of remittances, investment and other "returns" from their diaspora, both international and internal, help maintain that balance to the lasting benefit of both the communities and the country.

IMPACT ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITY

More difficult to assess is the impact of remittances on socio-economic inequality. Since many who move tend to be from the wealthier families in any community, the remittances logically flow back to those families, exacerbating or at least reinforcing existing inequalities. Poverty can be measured by the proportion of wealth controlled by the various quintiles in any population, and if the upper 20 per cent are increasing their "share" as a result of migration, and the lowest fifth decreasing their share, it could be argued that migration was indeed contributing to the intensification of poverty. Yet again, the evidence is contradictory.

In Pakistan, the distribution of remittances appears to have increased inequalities between migrant and non-migrant households, and yet spread benefits to a wider range of groups and areas that could effectively undermine the centres of traditional political and economic power (Addleton, 1992).

Migration flows do tend to be generated out of specific "niches" or areas of origin. For example, most of the migration from China comes from relatively few districts in the three coastal provinces of

31. See the Asian examples summarized in, for example, Gunatilleke, 1986.

Guangdong, Fujian and Zhejiang, much of the migration from India to the Gulf States is from Kerala, and almost all the migrants from Bangladesh and Pakistan to the UK come from, respectively, the districts of Sylhet and Mirpur. Hence, certain micro-regions may benefit more than those areas sending fewer migrants, thus increasing regional as well as social inequalities (Seddon et al., 2002). Nevertheless, data from Thailand show that, although the per capita amount of remittances to poor households may be much less than to wealthier families, it has a much greater relative impact and helps to alleviate poverty (Osaki, 2002).

Migration may thus help reduce absolute poverty among some communities, but at the same time increase feelings of relative deprivation among others. Overall, people may be better fed as a result of migration, but the personal sense of deprivation may still generate resentment. Thus, migration can also be a significant factor in the growth of some social and revolutionary movements, a theme that remains under-researched (Skeldon, 1987). Such movements have led in the past to destruction that in turn extended poverty on a massive scale. Illustrations are scarce here, as this remains an under-researched area, albeit important.³²

There also remains the issue of how much remittances may be helping some governments in developing countries of origin to defer structural, labour market and educational changes essential for longer-term poverty alleviation. Some experts strike a cautionary note here, based on experiences in Latin America, as financial institutions can often have different goals for remittances than those of the migrants, their families or the government (Ellerman, 2003).

The overall question for policy makers is how to increase the impacts of remittances on poverty alleviation. There is still insufficient conclusive

evidence about current actual impacts, and the differences from region to region, also rural to urban, within a country. In the Philippines, despite the massive remittances from abroad, and evidence of their positive impact in many areas, income distribution remains problematic, relative to other Southeast Asian countries, and it takes high economic growth to benefit the poor (Abella et al., 2004).³³ But the obvious question here is: how much worse would the situation be without remittances?

Increasingly, governments and finance institutions are finding ways to expedite and lower the costs of remittance transfers, which are still prohibitive for many migrants (Lowell et al., 2002).³⁴ In Asia, governments are trying to attract remittances through foreign currency accounts and bonds (India), pre-departure counselling to overseas foreign workers (Philippines), simpler transfer procedures and expansion of financial networks (Bangladesh) (IOM, 2003).

Economists would, finally, strike a note of caution about overestimating the “multiplier” effect of remittances. Businesses established through remittances cannot necessarily rely on their continued flow for sustainability. Remittances need to be factored into any development and growth planning as a *means* – an economic trigger – not a *way* of life.

MIGRANTS AS AGENTS OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION

A **FINAL** migration factor which can alleviate poverty is the behaviour of the migrants at destination and origin (after return), both domestic and international. As stated, migrants often tend to be among the more innovative and better educated members of any population. A small number of them are traders and entrepreneurs, brokers of economic exchange

32. See the discussion of the Eritrean, Sri Lankan (Tamil) and Indian (Hindu nationalists) examples in Newland, 2004.

33. The 2004 CEME report on the Philippines states that globally, a 10 per cent increase in income growth means a 10 per cent gain in the incomes of the poor. In the Philippines, 10 per cent overall growth means a 4 per cent gain for the poor (Martin, 2004).

34. See the Chapter “Migrant Remittances as a Source of Development Finance”.

generating both wealth for themselves and employment for locals at origin and destination, which in turn generates prosperity. Entrepreneurship, often associated with particular ethnic groups, such as the Chinese or Jews, is perhaps more a function of situations and linkages resulting from migration than of particular ethnic characteristics. Entrepreneurs are the minority among the migrants (Chirot and Reid, 1997), who generate capital accumulation.

Migrants can and do contribute to the development of their home communities to varying degrees and in different ways: through remittances, as seen above, but also through new, enhanced skills acquired abroad, which they can bring back to their communities of origin, or use to train people there, on short or long-term assignments. They can also invest from abroad in community development schemes (e.g. through Home Town Associations). But they can also support democratization and human rights in their countries of origin, an area which could well engage more women in the interest of attitudinal changes towards the role of women (Newland, 2004).

The Philippines already has a well functioning, complex programme and administrative structure to encourage and support the return of its experienced diaspora.³⁵ China, too, has a long history of profiting from its “diaspora”, also internal,³⁶ and has in recent years successfully attracted back large numbers of students into leading positions in China, as well as diaspora investments in Chinese enterprises.³⁷ The government has adapted its laws and practices to provide, i.a., tax and fee concessions to overseas investors, and this has paid off with almost half a million enterprises relying on foreign investments at October 2003, and 60 per cent of foreign investments coming from overseas Chinese

investors (ibid). In India, a recent sample survey looked at IT professionals in Bangalore and their role in stimulating international mobility of Indian professionals (Khadria, 2004).³⁸ In Bangladesh, associations similar to the Home Town Associations in Latin America have sprung up quite independently (Newland, 2004).

While there continues to be an unfortunate lack of consolidated data on this issue, there are many stories around the world about migrants successfully operating as agents of growth and/or development for their depressed home communities.³⁹ But care needs to be taken about making an easy leap from development to poverty alleviation, or assumptions that diasporas are a panacea for poverty, harmoniously working (or with the potential to work harmoniously) for the good of the country. As shown above, diasporas are highly heterogeneous and can be very idiosyncratic in their relationship to the country of origin.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS – GENDER ISSUES AND MIGRANT HEALTH

GENDER differences are an important consideration in the migration-poverty debate, particularly in parts of Asia where women are among the poorest, and are increasingly resorting to internal or international migration for economic survival (e.g. Bangladesh). In areas where males undertake most of the agricultural work, women can be released from rural households to access off-farm activities in towns and vice versa in areas where women dominate labour input into agriculture (as in much of Africa). The diversification of resource base, labour input and gender role can all

35. See also the chapter “Filipinos Working Overseas: Opportunity and Challenge.”

36. See Ellerman (2003) who argues that the successful “township-village enterprises” (TVEs) were the legacy of peasants who returned home with new skills after long displacements to urban areas during the Chinese Civil War.

37. See also the Textbox 6.3.

38. Khadria mentions in his paper that the results of this survey, which is part of a two-pronged survey (also on health workers), are published in an OECD STI Working Paper, 2004.

39. Ellerman cites the case of Slovenia, which, as a result of its technicians and engineers being forced to work in Germany during World War II was able to use the enhanced skills of its returnees to develop a high technology industry after the war, that has helped Slovenia become a leading “transition” economy today (Ellerman, 2003).

act to alleviate poverty, where households are dependent upon a single resource at one location. But this strategy also has its costs, as migrants can be exploited at destination, and the separation of family members can cause major social disruption at origin.

These experiences are not new to Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan, which have each variously banned or restricted the emigration of their young women, following abusive incidents abroad.⁴⁰ Today, Sri Lanka is the only one among these with an active policy to foster female labour emigration. But the problem is the much higher, immeasurable incidence of irregular migration by the women, who as uncounted statistics are highly vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, illness and death, particularly if they become victims of trafficking.

A recent study on trafficking in South Asia by the Asian Development Bank found that the most commonly identified “push” factor driving the trafficking process is poverty (ADB, 2003; 2003a). Despite this, trafficking often does not receive sufficient priority in strategies aiming to combat poverty. Trafficking is not articulated in any of the national anti-poverty country strategy papers in South Asia (ibid).

These negative consequences need to be balanced against possible improvements in the status of migrants who acquire skills or pursue education at destinations. The gender issues are significant, as women, by absenting themselves even temporarily from patriarchal structures, can improve their status through work elsewhere (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994). Temporary absences of men can also thrust women left behind into positions of responsibility to run households, elevate their status and, indirectly or directly, reduce the incidence of deprivation. Whether

they stay or leave, they can become agents of change and of development for their families and country. This has certainly been the case in the Philippines,⁴¹ where the majority of labour migrants are women who contribute massively to remittance flows and family improvements at home.

Migrant Health is also assuming a higher priority in the work of WHO/UNAIDS, World Bank, UNDP and IOM on the nexus between migration and development. In general, there is a greater understanding of the longer-term devastation to national economies and development goals of the HIV pandemic (World Bank, 2003), particularly in Africa,⁴² but increasingly also in Asia, where a report to the UNDP anticipates a pandemic potentially larger than in Africa (Iredale et al., 2004). There is an urgent call by the World Bank, UNAIDS, IOM and others for national policies and programmes to combat HIV and AIDS, also in regard to mobile populations, which are highly vulnerable, particularly where such large numbers are clandestine as in Asia, and particularly women in exploitative situations,⁴³ as described above.

The DFID/WB conference in London on remittances in 2003 concluded that very little is known about the gender differences in remittance behaviour. International agencies and NGOs are increasingly working together to fill the large gaps in information on both the gender and health issues, as a first step through better research;⁴⁴ and this urgently needs to target the as yet largely unknown relationship between migration and poverty.

40. See also the chapter on “International Migration Trends and Patterns in Asia and Oceania”.

41. Some 60 per cent of Filipino migrants are female, most of them domestic helpers, maids, nurses and caregivers.

42. The WB report (World Bank, 2003) anticipates that South Africa could face progressive economic collapse in several generations unless it combats the AIDS epidemic more urgently.

43. UNAIDS reports that today 48 per cent of all adults living with HIV are women. Refer also the UNAIDS website: www.unaids.org/EN/other/functionality/Search.asp

44. The World Bank is particularly investing large amounts of money in the HIV/AIDS issue (WB, 2003).

SOME POLICY CONCLUSIONS

THIS CHAPTER has surveyed some of the complexities of the interplay between migration and poverty, particularly in Asia. In many areas, migration can lead to improved chances of survival and an alleviation of poverty, but it can also bring exploitation and disruption, with potential costs for the migrant, society and governments. The debate weighs in favour of migration being an effective tool in the fight against poverty in less developed countries, but only where policy and programme environments can foster those benefits. Amid the uncertainty of outcome, some sensible policy directions have emerged from experience for policymakers' consideration:

i) *Facilitate migration programmes as a means of reducing poverty* in the country of origin and, where appropriate, the country of destination. Migration may not be able to eradicate all types of poverty, and may even exacerbate some; but the OECD argues that if the EU, Canada, Japan and the US allowed migrants to make up just four per cent of their labour force, the returns to origin areas could be around USD 160–200 billion a year, far more than any potential debt relief (*The Guardian*, 26 August 2002). International agencies such as the World Bank, ILO and IOM could work with states to broaden the base of such regular immigration options globally (e.g. through bilateral labour agreements).

Development concerns can be protected through better regulation of international recruitment agencies and guidelines for ethical recruitment of workers from developing countries. Some models exist, such as the UK's code of conduct for recruitment of international health workers, and regional processes could help devise and enforce such cross-cutting agreements, as, for example, the EU is trying to do at one end of the north-south migration spectrum, and the Puebla Process, "5 plus 5", MIDA, MIDWA and others are doing at the other end.

But "development-friendly" migration policies go much further than simply cautiously opening the door to immigration. They can bolster the transnational networks between origin and destination countries conducive to diaspora-based investment and growth in the former, through more effective integration programmes and flexible citizenship arrangements.

ii) *Integrate migration into broader economic and social development frameworks*. For example, insert migration into the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by the UN to be achieved by 2015. Clever migration management strategies, as per the first point, are important for all socio-economic development goals – national and international. Within the social agendas of the MDGs, they can help strengthen gender equality, education and health. A focus on migrant health could help combat the spread of diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria, which seriously hamper development and poverty alleviation prospects.

This is also an injunction to both the UN and other international agencies working on migration, and on development, to combine their efforts. More coherent approaches across different arms of government and the international community are more likely to attract the right donor support.

iii) *Support and enhance the contribution of diasporas to development*, for example through remittance leveraging, diaspora networking, and sustainable return and reintegration. Only governments and the private sector working together can reduce the costs of remittance transfers, improve remittance transmission possibilities for migrants, and mobilize and channel savings through greater involvement of formal financial institutions. Strengthening ties between countries of origin and their diasporas, as China, the Philippines, India and Thailand are increasingly doing, e.g. through investment opportunities (with tax breaks), enlightened bank account policies, even social events for visiting families, can bring big returns for home communities.

Development agencies and donors should directly empower diasporas, e.g. through network strengthening, incentives and general capacity building, to encourage them to contribute in a more systematic way to poverty alleviation at home (Newland, 2004).

The Philippines, Taiwan, India and China mainland offer some diverse but useful examples of how governments can support their respective diasporas (ibid), but more research is required on the exact impacts on poverty alleviation, and why these differ from country to country or region to region within a country, depending on cultural factors, the economy, and the strategic importance of that economy globally.

All such policies should not force the diaspora into formalistic patterns of behaviour, but rather foster an enabling environment, whereby migrants choose to support development initiatives at home, and are supported in that choice. Remittances should not be seen as a replacement of international donor support for development, or an enduring form of cash flow, but as a “trigger” for other longer-term projects (Nyberg Sorensen, 2004).

iv) *Enhance understanding of the development potential of migration via Mode 4 discussions.* This is more generally development-oriented, and would need some further calibration in regard to poverty alleviation. The debate is huge, complex and controversial,⁴⁵ and this chapter only seeks to link this whole topic with GATS, and ensure that the GATS debate takes account of the fact that, given the right policies, mobility of workers can reinforce the competitive advantage of labour-abundant developing countries, and leverage poverty reduction efforts.

v) *Protect migrants, both male and female, from abuse and exploitation.* The social, financial and political costs of abuse, particularly where illness or death are involved, can be huge, also in regard to poverty alleviation. Policy makers are keenly aware that the profits garnered by smugglers and traffickers are finding their way into the wrong pockets. The money could be fuelling better policies, particularly in regard to empowerment of women, human rights and alleviation of the poverty and deprivation that makes people vulnerable to the wiles of smugglers and traffickers.

vi) Importantly, *improve the quality of data on this subject by improving policy-oriented research* on the migration-poverty linkage, as the UK development agency DFID and others have begun to do.⁴⁶ Such research would need to be extended across countries and regions of origin and destination. The network should be inter-disciplinary, bringing together the perspectives and findings of national and international expert agencies in development, migration, humanitarian, labour, health, cultural and education issues.

All the above issues require more research, but without more information on the behaviour of work permit holders and migrant communities in host countries, it would be difficult to plan support strategies for diaspora and migrant networks to contribute to poverty alleviation (Findlay, 2001). Improving the quality of data on remittance flows and their impact on development is one of the key recommendations of the DFID conference on the subject in October 2003.⁴⁷ DFID is also leading the way by investing in a knowledge base on the whole issue, which may lay the foundations for future joined approaches to migration and poverty.

45. See also the Textbox 9.1 “Trade and Migration: GATS Mode 4”.

46. Referenced by Tamas’ study, 2003, which tours other research projects undertaken or under way on the general subject of migration, development and poverty, e.g. the overview of research and policy activities in regard to this nexus by the Sussex Centre for Migration Research. DFID is also supporting the establishment of a new Migration, Globalisation and Poverty Development Research Centre at the University of Sussex.

47. Conference on “Migrant Remittances: Development Impact, Opportunities, and Future Prospects”, sponsored by DFID, IMP and the World Bank, London, 9-10 October 2003.

The challenge is a dual one: poverty reduction programmes should take account of, and build on, the potentially positive force of migration; and migration policies should take account of development needs and reinforce the potentially positive force of migrants to help meet these needs. This can be best achieved through the combined efforts of the international and national development and migration agencies, the migrant diaspora, and the private sector. The policy pointers in this chapter can serve all parties in this endeavour, and be tailored to the specific circumstance of the country, region or community in need.

CHAPTER 14

MIGRANT REMITTANCES AS A SOURCE OF DEVELOPMENT FINANCE¹

Whether remittances are used for consumption or buying houses, or for other investments, they stimulate demand for other goods and services in the economy... and enable a country to pay for imports, repay foreign debt and improve creditworthiness.

INTRODUCTION

WORKERS' remittances have emerged as a major source of external development finance in recent years (Ratha, 2003; *The Economist*, July 31, 2004). Given their magnitude and potential to reduce poverty, they have gained the attention of policymakers at the highest levels.² This chapter discusses recent and current trends in remittance flows, highlights some of the advantages and disadvantages associated with these flows, and identifies some important issues confronting policy makers in leveraging the effectiveness of remittances for development in developing countries and regions of origin.

BACKGROUND

OFFICIALLY recorded remittances received by developing countries exceeded USD 126 billion in 2004 (Graph 14.1).³ The actual size of remittances, including both officially recorded and unrecorded transfers through informal channels, was even larger. *Remittances are now more than double the size of net*

official flows (under USD 25 billion), and are second only to foreign direct investment (FDI) (around USD 165 billion) as a source of external finance for developing countries (Graph 14.1). In 36 out of 153 developing countries, remittances are larger than all capital flows, public and private. In many countries, they are larger than their earnings from the most important export item. In Mexico, for example, they were larger than FDI, and about the same size as oil exports, in 2003. In Sri Lanka, they were larger than tea exports (Ratha 2003).

Remittances continued to grow in 2004 reaching USD 23 billion in India, USD 17 billion in Mexico, and USD 8 billion in the Philippines. In part, the surge in remittance flows can be attributed to better data recording by central banks, in response to the generally increased scrutiny of remittances flowing through alternative channels. But a reduction in remittance costs – some 60 per cent in the US-Mexico corridor since 1999 – has also stimulated a growth in flows. An increase in migrant stocks is the other factor affecting remittance flows. Finally, security concerns and heightened scrutiny by immigration authorities in many rich countries have also encouraged outward remittance of savings by undocumented migrants. Pakistan is a case in point,

1. The author of this chapter is Dilip Ratha, Senior Economist, World Bank, Washington, D.C.; dratha@worldbank.org

2. The G8 Heads of State Summit at Sea Island in June 2004, for example, called for "(...) better coherence and coordination of international organizations working to enhance remittance services and heighten the developmental impact of remittance receipts".

3. Remittances are defined as the sum of workers' remittances, compensation of employees and migrant transfers. The workers' remittance figures from the IMF Balance of Payments Statistics are known to be under-reported in many countries. See Ratha, 2003, for a discussion of data and definition issues.

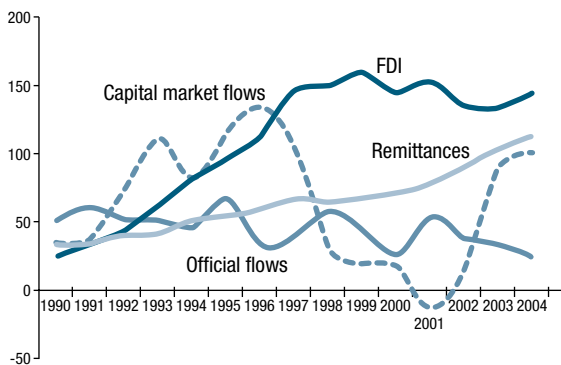
where remittance flows to that country more than tripled between 2001 and 2003.⁴

Remittances are more evenly distributed than capital flows. Even though the top recipient countries are typically large countries such as India, Mexico and the Philippines, remittances as a share of GDP or in per capita terms are particularly large in small countries such as Tonga, Tajikistan and Lesotho. Lebanon is among the top recipients in terms of remittances per capita.

A remarkable feature of remittances is that they tend to be a stable financial flow for developing countries, and even have a counter-cyclical effect in times of economic hardship. They typically serve an altruistic purpose for the migrants. In times of need, migrants tend to send more money to help out families back home. The other distinguishing feature of remittances is that they are person-to-person flows, well targeted to the needs of the recipients, who are often poor. The sender has a fair degree of control over the use of remittances, tending to send them in several instalments over the course of a year.

GRAPH 14.1

RESOURCE FLOWS TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (USD BILLION)



The rest of this chapter briefly addresses the following five main issues confronting policymakers interested in facilitating remittance flows and enhancing their developmental impact:

- How to strengthen the financial infrastructure supporting remittances?
- How to balance policies between combating money laundering and facilitating remittances?
- What is the developmental impact of remittances, and how can this be enhanced?
- How to improve data on remittances and migration?
- Should governments use fiscal incentives to attract remittances?

STRENGTHENING THE FINANCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORTING REMITTANCES

EXORBITANT fees charged by money transfer agents – 13 per cent on average, and frequently as high as 20 per cent – are a drain on hard-earned remittances (Graph 14.2). And they especially affect poor migrants, who remit only small amounts at a proportionally higher, at times exorbitant, cost. *Reducing remittance fees would significantly increase annual remittance flows to developing countries, especially to the poor recipients.*

The remittance cost typically involves three components: the true cost of sending money, the profit component, and the foreign exchange (FX) commission. It is difficult to see why remittance fees should increase – rather than stay fixed – with the amount transferred.⁵ Anecdotal evidence suggests that the true cost of sending remittances is very small. Informal channels, for example, regularly charge fees below one per cent.⁶

4. Recent household surveys in countries like Guatemala and Colombia have shown an upward trend in remittance receipts for 2004. For example, Colombia is believed to have received over USD 3 billion in 2004 (sources: IOM Guatemala City and IOM Bogota; and IOM Press Briefing Notes, 19 November 2004).

5. Only one component of remittance costs, the FX commission, should be proportional to the size of remittances.

6. In an informal conversation, an undocumented migrant in Barcelona reported in 2004 that he saves on average 300–350 euros a month of which he remits home 250. The owner of the café down the road charges only a foreign exchange conversion fee, under 1 per cent, to deliver the funds to the recipient in another country in about 24–48 hours.

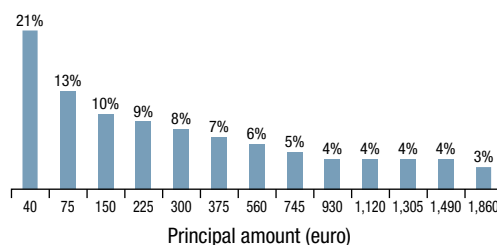
It is reported that some formal agents in Hong Kong charge a fixed fee of only USD 2.5 to transfer funds to the Philippines (Fairlamb et al., 2003). High costs are partly the result of inefficiencies in the regulatory framework. The profit component is high, as many transfer agents have been able to charge high fees without exposure to competition. To some extent, competition in the remittance industry is hindered by ad hoc rules and regulations. For example, high collateral requirements (often in excess of a million dollars in some US states) often deter new players who could compete effectively in some remittance corridors. Worse, in the US collateral requirements and compliance with regulations vary widely from one state to another, discouraging many transfer agencies from expanding their operation across states (Ratha and Riedberg, 2004).

In some countries, transfer agents need to acquire a full banking licence, even when they have no intention of providing banking services. Entry barriers also include lack of access to existing payment systems, which forces new entrants into the remittance market to build their own costly proprietary transfer systems. Frequently, some large remittance service providers have persuaded the postal network, or large banks with extensive branch networks in developing countries, to sign exclusive contracts that limit the access of competitors to these distribution networks. To address these problems adequately would require policy coordination – especially harmonizing regulatory and compliance requirements – between both source and destination countries. It would also be helpful to find ways to harmonize payment systems and increase access to existing payment systems. Use of electronic card-based products would also reduce remittance costs.

GRAPH 14.2

COSTS OF SENDING REMITTANCES ARE HIGH AND REGRESSIVE (% OF PRINCIPAL AMOUNT)

Cost of sending money from Brussels using a major money transfer operator, excluding foreign exchange commission



Source:

Price list obtained from various Western Union branches in Brussels and Paris.

The currency conversion fee, the third cost component mentioned above, is often in the range of 3 per cent of the principal amount. Banks with access to wholesale foreign exchange markets tend to charge a lower FX fee than money transfer operators, but banks also tend to benefit from the “float”, the interest they earn by delaying delivery of funds.⁷ The FX commission can be very high in countries with exchange controls and wide divergence between the official and the parallel exchange rate. In Venezuela, for example, the FX commission was nearly 40 per cent (the official rate was 1920 bolivars per dollar, the free market rate was over 3,200 bolivars per dollar) in October 2004, entailing a huge loss to remittance senders using formal channels (World Bank, 2004).

Even with the existing cost structure, there may be scope to reduce average remittance costs by bundling, i.e. enabling senders to remit more money but less frequently. In the above cost schedule, for example, if a person sends 150 euros per month for a period of six months, the total remittance cost would be 10 per cent or 90 euros. If, on the other hand, the person could send the entire 900 euros in one transaction, the remittance cost would fall to just over four per cent, or under 40 euros. The difficulty is that many poor remittance senders typically do not have sufficient

7. For example, if a Brazilian bank received remittances on October 11, 2004, and delayed payment to the final recipient by two weeks (i.e., until after October 22, 2004), and invested the funds in the overnight money market, it would earn a float of 2.85 per cent.

funds to be able to bundle remittances. Banks and microfinance institutions could play a role in alleviating such liquidity constraints and reducing the effective cost of remittances.

Unfortunately, a large number of migrants, especially those who are poor or undocumented, do not have bank accounts. Improving migrant workers' access to banking facilities in their host countries (typically developed countries) would not only reduce costs of remittances, it would also lead to financial development and improved intermediation of savings and investment in many receiving countries. It is observed, for example, that 14-28 per cent of non-members who came to credit unions affiliated with the World Council of Credit Unions to transfer funds ended up opening an account with them. Using existing retail financial infrastructure, such as postal savings banks, commercial banks, or microfinance institutions in rural areas could facilitate remittance flows.

To reiterate a point made above, there is a strong role for governments in setting the right policy and competition framework to ensure that private and financial sectors can be as facilitative as suggested above, also between states (such as the US-Mexican government partnership in fostering the Mexican diaspora's reinvestment in home communities). A stronger, more accommodating financial infrastructure could help the migrants help themselves, and their community and country more effectively.

BALANCING THE EFFORTS TO FIGHT MONEY LAUNDERING AND TO FACILITATE REMITTANCE FLOWS

THE REGULATORY regime governing remittances has to strike a balance between curbing money laundering, terrorist financing and general financial abuse, and facilitating the flow of funds between hard working

migrants and their families back home through formal channels. It is not entirely clear that personal remittances (which are typically small in size) are an efficient way of laundering or illegally transferring sizeable amounts of funds. More importantly, informal channels owe their existence to the inefficiencies in the formal system: informal channels are cheaper, and informal agents work longer hours, operate in remote areas where there are no formal channels, and often have staff able to speak the language of the migrant customers. Informal channels, however, can be subject to abuse.

Strengthening the formal remittance infrastructure by offering the advantages of low cost, flexible hours, expanded reach and language can induce a shift in flows from the informal to the formal sector. Both sender and recipient countries should support migrants' access to banking by providing them with identification tools (as banks are now doing in regard to Mexican migrants in the US).

UNDERSTANDING THE DEVELOPMENTAL IMPACT OF REMITTANCES

ON THE POSITIVE side, *remittances are believed to reduce poverty, as it is often the poor who migrate and send back remittances.* Remittances may also help improve economic growth, especially if they are used for financing children's education or health expenses. Even when they are used for consumption, they can have multiplier effects, especially in countries with high unemployment.⁸ In Morocco, as in many other countries, a large part of remittances is invested in real estate, reflecting, on the one hand, the altruistic desire of migrants to provide adequate/better housing to families left behind and, on the other, a lack of other investment instruments in the recipient community (Khachani, 2004). In Armenia, a household survey in 2002 showed that remittances seemed to go to some of the most vulnerable households in the country, and made up 80 per cent

8. See the chapter "Migration and Poverty: Some Issues in the Context of Asia".

of household incomes for those receiving them (Roberts, 2004).

Whether remittances are used for consumption or buying houses or other investments, they stimulate demand for other goods and services and have a positive effect on the economy. Some experts however argue that remittances may reduce recipients' motivation to work, and thus slow down growth (although reduced work effort by some individuals need not translate into low employment in an economy with a high unemployment rate). Others argue that remittances may increase income inequality in the recipient country, because it is the rich who *can* migrate and send back remittances. Also, as with all foreign currency inflows, too great a volume of remittances can result in currency appreciation, which may affect the competitiveness of exports. On the other hand, remittance receipts bring in valuable foreign exchange and enable a country to pay for imports, repay foreign debt and improve creditworthiness.

The effect of remittances on country creditworthiness is very evident in some countries. For example, for several years it was feared that Lebanon was vulnerable to a balance of payments crisis because its foreign debt stood at nearly five times the value of its exports. Yet, the fact that such a crisis did not materialize is sometimes attributed to large remittance flows. Remittances sent by its diaspora nearly equalled Lebanon's exports (about USD 2.4 billion) in 2002. The ratio of Lebanon's debt to exports is halved when remittances are included in the denominator. (Brazil and some other countries have been able to borrow from the international capital markets at lower interest and longer maturity by using remittances as collateral (Ketker and Ratha, 2001)).

In policy circles, it is often debated whether there may be ways to encourage the use of remittances for more productive purposes than consumption or purchasing real estate. While such a question may be appropriate for official aid flows, it is not exactly appropriate for personal remittance flows. If it is true that the senders

and recipients rationally decide, given their economic environment and available investment instruments, to consume more and save less, then it would be hard for policy makers to induce them to do otherwise. Indeed, in such circumstances, forcing remittance recipients to save more and consume less would reduce consumer welfare. Also, such policies may exacerbate the distrust many migrants often profess towards their governments.

Nevertheless, there may be ways to indirectly increase the development impact of remittances. For example, encouraging account-to-account remittance flows instead of cash transfers would result in increased savings by recipients (and senders) and better matching (by banks) of available savings and investment demand. Improving the investment climate in the recipient community would also encourage more investment. Governments and the private sector could also ensure that other flanking measures are in place to support investment in development-related activities, such as community development projects, mortgage support, health insurance for dependants and similar allocations.

IMPROVING DATA ON REMITTANCES AND MIGRATION

RELIABLE data on remittances are key to our understanding of their development impact, yet the data that are available leave much to be desired. Informal remittances are large and indeterminate. Even recorded data are incomplete. Rich countries such as Canada and Denmark, for example, do not report any remittance data, not to mention several poor countries that either do not report, or report inaccurate data. Even when remittance data are available, countries often classify them incorrectly. Many report workers' remittances as "other transfers". Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish remittance flows from, say, tourism receipts or non-resident deposits. Finally, only a handful of countries report bilateral flows of remittances.

To improve remittance data would require more information to be gathered, and systematic studies to be undertaken of the relationship between migration stock and remittance flows; remittance behaviour of migrant workers in major remittance-source countries, and how remittances respond to changes in the source and destination economies. One way forward, perhaps the only way forward, would be to conduct surveys of remittance senders and recipients, to establish the size of remittance flows, their sources and destinations, the channels used, migrant motivations, and the use of the remittances. Major international coordination – among governments, private sector, international organizations and migrant/diaspora groups – is necessary for improving the data on remittances.⁹

USING FISCAL INCENTIVES TO ATTRACT REMITTANCES

THE MAJORITY of developing countries offer tax incentives to attract remittances. The side effect of such incentives, of course, is that remittances may then be used for tax evasion and money laundering. Also, some governments provide matching funds for remittance-backed projects (as in Mexico's 3-for-1 programme).¹⁰ Again the side effect may be a diversion of scarce budgetary resources to projects favoured by non-resident nationals with the necessary means.

Many aid agencies are looking into the effectiveness of hometown associations (HTAs) to channel aid.¹¹ But the potential to channel any significant volumes of official funds in that way may be limited, although there is clearly a potential to use HTAs to promote community financing of infrastructure or other collective funding for community projects.

One effective policy measure to encourage remittance inflows is the application of uniform exchange rates and eliminating the black market exchange premium. Venezuela offers an interesting example in this respect. As mentioned earlier, with a current black market premium of nearly 40 per cent, the effective cost of sending remittances to Venezuela amounted to nearly half of the principal amount in the last quarter of 2004. Non-resident Venezuelans, therefore, are either discouraged from sending remittances or they are sending them through informal channels.

CONCLUSION

WHILE formulating policies on remittances, policy makers should keep in mind that remittances are *not* public money. They are personal flows, often better left to the remitters and recipients to decide how they should be spent. Efforts to tax remittances or direct them to specific investments may well prove difficult to achieve. Instead, as discussed above, policy makers may wish to improve the investment climate in the recipient communities, and the regulatory and incentives frameworks to encourage and support such investment. Remittances are more effective in generating incomes and investment when they are supported by good public policy and financial infrastructure.

9. IOM has begun to work with governments, e.g., in Guatemala, Colombia, Argentina and Paraguay to survey patterns of remittance flows and use in those countries (sources: IOM Guatemala City, Bogota and Buenos Aires).

10. See the chapter "Migrant Hometown Associations: the Human Face of Globalization".

11. USAID, for example, has been exploring partnerships with HTAs in Mexico and other Latin American countries, see "Remittances at USAID" at www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_partnerships/.

TEXTBOX 14.1

AFRICAN FEMALE DIASPORA IN FRANCE

Historically, most Africans from the sub-Saharan countries migrating to France have originated from the francophone western and central regions of the continent. There are two main discernible movements – from the Senegal River basin starting in the 1960s, and from the Gulf of Guinea and Equatorial and Central Africa in the 1980s, the latter flow dominating the African immigration scene in France from the early 1990s onwards.

Initially, the African flow was dominated by males in line with the general migration patterns of the prosperous 1960s. Young and able-bodied men, the majority from the Sahel countries (Mali, Mauritania, Senegal) came to work in France on rotation for periods between three to six years. The global economic crisis of 1974, and the resulting restrictions imposed by France on labour migration, saw fewer migrants arriving in the 1970s, with those already in the country seeking to establish themselves there more permanently. With this came the desire to have their wives and families join them. In 1976, legislation supporting family reunion helped pave the way for a large influx of women, and marked the beginnings of the gradual feminization of the African diaspora in France.

The numbers of sub-Saharan women in France more than quadrupled from 16,470 in 1975 to 73,000 in 1990, although these flows continued to be largely male-initiated. The women, mostly from the Sahel countries and of rural origin, with little formal education and poor language skills, typically saw their social role restricted to that of mother and housewife. After 1990, the second current of African migrants brought a greater demographic diversity among the incoming migrants and, by 2002, there were more than 140,000 sub-Saharan migrant women in France (see annual report of the French Ministry of Home Affairs for 2003, *Titres de séjour 2002*).

In this period African migrants were generally of urban origin, better educated, linguistically more proficient and showed higher levels of individual initiative, driven by economic or political motivations. Women, too, were better educated and urban-based, and tended to possess a new awareness of their status as women and a propensity for taking control of their own lives. While family reunion continued to play a major role in African female migration in the 1990s, more and more women opted for single-migrant status, be it as unattached females or as married women leaving their children behind. They were often encouraged by their spouses and families based on the popular perception that women in France now enjoyed better employment prospects than men.

Their ultimate objective was economic betterment for themselves and their families back home, which meant a sharply increased presence of independent women migrants seeking access to the French labour market. Their success depended on the ability to remit substantial portions of their income to the home country, thus replicating the traditional male migrant "provider" role.

Despite high motivation and in many cases secondary education and/or formal skills, African women seeking work in France experienced considerable difficulties and have often had to content themselves with menial jobs. The percentage of sub-Saharan women

engaged in the tertiary sector (26% in 1999) is not substantially above that of migrant women in general (23% in 1999, compared with 10.5% of French-born women working in the same sector), but they appear to be over-represented at the lower end of the services category (i.e. catering, caretaking and domestic services). One in three economically active women of sub-Saharan origin was looking for work in 1999 (compared with a 25% unemployment rate for migrant women in general, and 11.2% for French-born females) (Ministère de l'emploi, du travail et de la cohésion sociale, 2002; INSEE, 2000).

However, this increase in migration was accompanied by a sharp rise in the number of women being trafficked from the region, notably from Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon and Sierra Leone, with sub-Saharan women accounting for 10 per cent in 2000, 15 per cent in 2001, 20 per cent in 2002 and, finally, 27.5 per cent in 2003 of the total number of victims of trafficking. The central office to combat trafficking in persons, OCRTEH (Office central pour la repression du trafic des êtres humains) reported a large increase in the number of prostitutes of sub-Saharan origin during this period (Interview with Jean-Michel Colombani, Head of the OCRTEH, May 2004 (Afrik.com) www.afrik.com/article7276.html).

An important feature of the African female diaspora in France is their role in migrant associations that have developed and grown out of the broader migratory patterns. These generally follow a generic organization model of immigrant solidarity, known as OSIM (Organisation de solidarité internationale issue de l'immigration), although their respective structure and purpose vary widely. They often tend to follow or complement those of community organizations in the countries of origin, and aim to foster partnerships and solidarity with those countries.

OSIMs are non-profit organizations and rely on the financial and administrative support of their voluntary membership. Their operational strength depends on their members having a point of anchorage in, and a socio-cultural commitment to, both the host country and the country of origin. While initially more focused on migrant integration and welfare in the host country, in recent years OSIMs have begun to play a stronger role in economic cooperation and development outside the more formal and official foreign aid channels.

Africa-oriented OSIMs, which first appeared as natural extensions of village and inter-village associations in the home countries, are highly visible in France. It is estimated that there are more OSIMs deriving from the two currents of sub-Saharan migration than those representing all other migrant groups together. There were more than 1,000 OSIMs in France in 2000, representing some 32 countries. Of these, more than 200 are African women's associations (GREM, 2000).

While there is as yet no all-encompassing network of migrant women's associations, efforts have been made to group associations with converging aims within the African female diaspora. The most representative of these is the IFAFE (Initiatives des femmes africaines de France et d'Europe), founded as an association in 1993 and reconstituted as a federation in 1996 comprising 23 member associations. Its objectives are twofold: a) support the integration of foreigners in France, combat the negative image of foreigners (especially women) and combat racism and all forms of discrimination, and b) contribute to the

development of migrant source countries in Africa and globally, especially through emergency aid in the event of natural disasters or war.

Despite limited funding, over the last five years IFAFE engaged in a variety of cooperation and development programmes, ranging from humanitarian aid (medication and school equipment), rural development projects (building wells) in Congo, Gabon and Cameroon, to vocational training for orphans or microcredit financing for farming women and small-scale businesswomen who lost their livelihood following the eruption of the Nyiragongo volcano in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Though its work is generally modest and small-scale, IFAFE nevertheless opens the way for African female migrants to be significant players in the wider development arena. Aided and guided by OSIMs, individual migrants or groups can contribute to cooperation and development in ways that go substantially beyond the traditional transfer of remittances. They achieve this with activities ranging from fundraising in the host country or solidarity building for foreign aid programmes, to hands-on participation in skills transfers for and in their home countries.

Contributed by Sylvia Ekra, Project Officer, IOM Geneva, based on the following sources: Service de droits de femme et de l'égalité, Rapport à l'emploi des femmes immigrées et issues de l'immigration 2002, fiche 4-F, Le Point sur: Femmes immigrées et issues de l'immigration, Paris, Ministère de l'emploi, du travail et de la cohésion sociale. Daum, C. (ed.) Typologie des Organisations de solidarité internationale issues de l'immigration, 2000, Paris, GREM, Institut Panos, Ministère des affaires étrangères. Gbadamassi, F., De plus en plus de prostituées africaines en France: L'Office central pour la répression du trafic des êtres humains s'inquiète, Afrik.com 7 May 2004, Paris, L'Afrique sur l'Internet (www.afrik.com/article7276.html). National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies, Thave, S., L'emploi des immigrés en 1999, INSEE Première no. 717, Paris, May 2000. Ministère de l'intérieur, Les titres de séjour des étrangers en France en 2002, cinquième rapport établi en application de l'article 45 de la loi du 11 mai 1998, Paris.

CHAPTER 15

MIGRANT HOMETOWN ASSOCIATIONS (HTAs) – THE HUMAN FACE OF GLOBALIZATION¹

MILLIONS of migrants today maintain some social and familial obligations to their country of origin through remittances. Managed cleverly and in joint community ventures, these ties are increasingly helping to draw the home economies into the global economy, with migrants becoming active agents of the “globalization” of their home countries.

Immigrants are increasingly joining forces to support practical social projects back home through small grassroots organizations known as hometown associations (HTAs). Raising funds for the betterment of their places of origin, HTAs are growing in importance in Latin America and the Caribbean due to the sheer scale of support to their communities. They illustrate the close and complex relationship between development and migration at a number of cultural, economic, political and social levels (Orozco 2004a).

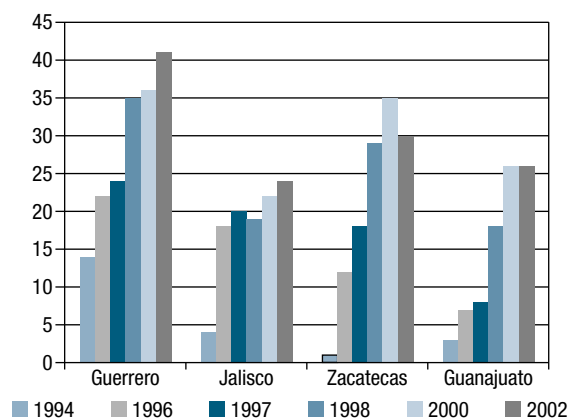
While primarily philanthropic in nature, HTA work sometimes overlaps with economic development activities, and in this way represents an important link between countries of origin and emigrants. It addresses the need for economic aid in migrants’ home countries, strengthens cultural ties and improves the quality of life for home communities.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, migrant remittances accounted for some USD 38 billion in 2003, or 31 per cent of the global remittance levels; but the region has also become an interesting crucible for experimenting with development through collective donations for local projects (Orozco, 2002). In the US, there are thousands of Latin American and Caribbean hometown associations. According to the

Mexican consulates, there are over 700 registered Mexican clubs (although government officials in Mexico and Latino community leaders estimate a much higher and increasing number). The figure below shows the increase in Mexican hometown associations based in Chicago alone over the past six years.

GRAPH 15.1

GROWTH OF MEXICAN CLUBS IN CHICAGO



Source:
Orozco, Manuel, *Hometown Associations and their Present and Future Partnerships* (2003).

However, HTAs are not just a Mexican phenomenon. Most Latin American immigrants are organized in HTAs for the purpose of helping their communities. Salvadoran HTAs, for example, have grown in number since the 1990s; in Washington, DC, Salvadorans from eastern El Salvador are organized in more than twenty groups to raise money for assistance in areas like San Miguel province. The *Comunidad Unida de Chinameca*,

1. The author of this text is Dr. Manuel Orozco, Senior Fellow and Project coordinator of the MIF-IFAD Remittances and Development Program, Washington, D.C.

created in 1991, is a typical Salvadoran HTA: it began its activities in the city of Chinameca by constructing the school's water tower and 12 restrooms, and from there went on to construct a laundry facility and recreational park for the town, and painted and attached a roof to the local church. The *Comunidad* raises some USD 30,000 annually, mostly through fundraising events. During the earthquake in El Salvador in 2001, the *Comunidad* received donations of construction materials from the French Embassy to build a wall for the Red Cross, and the town participated by donating labour (Orozco 2004d).

Guyanese hometown associations focus on similar projects to those from Central America and Mexico. These associations are based in Canada and the US – New York in particular – and have long-standing organizational bases. *Guyana Watch*, founded in 1992 and based in Queens, New York, provides an annual medical outreach service in Guyana, whereby a group of 20-25 doctors and nurses travel to three different cities in Guyana (Essequibo, Demerara, and Berbice) and work at a clinic for one day, attending to between 2,500 and 3,000 people (Orozco 2004b).

HTAs vary in their level of formal organization, but most have governing boards of 10 or fewer elected members, including a president, secretary, treasurer and auditors. This core membership generally selects the hometown needs to be supported, and the projects, based on submissions to the president by any club member upon returning from a visit to the hometown. The president then initiates discussion and calls a vote

among active members. Elected members also mobilize wider support for fundraising, often attracting hundreds of participants.

While HTAs are motivated by a practical desire to improve economic and social conditions in the hometown, their leaders and fund-providers argue that this strategy is also intended to reduce migration. Ironically, since these projects alone do not substantially boost development, they also do not prevent migration from continuing, at least as a matter of choice, if no longer as a necessity.

HTAs engage in a wide range of projects to improve living conditions in hometowns, including (in order of preference) in the areas of health and education (e.g. constructing or repairing health centres and school facilities, equipment donation), public infrastructure (road pavement and electrification), support to the town church or cemetery, and town beautification (such as constructing parks). They attract wide support for being concrete and assisting the town's most vulnerable populations, the elderly and children. In this way, they have both a philanthropic and developmental effect.

As shown in the table below, HTAs undergo a learning process, generating new ideas and drawing lessons from previous experiences. Older associations continue to support more traditional activities dealing with recreation or town beautification, while clubs formed after 1995 support a wider variety of projects, from church repairs to public works, health and education.

TABLE 15.2

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOUNDATION OF CLUB AND TYPE OF ACTIVITY (PERCENTAGE AND NUMBERS)

	Before 1984	1985-1989	1990-1994	1995-Present	Total (% & nos.)
Church Work	13%	11%	9%	11%	100% (22)
Cemetery	0%	11%	2%	3%	100% (6)
Ornamentation of Town	9%	11%	7%	5%	100% (13)
Recreation	9%	11%	16%	5%	100% (18)
Infrastructure	9%	11%	9%	20%	100% (30)
Economic Investment	0%	11%	0%	8%	100% (10)
Health and Education	35%	11%	28%	30%	100% (57)
Other Donations	26%	22%	30%	19%	100% (47)

Source:

Orozco, Manuel *Hometown Associations and their Present and Future Partnerships: New Development Opportunities?* Washington: Inter-American Dialogue, September 2003.

HTAs are conscious of their limited fundraising base and choose activities appropriate to their resources: the majority of Mexican HTAs raise around USD 10,000 a year, although some groups generate up to USD 100,000 annually. This has a substantial impact on the rural receiving communities, as most HTAs work in rural towns with populations below 1,000, average annual per capita incomes below USD 400, and highly underdeveloped public and financial infrastructures, including the absence of commercial centres, which forces residents to travel at least 50 kilometres to purchase goods.

Where remittances occur in at least one-third of the households in a hometown, HTAs can become important for improving the quality of life of households. They can facilitate projects that would otherwise be impossible for the receiving communities to implement. In towns with fewer than 3,000 people, HTA donations represent over 50 per cent of the municipal public works budget. For localities with populations under 1,000, HTA donations can amount to seven times this budget.

TABLE 15.3

MEXICO: BUDGET ALLOCATION, HTA DONATIONS AND POPULATION (MEAN VALUES)

Population range	HTA donation (in dollars)	Ratio HTA and public works budget	Population in community
Under 999	8,648	7.1	407
1,000 to 2,999	11,999	0.5	1,686
3,000 to 4,999	8,397	0.1	4,014
5,000 to 9,999	9,602	0.1	7,328
10,000 to 14,999	11,072	0.0	12,405
Over 15,000	14,589	0.0	57,248
Total	9,864	3.5	5,283

Source:

Orozco, Manuel *Hometown Associations and their Present and Future Partnerships: New Development Opportunities?* Washington: Inter-American Dialogue, September 2003.

MATCHING GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

THE INFLUENCE of hometown associations on rural communities in Latin America, as well as their outreach to state, local and even national government officials, has led to some interesting partnerships on various community projects. Two examples are the “3 × 1” programme in Mexico, and a matching fund arrangement with the government of El Salvador.

i) “3 × 1” programme

After years of informal engagements by HTAs with various public institutions, the government of Mexico created *Iniciativa Ciudadana 3 × 1*, a programme aimed to match HTA donations with funds from the three levels of government (federal, state, municipal). In 2002, the *Iniciativa Ciudadana* projects totalled USD 43.5 million, a quarter of which came from the contributions of Mexican hometown associations, and two-thirds of which benefited the four states with high emigration and labour-intensive agricultural economies, Zacatecas, Jalisco, Guanajuato and Michoacan (see Table 15.4 below).²

TABLE 15.4

DISTRIBUTION OF “3X1” FUNDS BY STATE IN 2002 AND 2003 (IN THOUSANDS)

State	Amount 2002 (USD)	Percentage	Amount 2003 (USD)	Percentage
Guanajuato	2,054	4.7	1,298	3.6
Jalisco	5,199	11.9	7,720	21.4
Michoacán	4,151	9.5	2,807	7.8
Oaxaca	1,504	3.5	1,465	4.1
Puebla	557	1.3	NA	NA
San Luis Potosí	1,717	3.9	2,490	6.9
Zacatecas	16,316	37.5	13,665	37.9
Other States	12,056	27.7	6,615	18.3
Total	43,553	100.0	36,061	100.0

Amounts were converted to 2002 US dollars, and 2003 US dollars according to the year.

Source: SEDESOL, 2003, 2004.

2. In 2003 the total dropped because Puebla did not participate in the programme.

ii) Matching Fund Arrangements in El Salvador

The Salvadoran government has forged close partnerships with its HTAs on a range of development projects in rural El Salvador. One important example is the initiative managed by the Social Investment and Local Development Fund (FISDL) of the government through the programme “Unidos por la Solidaridad”.

This partnership has supported some 45 projects, at an average cost of USD 278,689 per project. The Salvadoran HTAs provide on average 16 per cent of the support, both financial and in kind; but the percentage ranges from 1 per cent in San Salvador to 57 per cent in Usulután.

TABLE 15.5

FISDL-HTA PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

Department	Projects	HTA funds USD	FISDL funds USD	Total project costs USD	Av. project cost USD	HTA donation %	FISDL funds %
LA UNION	11	306,317.45	2,394,216.51	3,627,382.76	329,762.07	8.4	66.0
LA PAZ	10	62,500.00	782,254.94	1,366,122.39	136,612.24	4.6	57.3
CHALATENANGO	7	109,570.15	408,652.80	682,514.28	97,502.04	16.1	59.9
CABAÑAS	3	98,787.91	778,277.68	1,133,533.85	377,844.62	8.7	68.7
SAN MIGUEL	3	66,045.69	336,622.02	446,560.89	148,853.63	14.8	75.4
CUSCATLAN	2	22,000.00	184,261.98	254,902.90	127,451.45	8.6	72.3
SAN SALVADOR	2	6,000.00	387,798.37	638,945.90	319,472.95	0.9	60.7
USULUTAN	2	1,384,221.82	1,025,048.77	2,420,699.16	1,210,349.58	57.2	42.3
AHUACHAPAN	1	4,000.00	21,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	10.0	52.5
LA LIBERTAD	1	14,517.89	134,586.91	149,104.80	149,104.80	9.7	90.3
MORAZAN	1	4,972.00	342,539.91	497,155.16	497,155.16	1.0	68.9
SAN VICENTE	1	36,779.00	30,092.00	66,871.00	66,871.00	55.0	45.0
SANTA ANA	1	18,298.04	93,929.94	121,986.93	121,986.93	15.0	77.0
Total/Average	45	2,134,009.95	6,919,281.83	11,445,780.02	278,689.73	16.2	64.3

Source:

FISDL, Proyectos de “Unidos por la Solidaridad” con Salvadoreños en el exterior, FISDL: San Salvador, El Salvador, Enero 2004.

IMPACT ON DEVELOPMENT

ALTHOUGH the contributions of HTAs are relatively small when compared to development needs or the structural transformations required to improve society, some of their philanthropic activities have a distinct developmental effect. The projects that achieve this generally possess the following qualities conducive to development:

i) They give *ownership* to individuals and the community. Projects must aim not only at collective benefits to all members, but also at transferring

ownership or control of the project to the members, to legitimate the project as theirs.

ii) They reflect the real socio-economic needs of a community; particularly in the areas of health, education, public, financial infrastructure and the economic base of the community.

iii) They are *sustainable*, i.e. enable people to improve their lives over time, and continue to have a beneficial impact after the resources invested have been exhausted, without adding or constituting a burden to the beneficiary community.

iv) Finally, the development contribution of a project is complete when its attributes and functions can be *replicated* with ease and do not depend on the local and unique circumstances of a community.

Many of the thousands of HTAs referred to above give ownership of their projects to the communities, and are increasingly matching their activities more closely to the actual needs of the beneficiaries. (Not all projects correspond to the realities and priorities of a community. In some cases, a high percentage of HTA work supports church and religious activities that add little directly to the development of the community.) They are also more aware of the critical need for projects to be sustainable, and are exploring ways of ensuring longer-term commitments, and surety of support for the projects, e.g. through broader investments, to prolong the development effects. HTAs in the Americas are being watched with keen interest in other parts of the world for their potential applicability to other comparable diaspora scenarios.³

3. See the 2004 report by Roberts on remittances in Armenia, which considers the possibility of HTAs for Armenia given the close relationship Armenians abroad tend to have with their home communities – particularly in regard to the “new” diaspora located mostly in Russia.

TEXTBOX 15.1

COMMUNITY FUNDS PROGRAMME IN GUATEMALA

The Community Funds programme aims to harness the productive potential of remittances to the development needs of Guatemalan communities of migrant origin. It brings together village communities and their diaspora in the US, Canada and Mexico in joint investment ventures to benefit the home communities. The intention is to promote development in villages that are losing their inhabitants owing to poverty, by engaging the cooperation of members of the diaspora communities abroad to invest and support social projects at home to ensure the survival of vulnerable rural communities.

Many villages in Guatemala have been suffering from the economic crisis and high jobless rates, aggravated by falling coffee prices on international markets. This situation has driven many villagers, particularly the young men, to leave in search of work. The Community Funds concept draws on the income-generating capacity of the diaspora to establish grass-roots joint investment projects in the home communities to fund social, infrastructure and generally development-oriented projects. It builds on the banking capacity of migrants as a vehicle to manage their financial resources and to channel these towards the seed capital-generating small investment projects.

It is both an alternative and complementary response to the belief that Guatemala needs a New Economic Platform.

The programme aims to enable village communities to link up with local and foreign markets through business centres, and to attract investments from villagers and emigrants for local productive and social projects. The attraction of the Community Fund Programme lies in what might be paraphrased as: "think locally, act globally"; in other words, to harness overseas capacities offered by the diaspora communities for the benefit of local development and thus to:

- overcome the polarization that traditionally has isolated small producers, by aggregating their harvests, and through greater volumes strengthen their price-setting power;
- bring together local merchants to bid jointly for large aggregate purchases and obtain better prices through strengthened bargaining power;
- develop business training programmes, and
- develop credit programmes with a sound basis and realistic outlook and objectives to obtain credible access to modern commercial and marketing networks.

The productive potential of remittances is entered in an investment portfolio with a local partner bank for the purpose of financing or co-financing projects in agriculture, industry, services and community infrastructure such as roads, bridges, markets, collection centres, transportation systems and storage facilities for goods. The portfolio outlines appropriate marketing mechanisms, in this case aiming at local merchants joining forces with the aim of procuring goods in bulk to obtain better prices through their combined negotiating and purchasing power. The joint procurement strategy is complemented by a joint or aggregate marketing strategy, and the securing of better prices through strengthened price-setting and negotiating power for the goods produced under the Community Fund Programme.

The profits generated by the investment projects are to be channelled towards social projects such as hospitals, public health, schools, skills training and education. In addition, and if possible, the proceeds could also be used to help fund personal loans, emergency expenses or debts relating to migration travel costs. The programme is being implemented by IOM, which also provides support for the drafting of investment and social projects based on feasibility studies.

The programme is an experiment that complements, but does not duplicate the efforts and support by other institutions such as the Inter-American Development Bank, the IMF, the World Bank and ECLAC's surveys on trends, costs and the economic impact of remittances. Another mechanism developed for Central America and Mexico is the "Dialogue Table on Remittances and International Development Assistance", in which IOM also participates. The mechanism is coordinated by the German technical cooperation agency, GTZ, with the participation of a number of NGOs and international cooperation agencies. The Dialogue is a forum for sharing and coordinating public and private cooperative activities regarding remittances, their transfer and productive use in the Central American region.

The Community Funds Programme in Guatemala is an important experiment, and its achievements can provide a useful example for other communities experiencing high emigration rates.

Source: IOM Guatemala, iomguatemala@iom.int

CHAPTER 16

ENHANCING THE BENEFITS OF RETURN MIGRATION FOR DEVELOPMENT¹

An important and insufficiently researched link between development and migration is the role that return migration can play in a country's development.²

INTRODUCTION

RETURN migration is a key issue in any debate about the costs and benefits of migration for development. It is often argued that one of the potential costs of migration for developing countries is the loss of skilled and qualified human resources – a “brain drain” that can act as a serious brake on development and poverty alleviation, by depriving poor countries of critical human capital in key economic and social sectors such as information technology, sciences, health, education and others.³ Low rates of skills return can exacerbate this problem; in the case of India and China for example, only 20 per cent of their overseas graduate students have been returning on average from the US (Johnson and Regets, 1998).⁴

Such potential negative effects may be countered if developing countries can profit from migrant remittances, diaspora linkages and the return of their émigrés with enhanced skills, knowledge, ideas and capital (Lowell and Findlay, 2001). A number of measures have been devised to this end over the years, particularly to encourage the return of highly qualified professionals. Less attention has been given

to encouraging the return of lower skilled workers, as it is not similarly acknowledged that less qualified returnees could also contribute to development through experience, education and contacts gained abroad (ibid).

Return migration, if not managed correctly, can also bring costs and may actually harm development, as recently reported in the UK House of Commons: “If the conditions are not right, the return of large numbers of migrants and refugees can place huge demands on a developing country, raising the potential for instability, conflict and renewed out-migration” (House of Commons, 2004, p. 27). Return migration can also mean the loss of remittances, although this can be partly offset if migrants return with substantial savings, or when return is only temporary. It can also have negative consequences, if migrants return to a situation into which they find it difficult to reintegrate.

Return migration could stimulate development, but this is more likely to occur if return is sustainable. Many migrants choose to return on their own without any special help, while others benefit from the support of an assisted return programme. Return can be voluntary, or it can be the result of expulsion or

1. The author of this chapter is Frank Laczko, Head Research and Publications Division, IOM, Geneva. Information was also provided by the Assisted Voluntary Returns and Integration Unit, IOM Geneva.

2. See the report by the Government of the Netherlands (AVT, 2004, p. 61).

3. See also the chapter in this Report “Economic Effects of International Migration: a Synoptic Overview”.

4. Johnson and Regets report that only some 50 per cent of overseas graduate students tend to return from the US.

deportation (forced return).⁵ Return can also be permanent or temporary: for some, marking the end of the migration cycle, for others, only an episode in that cycle.

Broadly speaking, states have adopted two types of measures to facilitate the development benefits of voluntary returns: a) incentives and inducement to encourage migrants, especially the highly qualified, to return, and b) reintegration assistance to ensure sufficient socio-economic well-being for the returnee to contribute to the development of the country.⁶

The focus of this chapter is on voluntary return migration, and assisted return programmes, and the policy measures taken to enhance their impact on development. The chapter deals with three main questions:

- i) How does voluntary return migration, whether permanent or temporary, contribute to development?
- ii) What can be learned from government efforts to facilitate return migration in order to promote development?
- iii) What policies might be introduced in sending and receiving countries to enhance the benefits of return migration for development?

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL OF RETURN MIGRATION

THE IMPACT of return migration has traditionally been neglected in the migration literature (Ghosh, 2000). This is partly due to the fact that theories of migration have tended to conceptualize migration as a permanent movement for settlement. Within this paradigm, return migration is thought to occur by default, when the migrant fails to achieve the original

intention to settle permanently in another country, either because of e.g. nostalgia for the home country, or social and economic integration problems. These theories tended to ignore the scale of return migration, even within migrant groups where the primary intention may have been to settle permanently in a new country. It is interesting to note, for instance, that between one-quarter and one-third of all Europeans who migrated to the US between 1908 and 1957 returned home again (Lucas 2004). Today, the increasing incidence of temporary or circular migration attracts more interest in return migration and its potential developmental effects.

It is difficult to assess the effects of return migration on development, because there is generally much less information about the return of skilled workers than the immigration of persons from developing countries (Findlay, 2001). Return migration flows that are not part of an organized programme often go unrecorded, yet they may comprise substantial numbers of migrants. As one expert pointed out: If the data on international migration are generally poor, the recording of return migration is far worse (Lucas, 2004). Even where the scale of return is established, it is often not known where the migrants returned to.

Without knowing how many and what types of migrants are returning to a country, it is also difficult for researchers to draw a representative sample of returnees (ACBF, 2004). Another weakness of research in this area is that studies are often based on relatively small samples of returnees and are usually conducted at only one point in time, making it difficult to establish the long-term effects of return migration (ibid).

Given the many different types of return migrants and movements, and their varying impact, the relationship between return migration and development is a

5. IOM definitions of return:

a) voluntarily without compulsion (migrants deciding at any time during their sojourn to return home on their own volition and cost, and possibly with assistance);
b) voluntarily under compulsion (persons at the end of their temporary protected status, or rejected for asylum, unable to stay and choosing to return home on their own volition);
c) involuntarily, as a result of a lack of legal status in the country (the authorities deciding, usually by law, on deportations).

6. Reintegration assistance specifically devised to support development efforts in countries of origin should not be confused with the financial and other support provided by countries of destination to ensure sustainability of individual return, e.g. of irregular migrants.

complex one. Some migrants return permanently to their home country, while others return temporarily. The categories of migrant also vary widely – failed asylum seekers, temporary labour migrants, highly qualified, students, seasonal workers, unskilled, refugees and persons receiving temporary protection, irregular migrants, and vulnerable groups including victims of trafficking, the elderly and children. Some return voluntarily, and others are obliged to return. Some of the categories overlap, for example, many refugees are also highly qualified.

Assessing the impact of return migration on development is not a straightforward exercise given the many different types of possible effects – social, economic, political and cultural. The impact may vary greatly over time and according to the scale of return movements. Moreover, return not only affects the migrant, but also the community of reintegration and the wider national socio-economic networks and services. It is also challenged by the fact that “development” is such a broad concept: it is more than poverty reduction and can refer to the broader social, economic and political development of a country (AVT, 2004).⁷

The impact of return migration will also vary according to the conditions in the receiving country for returnees, and on the degree to which returns are sustainable. Migrants may face many problems on their return, including lack of work, work at a lower level than before, social rejection, lack of basic health and education services, language barriers for children and the aged, and concerns about personal security.

If skilled workers left their home because of lack of job opportunities, then their return may have little positive impact on the labour market if they cannot find jobs. However, if skilled workers left in search of experience overseas and better wages, and return with their savings and increased skills, return migration may be beneficial for development. It has been argued that countries of origin are likely to gain development

benefits from return migration only when three conditions are met (Ghosh, 2000):

- workers return with knowledge that is more advanced, or with better skills than they would have acquired at home;
- the knowledge and skills acquired abroad are relevant to the needs of the home country economy;
- the migrants must be willing and have the opportunity to use the skills upon return.

These conditions only refer to the return of labour migrants. But even in the case of this group, empirical evidence from different parts of the world suggests these three conditions are fully met in only a few cases (Ghosh, 2000). While there are examples of return migrants having acquired skills they can use at home, the general conclusion is less encouraging: “Overall evidence on migrants’ acquisition of new skills is not encouraging, especially for low-skilled migrants. Early studies of Turkish guestworkers returning from Germany show that less than 10 per cent had received any useful training while in Germany; and recent research from Thailand shows that very few returning migrants had been employed in occupations that imparted new skills” (House of Commons, 2004).

However, for some types of occupations the benefits of return may be greater than for others. In nursing and teaching, for instance, it is reported that temporary migration can enable migrants to acquire new skills, and in many cases plays a useful role in exposing migrants, as well as host societies, to new ideas and ways of doing things, some of which may be usefully applied or adapted after the migrant’s return (House of Commons, 2004).

One review concerning the benefits of return migration concludes that the sending country derives maximum benefit when highly skilled migrants leave for relatively short periods of 10–15 years, and return with financial, human and social capital (Olesen, 2003). It suggests that the benefits of this form of

7. This is explored in more detail in the chapter “Migration and Poverty: Some Issues in the Context of Asia”.

return migration often go unrecognized, because they are unrecorded, but could be more forcefully promoted through a variety of policy mechanisms. The following discussion reviews some of the approaches that have been adopted.

POLICY APPROACHES

FOR SOME developing countries, encouraging return migration is an integral part of a comprehensive approach to planning their migrant labour export. The Philippines government, for example, expects that its nationals will eventually return and has developed measures to facilitate their reintegration (Battistella 2004).⁸

In some other developing countries, states tend to adopt a more ambivalent, if not negative, approach to return migration (Iredale et al., 2003; Black et al., 2004). A recent study, for example, found that neither Bangladesh nor Vietnam, both proactive planners of large-scale migrant labour exports, had sufficiently developed policies to encourage the return of skilled workers (Iredale, 2003). Sending countries may not wish to encourage return, if they believe returnees will have problems finding work, or if there is a risk that they will take jobs away from local workers. Sending countries which benefit from remittance flows may also not wish to promote return migration, for fear of losing these benefits, despite recognizing the significance of the brain drain (Olesen, 2003).

The approaches taken by governments in the receiving industrialized countries to return migration are also varied and somewhat ambivalent. On the one hand, more and more states encourage labour migration, particularly skilled immigration through temporary labour migration channels; and have made it easier in recent years for temporary skilled migrants to prolong their stay and eventually obtain permanent residence status (OECD, 2003). Such policies, in effect, discourage return migration. On the other hand, a

number of destination countries have also experimented with incentives and reintegration packages to encourage the voluntary return through organized programmes of irregular migrants, persons with temporary protection status and refugees.

ATTRACTING BACK SKILLED MIGRANTS: GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

SINCE 1960, a number of states that lost skilled emigrants have introduced new measures to attract them back, among them: Colombia, Ghana, India, Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka (Olesen, 2003; Hugo, 2003). In addition to job placement, these programmes offer such benefits as funded travel, reinsertion assistance, medical insurance and professional equipment to aid effective reintegration. The results have been mixed. Malaysia, for example, initiated a substantial scheme in 2001 targeting its 250,000 skilled workers overseas (Hugo, 2003), that included tax exemptions on income remitted to Malaysia and on all personal items brought into the country, and permanent residence status for the foreign spouses and children of returnees. It focused on six key sectors of industry overseas: information and communications technology, manufacturing, science and technology, arts, finance and medicine. Despite these efforts, only 104 expatriates returned in the first two years of the programme (ibid).

In other countries/regions in Asia, efforts to attract home skilled migrants seem to have been more successful. South Korea and Taiwan Province of China, for example, have initiated a number of programmes to encourage a reversal of brain drain, and there is some evidence that these programmes have helped increase the number of returns, although it is likely that the returns were also encouraged by the rapid economic expansion occurring in these countries (Hugo, 2003). In Taiwan, for example, a government-led initiative, the Hsinchu Science-Based

8. See also the chapter "Filipinos Working Overseas: Opportunity and Challenge".

Industrial Park designed to attract Taiwanese R&D professionals back to Taiwan, helped to attract 5,025 returnees in 2000, twice the figure of 2,563 in 1996 (Lucas, 2004).⁹

China pursues a strong national policy to attract back skilled expatriates. Since the mid-1990s, the Chinese government has implemented a series of programmes to attract “overseas talent” to return to China. A number of “science parks”, “special development zones” and “high-tech zones” have been established in Beijing and most provincial cities, offering a range of incentives to return, including equivalent salary packages, multiple entry-exit visas and access to strictly controlled foreign exchange (Keren et. al., 2003, Hugo, 2003).¹⁰

As noted in the earlier chapter “International Migration Trends and Patterns in Asia and Oceania”, of the more than 700,000 students who went abroad in the past 25 years, fewer than 30 per cent have so far returned – most of them obligated to do so under the agreement of their official sponsorship (Laczko, 2003, Keren et. al., 2003). However, the number of returnees has been rising; in 2002, 18,000 returned, double the number of two years earlier, of whom a high proportion held a master’s degree or a doctorate, and many set up new enterprises (ILO, 2004). As in other countries in Asia, many of the returnees have assumed leading positions in government, international agencies and academic institutions (Hugo, 2003).

Apart from some media reports, few studies have been carried out in China on people who have returned (Keren et. al., 2003). An exception is a recent survey of 185 returnees conducted in Shanghai, which showed that more than a quarter of returnees claimed they did so in response to government policies or programmes. Those who returned, brought back significant savings, nearly a third with USD 50,000 or more (ibid).

There is also evidence to suggest that returns are increasing even without direct government intervention to encourage them. For example, in India several media articles in 2004 suggested that many more highly skilled migrants are returning in response to growing economic opportunities there. The *International Herald Tribune* reported in 2004 that, “what began as a trickle in the late 1990s is now substantial enough to be talked about as a “reverse brain drain”. By one estimate, there are 35,000 “returned non-resident Indians in Bangalore, with many more across India” (Waldman, 2004).

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS – DIASPORA OPTIONS

IN ADDITION to initiatives taken by developing countries, several efforts have been made over the years by international organizations, such as IOM and UNDP, to encourage the temporary or longer-term return of highly qualified workers to developing countries.

First implemented in 1974, IOM’s “Return of Qualified Nationals” (RQN) programmes have been supporting the social and economic advancement of developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America by assisting the return and professional reinsertion of their qualified émigrés. In collaboration with relevant governments, IOM identifies suitable candidates among diaspora communities to match vacant positions not filled through the home country labour market. Supporting the return and ensuring the reintegration into both professional and personal environments of suitable applicants helps rebuild and strengthen a depleted human resource base.

The Return of Qualified African Nationals programme (RQAN), implemented for 16 years (1983-1999), helped over 2,000 highly skilled and experienced African nationals and 2,565 fellowship students in

9. See further information on this in the chapter “Economic Effects of International Migration: A Synoptic Overview”.

10. See also the chapters: “International Migration Trends and Patterns in Asia and Oceania” and “Balancing the Benefits and Costs of Skilled Migration in the Asia-Pacific Region”.

TEXTBOX 16.1

RETURNING TO AFGHANISTAN – IMMAM JAN’S STORY

Mr. Immam Jan returned from the UK under IOM’s Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Program (VARRP). He had earlier owned a successful factory producing rubber shoes in Jalalabad and wanted to get back into business on his return home.

After his return he found that there was nothing left of his previous business, so he travelled to Kabul to test the market for shoes and potential partnerships he could enter into with local producers, utilizing his managerial skills.

He found a small rubber shoe factory 10 km east from Kabul, which had good potential but needed help with the management and marketing of its products. The factory owner and Mr. Jan entered into a partnership, and through IOM’s reintegration assistance and his own savings Mr. Jan was able to provide some necessary equipment for the business.

The business employs five workers from Kabul, and Mr. Jan is confident that he will be able to help increase production and expand the current market to several provinces around Kabul.

With the reintegration assistance, this project will enable Mr. Jan to sustain his return by providing an income for his family. It will also create employment for five additional Afghans.

Source: IOM Kabul.

their return and professional reintegration in public and private sector jobs in 41 countries in Africa. Evaluations of RQAN suggest that returnees did contribute to development in their home country at the micro level.

UNDP’s “Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals” (TOKTEN) Programme has also provided opportunities for qualified professionals in the diaspora to contribute their services to home countries through short-term consultancies. In the first 20 years of its existence (1977-97), TOKTEN placed about 5,000 volunteers on assignments in 49 developing countries (Newland and Patrick, 2004).

Since policies to encourage the permanent return migration of skilled migrants have had mixed results, policy makers have in recent years turned their attention to encouraging temporary return migration, where the emphasis is on sharing and transfer of knowledge, skills, ideas and technologies, in short

“brain circulation”. In 2001, IOM launched a new programme: “Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA)”, in Libreville, Gabon, which offers options for the African diaspora to reinvest its skills, financial and other resources in temporary, long-term or virtual returns to the home country or region.

MIDA targets African professionals, entrepreneurs and experts in the diaspora, willing and able to contribute their skills, finances and other resources to the development efforts of their countries of origin. It is based on the notion of mobility of people and resources and, as such, offers options for reinvestment of human capital, including temporary, long-term or virtual return. Approaches are tailored to meet the needs of the origin country, without jeopardizing migrants' legal status in their host countries or newly adopted home countries.

Since its inception in 2001, MIDA has evolved from a programme to a national and regional strategy supported by many countries and the regional and international community. MIDA does not claim to address all of the economic and social problems of the countries concerned, but it contributes within a larger framework to the development process by addressing the lack of human resources and building critical skills needed in key sectors in Africa. MIDA projects span a wide range of countries, sectors and activities, including:

Mobilizing Ethiopians Living Abroad for the Development of Ethiopia

The website "Ethiopian diaspora.info" launched in 2004 and funded by the Italian government, provides timely, relevant and accurate information to the Ethiopian community abroad on how to start a business, and investment advice and announcements relevant to the diaspora.

Managing Migration of Skilled Health Personnel

IOM and the World Health Organization (WHO) launched the MIDA Health programme in 2002 to address the many urgent challenges posed to the health sector of Africa by the growing mobility of populations. Building on the lessons learned from Phase I, which established a database of health professionals in 46 African countries, IOM and WHO have extended their pilot activities to include action-oriented research and building human resource capacity in the health sector.

E-learning: a New Option for Skills Transfer

In 2003, the MIDA programme launched its pilot initiative in distance learning. The project facilitates the virtual transfer of skills, using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to reach a wider audience than in a traditional higher education setting. 700 second-year PhD students have so far benefited from this project funded by the Belgian Government. The project not only helps to build capacity, but also contributes to retaining trained professionals in their home country.

The Role of Remittances in MIDA

Within the framework of MIDA, IOM is encouraging the voluntary and efficient use of migrant remittances for development in countries of origin. These include initiatives that support cost saving and reliable transfer mechanisms, and the establishment of an African Diaspora Remittance Fund to encourage attractive returns on investment, efficient transfers and national development.

VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

TO ENHANCE the positive impacts of return migration, a number of countries of origin and destination have developed programmes to support the return and reintegration of certain categories of migrants. Most have been launched by destination countries in Europe and target irregular migrants, unsuccessful asylum seekers, refugees and persons receiving temporary protection (IOM, 2004).

In other parts of the world, it is the sending, rather than the receiving country which is taking the initiative to provide reintegration assistance, often as part of a package of measures designed to manage temporary labour emigration effectively. In Asia, for example, return and reintegration programmes are mainly concerned with the needs of temporary labour migrants who return to their country of origin after working on a fixed-term contract (Battistella, 2004). Experience with such programmes has been varied, and few evaluations of their impact exist (Lucas, 2004).

EUROPEAN PROGRAMMES

DURING the last decade, European countries have been hosting a growing number of unsuccessful asylum seekers. Policy approaches, focusing on involuntary return, have had limited success. As a result, there has been a new willingness by some to adopt more innovative approaches to return by linking return with reintegration assistance. For example, in the Netherlands, various civil society organizations have increasingly emphasized the importance of assisting migrants after they return to their countries of origin, to ensure effective reintegration (AVT, 2004). The stable and successful return of irregular migrants is likely to be closely linked to their effective reintegration in their country of origin (IOM, 2004).

In 2002, the European Commission reviewed a large number of return projects it had co-financed since 1997 for the voluntary return of failed asylum seekers, persons with temporary protection status and refugees (EC, 2002). Many of the projects provided job training, preparation for return through exploratory visits, information and advice on the situation in the country of origin, help in setting up small businesses and general assistance after return. The review identified a number of factors contributing to the success of these programmes (AVT, 2004), including:

- A comprehensive approach that included counselling, job training and assistance both before and after return;
- Assistance to the communities to which the migrants were returning to avoid local resentment;
- coordination with other aid initiatives in the country of origin.

Many return and reintegration schemes have been unsuccessful and have attracted low numbers of participants (Koser, 2001). For example, the Assisted Return of Rejected Asylum Seekers (GTAA) project carried out in 1997-2000 by the Netherlands was targeted at failed asylum seekers from Ethiopia and Angola. Although the Dutch government describes the programme as “a failure” (AVT, 2004), several important lessons were drawn from it:

- i) The cooperation of the authorities in countries of origin is necessary, but not always forthcoming.
- ii) Migrant organizations in countries of origin have an interest in discouraging return and have considerable influence on potential candidates for return as well as on governments in countries of origin.
- iii) The alternative for rejected asylum seekers, staying on in the Netherlands, was too attractive.
- iv) There was no serious risk of expulsion.
- v) The responsible government bodies were unable to accurately estimate the numbers of candidates for return.

The Dutch authorities have learned from this experience, and active efforts have been made to secure the cooperation of the authorities in countries of origin. New programmes since then operating in Afghanistan and Angola have been described as “fairly successful” (AVT, 2004).

An earlier evaluation of several of the European return and reintegration programmes concluded that “the most successful return programmes are those that operate on a small scale, and are tailor-made for the particular circumstances of particular returnees and countries of origin” (IOM, 2001). These programmes are likely to be labour-intensive and demand a high per capita outlay of initial investment. They do not promise to deliver high numbers of returns, but they do promise to deliver sustainable and beneficial returns” (Koser, 2001, p. 44). But there have also been numerous small and large-scale projects in post-crisis scenarios like Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo, which have successfully linked individual reintegration with community rehabilitation efforts. The lessons from these programmes still need to be fully drawn and applied to the development scenarios.

THE RETURN OF MIGRANT WORKERS IN ASIA

DESPITE the fact that many countries in Asia promote the temporary labour migration of their nationals, it appears that “no adequate return migration policy has been effective anywhere in Asia”, (Battistella, 2004, p. 213).

In some countries, such as Bangladesh, there has been an absence of a concrete policy framework to facilitate the reintegration of returning labour migrants (IOM, 2002). One of the few surveys of returnees’ experiences conducted recently in Bangladesh found that “the process of reintegration of returnee migrants was very difficult” (ibid). This survey of 200 returnee households found a host of problems, including a lack of information on current business trends and job opportunities, and social problems with families upon their return.

Many migrants reported that they were able to bring back a considerable amount of savings, some of which was used for income-generation activities and land purchase. With regard to skills, it was found that a large number of migrant workers acquired skills while abroad, but on their return were engaged in

occupations where these could not be applied. Many respondents called for more assistance to help returnees reorient themselves, and said the absence of such assistance made them more likely to re-migrate (IOM, 2002).

The Philippines is an example of a country in Asia that does run reintegration programmes to assist returning labour migrants. Studies in the 1980s found that many migrants returning to the Philippines had difficulties finding a job. Subsequently, measures were taken to assist them in this. The 1995 Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act includes a provision on return migration and the establishment of the “Replacement and Monitoring Centre”, which aims at reintegration, employment promotion, and the utilization of migrant skills for development. The impact of these programmes is difficult to assess, because, like most countries in Asia, the Philippines does not have a system to collect data on returning migrants (Battistella, 2004).

But in practice, policymakers have been reluctant to provide benefits to migrants already perceived by the local population as privileged (ibid). As a result, “existing programmes have not been implemented in earnest, contingency plans for crisis-related mass returns have not been really tested, and assistance for social integration has relied only on the intervention of civil society” (ibid, p. 224). Returnees thus face many problems on their return. In the Philippines, research shows that employment is the biggest difficulty facing them, and that the skills they acquired abroad cannot be used (ibid).

CONCLUSIONS – POLICY IMPLICATIONS

THE ABOVE discussion confirms that governments need to improve the general social, economic and political conditions in migrants’ home countries to create the right environment for return. Experience in different parts of the world also suggests that selective return programmes can contribute to development; and that governments have a key role to play in facilitating

such return, which can sometimes be as important as economic, political and social factors (Iredale, 2003).

What are some of the measures that sending and receiving countries could take to enhance the contribution of return migration to development?

For *sending countries*, the UK has proposed the following broad measures to encourage return and reintegration (taking account of the fact that many sending countries have few explicit measures to encourage return and reintegration of their émigrés and have, at best, an ambivalent approach to return) (House of Commons, 2004):

- Be serious about welcoming migrants back.
- Make progress with improving governance and tackling corruption.
- Ensure that pay structures and progression within the civil service do not unfairly penalize migrants who have worked elsewhere and acquired useful skills.
- Help returning migrants to find suitable jobs, or to set up their own businesses.

One cautionary note drawn from experiences discussed above, would be to ensure that the return/reintegration programmes are not designed specifically for the migrants, but rather for the entire home community, to avoid resentments against returnees and hence blockage of any beneficial effects of the return migration (Battistella, 2004).

Receiving countries can also consider a range of measures to enhance the development impact of return migration. Returns can increase the opportunity for more people from developing countries to gain skills/experience in developed countries (Lowell and Findlay, 2001).

The most direct way of achieving a high rate of return is to ensure that temporary migration schemes are in

fact temporary, for example through the use of incentives and sanctions (Omelandiuk, 2003), which could include:

- i) In the case of students, a greater number of scholarships or bursaries, with conditions attached regarding return (to minimize the risk of brain drain).¹¹
- ii) Reimbursements of a portion of migrants' unused social insurance contributions once they have left the host country (House of Commons, 2004).
- iii) Promotion of more circular migration, for example by opening up more avenues for regular, repeat temporary labour migration, to give the incentive of future return to the same job; making residence or dual citizenship available to certain migrants as an encouragement to productive, free exchange between the two countries (Lowell and Findley, 2001),¹² and more flexible visa regimes (Lawson et al., 2004).

There is clearly a growing recognition, especially in Europe, that more needs to be done to facilitate the reintegration of migrants returning to developing countries. The early model of simple return with some financial and travel assistance to the returnees has over the years expanded to include more complex reintegration assistance in various forms, not necessarily financial.¹³ However, there is a lack of information about which factors contribute most to successful reintegration. This is one area where the usual call for more research is warranted.

Return migration policies are also more likely to be successful and to contribute to development when sending and receiving countries agree to cooperate in the design of such programmes, and where both sides agree on the need to prepare for returns at the outset of migration (Battistella, 2004). This is perhaps an indirect way of confirming that labour migration strategies should be planned together by sending and receiving countries, and that return and reintegration schemes be included as an essential component of any such programmes.

11. OECD, *Trends in International Migration*, 2001, p. 115.

12. For example, dual citizenship has been extended to Ghanaians living abroad as an encouragement for them to return freely (Black, et.al., 2004).

13. This currently ranges from modest reinstallation grants to longer-term support towards employment and micro-enterprise activities involving institutional support to employers, as well as support for local community employment and development schemes.

MIGRANT INTEGRATION

CHAPTER 17

BENEFITS AND COSTS OF INTEGRATION – INTERNATIONAL CONVERGENCE?¹

Converging forces and common challenges will drive the policy choices facing developed countries. Inclusion and social stability – the need to avoid racial, religious and ethnic schisms – are key strategic priorities of all countries with significant multicultural populations.

INTRODUCTION

THE BENEFITS and costs of migration depend on a broad web of social, cultural and economic factors. As these factors vary from country to country, the benefits and costs of policy and programme interventions also vary. International comparative research² offers the best available tool, sometimes the only tool, to evaluate the effectiveness of policies across these variations. It can identify and examine points of convergence and divergence between countries, and draw general lessons from particular circumstances. But while often persuasive, international comparisons need to avoid the simplistic assumption that similar policies and practices will yield similar outcomes across different countries.

This chapter discusses the benefits and costs of migration and integration programmes in different national settings, and the potential for such policies to converge in the face of similar pressures and challenges. It focuses mainly on the strategies of developed countries with advanced migration and integration programmes, and the role of such critical players as ethnic communities and NGOs.³ Its lessons also apply to other countries experiencing immigration.

Integration does not lend itself easily to a cost-benefit analysis, among other factors, because it relates closely to the individual societal models that nations set for themselves, and such imponderables as, e.g., cultural values. Hence the chapter focuses on a set of determining factors to assess the benefits and costs of institutional responses, and some broader contextual factors that are increasing the imperative for similar (or converging) policy interventions.

The chapter strikes a cautionary note for policymakers and politicians regarding the difficulty of transferring policy lessons from one setting to another – a consequence of policies producing dissimilar benefits and costs once they cross borders. But it also observes that a confluence of global pressures is smoothing away many of the differences, creating a common appreciation of the strategic challenges facing countries in the area of migration. This emerging appreciation is reshaping national perceptions and exerting a harmonizing influence over values and institutional behaviours. The end result is likely to be a convergence of benefits and costs of migration and integration policies across countries and, hence, also of the means to manage them.

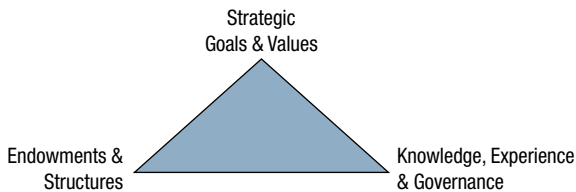
1. The author of this chapter is Meyer Burstein, international policy and research consultant, former Executive Head of the International Metropolis Project and Director General of Strategic Planning and Research for Canada, CIC; mb@meyurburstein.com, Ottawa, ON, Canada K1M 1A2.

2. International comparisons are at the core of international migration projects such as "Metropolis", a Canada-led international policy-research project that seeks to provide policymakers and practitioners with scientific advice on which to base decisions.

3. While recognizing their importance for integration, the chapter does not go into detail on the role of the migrants themselves and their countries of origin.

WHERE TO START?

THE BENEFITS and costs of migration and integration rely on three sets of factors represented in the triangle below. The apex covers strategic goals and national values; the left angle of the triangle domestic endowments and structural features, and the right angle knowledge, experience and governance.



The utility of individual policies (their benefits and costs) can be triangulated as a function of these three factors – goals, endowments and knowledge. Differences between countries on any one set of factors will change the “location” of policies within the triangle and produce a different balance between migration-induced gains and losses, winners and losers, and present and future benefit streams. National management strategies must respond to the unique arrangement of factors within each country.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND VALUES

NATIONAL migration interests and pressures tend to produce policies that respond to two sets of motives. The first set is functional and purposive, the second filtering and defensive. International policy differences result from variations in the importance that countries assign to these motives and to elements thereof. Some of the differences, as the triangle suggests, are “technical”, an amalgam of structural and experiential factors. These will be discussed later. The most important differences, however, result from variations in the “taste” for migration (a function of values). Such taste, or value differences, in turn affect goals and management strategies, making them more

or less functional/purposive or filtering/defensive. In short, divergent values often lie at the heart of divergent policies.

For example, Australia as a young, relatively unformed and culturally open society is prepared to accept, even welcome, large numbers of migrants. Japan, on the other hand, a much older, culturally fixed and more homogeneous society insists on tightly limiting entry. The economic, social welfare and cultural policies of the two countries diverge accordingly.

If maintained, the consequences of such different migration strategies can be dramatic, not just at the cultural level. If current migration policies were to continue, in thirty years the populations of Italy and Canada would converge in size, whereas today, Italy is twice as populous as Canada. Concomitantly, the economic strength and political influence of the two countries would undergo similar transformations. The question is one of values. Countries such as Japan, Israel and Italy will, ultimately, need to choose between cultural, ethnic or religious homogeneity (which they greatly prize) and the geo-political advantages offered by a larger, more diverse, population. This choice will not offer itself as a single proposition, but rather as a series of choices and options.

Which path will societies choose? Will tastes for cultural homogeneity persist or will attitudes and policies converge? This chapter argues for convergence. Value differences will gradually diminish under the influence of unrelenting globalization, immigration pressures, converging rules governing migrant entry and entitlements, and the adoption by policymakers of similar analytic frames and interventions. Nor will these changes be limited to “western” countries. The timetables will, undoubtedly, vary but the paths will be the same in other parts of the world, because the underlying dynamics are universal.

CONVERGING FORCES AND CHOICES

Most explanations for the diversity of public attitudes towards migration and the reasons why one country's preference for migrants differs from another's invoke geography, history and culture. The problem with this is that it directs too much attention to the past and not enough to the future. The result is a discussion rooted in populism rather than strategy. Populist discussions are necessary in democratic societies; but, at political and senior bureaucratic levels, it is essential to engage a wider set of strategic goals so that critical choices can be made, and the popular discourse expanded, as opportunities present themselves.

This discussion begins by identifying several major forces profoundly affecting the volume and composition of migration to advanced industrial states. These forces are generating increased migration pressures at the same time as the capacity of states to moderate, or isolate themselves from, those pressures is being eroded. This confluence of forces is gradually raising the level of global migration and increasing the population of ethnic, cultural and religious minorities residing in developed countries.

Faced with similar pressures and tensions countries will, over time, evolve similar appreciations of the challenges they face and similar potential "solutions". Public policy plays an important role in this reconciliation: policies set the terms of public debate by framing the strategic challenges that countries face; they also exert a direct influence over attitudes by shaping intake and altering the public's experience of migrants.

COMMON PRESSURES

- The main pressure forcing migration policies to converge is globalization. All countries are affected, though timing and sensitivity differ for historical and geographical reasons. Similar (though not identical) strategic challenges confront Europe, North America,

Australia and New Zealand; and parallel challenges confront countries such as the Philippines, Bangladesh, Somalia and Mexico. This chapter focuses mainly on the former group of countries.

Economic globalization, demographic stagnation (in the developed world) and technology have contributed substantially to increase the flow of migrants to both developing and developed countries. Permanent migration, temporary labour migration, student flows and irregular migration are all growing. Huge differences in per capita income across countries have created enormous incentives for people to move; and judging by the huge increases that have occurred in traded goods, services and direct investment from the early eighties onwards, migration is likely to continue accelerating. This will be accompanied by growing concerns over how to control and channel these flows. While south-south flows dominate, it is the developed countries with elaborate social welfare systems that have invested the most in both migration restrictions and migrant integration.

The rapid ageing of the populations in most developed countries has had major implications for labour markets and immigration. In Canada, immigrants now account for the bulk of net labour force growth, and the story is similar (or will be) for New Zealand, Australia and the US (Beaujot, 1998; DIMIA, 2004; Khawaja, 1998; Sum, 2003). In many European countries the situation is even starker, as labour markets – followed closely by population counts – are shrinking (UN Population Division, 2000). At the same time, developing countries experience an explosive upsurge in the number of young people seeking to enter labour markets unable to absorb them.

Global technology, communications and transport networks complete the picture, making people more aware of job opportunities abroad and enabling them to move more rapidly and cheaply.

- At the same time as migration pressures are rising, some fundamental "rules" governing immigrant

entry, treatment and entitlements are being relaxed. International accords, copycat jurisprudence, and converging norms for fair treatment and equity are responsible (Feldblum, 2000). Collectively, these rules constitute a migration governance system that operates to a significant extent through rights. The relaxation of rules (and extension of rights) suggests that migratory pressures will not abate, but rather increase.

The most far-reaching international instrument on migration is the Geneva Convention governing the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers. This is bolstered by other international instruments governing protection, including such relating to torture, the rights of children and smuggling and trafficking of human beings. In addition, multilateral and bilateral agreements are also contributing to convergence. The European Charter on Human Rights, treaties such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and membership in the WTO all create homogeneous (though not always powerful) rules governing access and/or treatment of foreign nationals.⁴

But it is not only governments working in tandem that are responsible for the convergence of rules governing migration. National courts have also played an important role. Increasingly, the high courts of different countries have converged in their interpretation of basic human rights and their protection, through legal assistance, interpretation, appeal rights, and so forth (Schwartz, 2003). Courts have also intervened on entitlements and benefits that the state must provide to migrants (for example, educating the children of asylum seekers pending determination of their parents' claims to protection).

The last point concerns family norms. Migration to reunify families is gaining wider acceptance, as part of a larger global trend towards increased tolerance. The World Values Survey indicates that advanced

industrial societies are becoming more open to diversity (notwithstanding the political situation in a number of countries and the broad media coverage this attracts). Young people are especially receptive and more apt to view migration as exotic and even stimulating (PEW Research Centre, 2004a).

More permissive, relaxed approaches to family reunification, especially in countries that do not see themselves as “immigration countries”, have led to significant increases in immigration. In particular family migration, even narrowly defined as a right, has the potential to generate secondary migration flows that are potentially larger than the original ones.

- The final set of factors feeding migration pressures on developed countries is the lowering of settlement costs for migrants and the emergence of an infrastructure to facilitate migration. Improved communications, cheaper transport and the support of expatriate communities in destination countries are all helping to lower the costs and risks of relocation.

Longitudinal studies in Canada and Australia, as well as international social capital research, have revealed the critical role that ethnic communities and family play in the migration process, each wave smoothing the path for subsequent immigrants. At the same time, a sophisticated infrastructure, both legal and illegal, has sprung up to facilitate migration to developed countries. This infrastructure includes lawyers, consultants, paralegals, as well as, on the underside, traffickers and smugglers.

The end result of this process has been a substantial reduction in the cost to migrants of entering and settling in the advanced industrial societies of the West.

4. The application and interpretation of rules follows a cyclical pattern. Currently, the prevailing ethos is restrictive; however, the overall secular trend still points towards liberalization.

COMMON MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

THE PRECEDING discussion sought to establish three points: south-north, east-west migration pressures are intensifying; rules governing entry and entitlements are converging, and entry and early settlement costs are falling. This makes the point that governments can no longer view immigration as an option, but as a fact. Correspondingly, migration and integration management must shift towards the centre of the policy stage.

Perceptions about migration are to a significant extent shaped by the machinery designed to manage it. In Europe, the emphasis tends to be on border controls and policing, with less attention to housing and welfare. In Canada, the US and Australia, there is greater emphasis on integration and labour issues and on the need for across-the-board institutional reform. This focus makes it easier to situate migration management in a larger strategic context.

Four critical strategic imperatives are discussed below. These are driven by the common migration pressures reshaping the labour markets and populations of developed countries. Especially noteworthy is the focus on integration as opposed to border control. It is posited that the wide differences that currently exist in national perceptions and values relating to migration and integration will converge. This will strengthen the case for exchanging policy and programme lessons. It is also posited that the productivity, well-being and security of migrant-receiving societies will depend on how well the challenges are managed.

i) *The Need to Manage Social Conflict*

Developed countries are becoming increasingly pluralistic, and social conflict is an inevitable part of this social change (Paquet, 2003; Putnam, 2003). Tensions are especially pronounced in large cities where the majority of migrants settle. There is an

urgent need to develop effective conflict resolution mechanisms seen as reasonable and fair by both migrants and hosts. But this is more difficult than simply combating discrimination. Societies must learn to resolve peacefully competing claims and establish common priorities if they are to retain their capacity to act coherently and address critical issues in both the public and private spheres. Governance plays a key role in this process. Research suggests that the behaviour of public institutions can attenuate the inverse relationship between ethnic diversity and generalized trust among members of a society (Helliwell, 2003).

ii) *The Need to Foster Integration*

Social and economic integration must become national priorities. Failure to integrate immigrants and minorities can exacerbate social and economic schisms and fragment societies along ethnic, racial and religious lines. The risk lies in creating a visible minority underclass that is dysfunctional and unreceptive to policy intervention. Such an outcome would quickly erode whatever public support exists for integration, further aggravating disparities and creating a downward spiral of poverty, ghettoization and despair. Conversely, by demonstrating that migrants are productive and share the social and economic aspirations of their hosts, integration can promote tolerance and support for public assistance. This, in turn, would facilitate the economic and demographic adjustments to which immigration is able to contribute (see below). If a sense of belonging and common purpose is not fostered, it can be difficult to sustain support for migration and settlement assistance.

The path will not be easy. Research in Canada, Australia and New Zealand suggests that structural changes in the labour market have complicated the task of integrating migrants. In particular, traditional human capital and labour market factors no longer provide an adequate account of immigrant economic performance, suggesting that other factors are at play.⁵ Discrimination is one – though by no means the only – explanation for the changes observed.

5. This conclusion is derived from a series of studies conducted by the Research Branch of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada as well as by the Canadian Department of Human Resources Development. The research was based on longitudinal immigration and taxfiler data and is considered to be very robust. See cic.gc.ca for research material.

iii) *The Need to be Competitive in the Global Economy:*

The future well-being of nations depends on their ability, and that of their cities, to participate and compete in the global, knowledge-based economy. In the past, this was tied to the physical capital and raw materials of a region. This is no longer the case. Many analysts now see cities as the engines of national growth, because of the human and social capital that cities assemble. Especially important is the human capital associated with creativity and innovation.

In order to succeed, countries – and cities – need to develop the capacity to attract, retain and employ the best and most creative workers. With fertility rates below replacement, this means attracting and retaining highly skilled immigrants, temporary workers and students from around the world. Recruitment from abroad will play an increasingly important role in stabilizing the labour markets of developed countries whose populations are rapidly ageing.

A close relationship is posited between corporate investment decisions and the availability of highly skilled, knowledge workers. Under the right conditions, a *virtuous* cycle of investment, attraction of skilled labour and further investment produces industrial clustering and growth. The conditions needed to induce this dynamic form an “ecosystem”, a key element of which is diversity. Creating this “ecosystem” is a significant public policy challenge, requiring the dismantling of structural barriers, measures to combat discrimination and the creation of a welcoming, open environment (Florida, 2002).

iv) *The Need to Manage Actual and Perceived Threats to Safety and Security:*

Countering the threat of international terrorism and creating a safe and orderly society is an important and costly government concern. Linked to this is the need to counter the potential backlash against migrants and minorities resulting from tensions and incidents involving ethnic communities. Multicultural or pluralist policies can have a palliative influence on both.

The creation of an inclusive identity, where minority interests coincide with those of the larger community, increases the likelihood that minorities will cooperate with police and intelligence agencies in their efforts to thwart external security threats. At the same time, multiculturalism and pluralism have a prophylactic effect, reducing the ferocity of any backlash that might develop (say, as a result of a security incident) and moderating the response this would elicit from minority communities.

Similar concerns apply to issues of justice and domestic criminality, including the victimization of ethnic minorities and crimes committed by ethnic criminal organizations and youth gangs. The interaction of police and other justice agencies with members of minority groups tends to create tension in all ethnically diverse societies (Loree, 2001). Conflict can breed resentment, entrench stereotypes and degrade effective law enforcement.

Addressing safety and security concerns and breaking the destructive cycle of conflict, dysfunction, loss of support for integration and further alienation requires action on a broad front. Some of these actions are, of necessity, security and control oriented.⁶ However, the critical role of integration should not be underestimated. Integration can increase the effectiveness of policing, prevent minorities from being victimized (including by members of their own ethnic group) and contribute to personal and public safety, real and perceived.

6. See also the chapter “Managing Migration in the Wake of September 11: Implications for a Cost-Benefit Analysis”.

ENDOWMENTS AND STRUCTURES

THE SECOND angle of the triangle concentrates on institutional structures and features of social organization that affect the benefits and costs of migration and migration policies. Some of the features are fundamental to the societies in which they are found.

- *Economic Structures*

The industrial and occupational structure of national economies plays an important role in immigrant integration, particularly in early settlement. The majority of immigrants tend to find their first jobs in the service sector, in light assembly or the building and construction sectors. Cyclical, temporary flows tend to centre on agriculture. Economies rich in these jobs allow immigrants easier entry into the labour market. Also important is the degree of unionization and the manner in which wages are determined. Societies characterized by high minimum wages, broad sectoral wage bargaining and universal welfare systems, such as exist in northern European states, do not provide ready footholds for immigrants seeking jobs. The high levels of social cohesion in these societies create exclusionary tendencies that result in substantial immigrant unemployment (much of it long-term) and a high incidence of immigrants and minorities being forced to work in the underground economy (Forsander, 2003).⁷

Generally, it appears that states with highly organized labour markets and social welfare structures incur high welfare and housing costs when integrating immigrants. This creates resentment in egalitarian societies and makes the task of integrating immigrants even more difficult and more expensive up-front.

- *Access to Institutions:*

What is not always recognized in comparisons between immigrant-receiving countries and more traditional societies is the extent to which integration depends on the institutional context in which it occurs. In many immigrant-receiving countries, integration is, by and large, a national effort that enjoys across-the-board institutional support. Institutional reform to give immigrants and minorities enhanced access is the norm rather than the exception for all levels of government, extending across the delivery of health services, education, justice-related services, training and welfare and benefit programmes. More recently, attention has been focused on the private sector and on eliminating barriers regarding the recognition of skills and educational credentials (Iredale, 1997; Sangster, 2001).

The institutional orientation to service a multicultural population represents a collective investment in inclusion and social stability – a common goal for all countries. The investment produces returns (for both the host and immigrant populations) in the form of successful immigrant integration, which raises the per capita income and taxes of immigrants and offsets the cost (to the pre-existing host population) of providing health, education, welfare and policing services.

In addition to economic returns, investment in the capacity of institutions to integrate immigrants produces a more resilient society that is better able to deal with social conflict and to withstand social “shocks”. If the arguments advanced in this chapter are correct, the development of this capacity will not be a matter of choice but of necessity.

- *Fiscal Arrangements*

The national pattern of fiscal benefits and costs from immigration depends on the governance structure, taxation powers and the distribution of migrants. Two general statements can be made:

7. See also the chapter “Migration and the Contemporary Welfare State”.

First, macroeconomic studies in Canada, the US and Australia agree that immigration has a small but positive economic impact. This suggests that immigrants more or less pay for the public services they consume (excluding deficit financing or significant discontinuities in the public goods infrastructure). Adding the costs of settlement expenses does not significantly change this picture at the *macro* level.

Second, studies of long-term *fiscal* impact suggest that immigration has a positive net fiscal impact in the case of highly educated immigrants, but a small, negative impact in the case of less educated ones. The fiscal impact of immigration is also not evenly distributed. Benefits tend to be widely dispersed across regions or the country as a whole, accruing in the form of a more efficient allocation of labour, higher productivity and cheaper goods and services. Costs on the other hand, are concentrated in regions of heavy immigration, such as cities, which therefore bear a disproportionate share of the settlement costs.

The exact pattern of revenues and costs will depend on the level of government responsible for providing various services, the powers of taxation that each has, and the transfers that take place between regions and among governments.⁸

- *Social Institutions*

The extent to which convergent policies produce converging benefits and costs depends on the extent to which migration governance engages non-governmental entities. In the case of border management, the expected returns to public investment will be similar across countries because border control falls almost exclusively within the domain of governments. This is not the case with integration, which is both a matter of public policy and private action. The participation of social organizations and the behaviour of ordinary people

towards each other have as much to do with successful integration as does public action.

In Australia, Canada and the US, public policy in the area of integration is particularly effective because it leverages enormous support from NGOs and ethnic communities. This is not the case in much of Europe or Japan, where the NGO sector dealing with migrants is active, but not as strongly developed or institutionally supported, with corresponding implications for the costs and benefits of integration policy. NGOs, with their cultural knowledge and commitment, are effective service providers and offer an efficient vehicle for government outsourcing of settlement services.

A key underpinning for the participation of social organizations is the social bridge capital that exists within a country. In the case of Canada, framework legislation such as the Multiculturalism Act plays a crucial role in creating a welcoming environment for newcomers and in establishing immigration and integration as national “projects”. Direct financial support and tax relief are also responsible for the development and health of the NGO sector, but without the framework legislation the work of this sector would not be seen as in the national interest (Duncan, 2003). This would compromise the effectiveness of public action and reduce the leveraging that is currently achieved.

KNOWLEDGE, GOVERNANCE AND EXPERIENCE

THE THIRD angle of the triangle – governance, shared knowledge and institutional experience – may collectively be thought of as a form of social capital. The idea is that settlement is a holistic process requiring a complex array of supports, marshalled from public and private sources.

8. For a detailed treatment of this complex topic, see *The Future Fiscal Impacts of Current Immigrants* in the publication *The New Americans* by the US National Research Council, 1997. Particularly interesting is the comparison of fiscal impacts at the state and federal levels. Measured in terms of net present value, the overall average fiscal impact of an immigrant is positive, with state losses (-USD 20,000) being outweighed by federal gains (+USD 80,000). States such as California and New Jersey, with large immigrant intakes incur higher net costs, especially in the case of California because of lower education levels for its immigrant population.

The emergence of a comprehensive set of services and their coordination is an iterative process that requires time, experience, information and trust. Coordination is needed at the level of both policy and practice. This involves all levels of government – national, regional and urban – NGOs (including religious institutions) and, in some instances, business groups. Coordinating the contributions by these agencies is an organic process that evolves over time based on interests, competencies and capacities.

Research plays an important role in bringing about stakeholder collaboration by defining issues in a manner that cuts across jurisdictions. This provides incentives for agencies to collaborate at the initial stage of problem definition, as well as subsequently at the stage where remedies are identified. A commitment to evidence-based decision making also reduces ideological confrontations by emphasizing methods and outcomes as opposed to ownership. The result is a relatively neutral forum in which the focus is on ideas and practical solutions.

The social capital that is built through shared tasks and shared experiences produces benefits that increase the effectiveness and efficiency of integration services as well as lowering their costs (Reitz, 1998). The benefits accrue in the form of:

- greater policy effectiveness with fewer policy “holes”, more nuanced and qualitatively better programmes and a better sense of the downstream implications of policy and programme decisions;
- greater programme efficiency due to reduced overlaps and better sharing of scarce resources;
- broader policy and programme support leading to greater policy stability, resilience and reduced vulnerability to single issues; quicker responses to crises and a reduced tendency to sidestep issues and adopt risk-averse behaviour, and
- greater capacity for public institutions to leverage private resources and control external factors by capitalizing on the attractions of culturally diverse districts to attract creative workers and corporate investment.

With time, countries that do not at present invest in integration or research, and whose agencies lack experience, will build the knowledge and relationships necessary for greater efficiency and effectiveness in delivering integration services. This will cause the benefits and costs of migration policy and practice to converge across countries, making it easier to transfer lessons among them.

CONCLUSION

THIS CHAPTER began with a caution to policymakers and politicians about the dangers of uncritically transferring policies from one country to another. Three sets of factors were identified as determining the benefits and costs of interventions in different national contexts: values, institutional arrangements and knowledge and experience. Currently, significant differences exist within and between developed countries in respect to these factors, causing the benefits and costs of similar immigration policies to differ widely, depending on their location.

Notwithstanding these differences, a main tenet of the chapter is that developed countries are all facing a similar set of challenges, which create similar policy imperatives, particularly in the area of integration. These same imperatives are also causing values relating to migration to converge as nations struggle to address common tasks.

As values converge and learning takes place, many of the structural and institutional differences between countries that affect migrant integration are likely to fall away. This will result in better migrant access to institutions, the development of a robust NGO sector and the emergence of fiscal arrangements that share the benefits and costs of migrant integration more equitably among the different levels of government. (Dismantling the institutional barriers to effective integration also helps protect the rights of migrants, another value made common to all countries by converging international laws.) Some institutional differences will, of course, persist, but economic

globalization may eventually grind these down as well with corresponding implications for national costs and benefits.

The final set of factors that focus on institutional coordination, knowledge and trust – a form of social capital – presents no ideological impediments to convergence between immigrant-receiving states and more traditional societies. As countries mature in their approach to migration, the capacity differences between them are likely to diminish. Benefit-cost differences associated with various integration practices should follow suit.

Significant convergence of integration policies is unlikely to happen for many decades, given the

nature and pace of the economic and demographic changes driving the adjustments. This process will, however, accelerate with time. As values shift and institutional constraints are reduced, the range of options available to policymakers, particularly in Europe, will expand. Once new policies are implemented, they will have a liberalizing effect on values and on institutional behaviour, thus establishing a virtuous cycle of change, liberalization and further change. As this occurs, the benefit-cost ratios associated with implementing migration and integration programmes in different national settings will converge permitting lessons from one regime to be transposed to others with greater confidence about the likely outcomes.

TEXTBOX 17.1

INTEGRATION – EMPOWERING THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL (NGO) SECTOR

It can be argued that social integration and social inclusion generate increased social capital, while social exclusion reduces it and the levels of trust required for a vibrant economy and well functioning society.

Social capital is a public good that occurs in the relations between members of a society, and between members of a society and the institutions of that society, such as government bodies, the police, business organizations, NGOs and political organizations. It is said to be at the root of cooperation and to facilitate the development of individual human capital, smoothly functioning communities, robust and stable economies and a vibrant cultural life.⁹

Social capital theory suggests that the extent of its availability varies according to whether and to what degree civil society, including immigrants, can participate in its processes and decision making. A society characterized by social inclusion will, other things being equal, be more prosperous than one that is not. Social inclusion complements social justice mechanisms and through its broad societal reach should benefit all, not only those needing social justice supports.

NGOs Play an Important Role in Strengthening Social Capital

Governments can play a central role in promoting the social integration of migrants, but in some countries grassroots efforts in that regard still tend to be undertaken by NGOs. Canadian government programmes, for example, offer funding to NGOs for local activities

9. See some of the standard literature on social capital such as William Coleman's *Foundations of Social Theory* (1990), Francis Fukuyama's *Trust: The Social Virtues and Creation of Prosperity* (1995), and Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (2000).

to promote social integration by settling immigrants, and assisting them to find accommodation, work and schools for their children. In principle, the best ideas submitted by the NGOs are retained for funding. This approach transfers ownership of the integration effort to the people and their communities, which in turn can create more social capital than if the government retained exclusive responsibility.

Government funding for NGOs can be an efficient means of creating social capital within immigrant communities, empowering immigrants in their own settlement and integration in ways that direct service delivery by government cannot. Such programmes signal a willingness by the government and mainstream society to trust the newcomers and regard them as members of the host society. Local administration of the programmes allows direct contact between the newcomer and the official face of their new society. (This reference relates to NGOs that deliver services, not NGOs whose primary responsibility is to advocate on behalf of groups.)

This may well support the argument for *framework* legislation rather than direct government intervention. Such a framework can provide the necessary guidance to community actors in their endeavours. Ideas for the promotion of integration are developed in greater numbers, can be designed for the particular situation of a community, and are deployed by people with a vested interest in the outcome. Frequently, government-funded programmes require that organizations work in partnership with others, including the business community, and this stimulates greater trust, greater social capital and more effective integration. In that way, framework legislation could provide both the roadmap for social integration, as well as the legitimacy, based on democratic processes, of its pursuit. The approach is similar in Australia. By contrast, in the US community groups assume a major responsibility for integration, albeit with private rather than government funding.

The motives for integration need not be just the moral imperative of social justice and the extension of human rights. In times of crisis – and many regard the post-September 11 era as such a time of crisis – social justice arguments can be supplanted by the exigencies of the moment. But, if societies are motivated to ensure general prosperity through the strengthening of social capital, and see the integration of immigrants as a necessary ingredient, they will be on firmer ground for social capital to generate longer-term economic benefits, also in non-crisis times.

Source: Howard Duncan, Executive Head, Metropolis Project.

TEXTBOX 17.2

WOMEN, DREAMS AND VIDEOS

Ana Maria Chica Coral, a journalist and migrant living in Italy, helped make the video *Dreams of Women*, which aims to improve public perceptions of migrants in Italy through the active engagement of the migrants themselves. It was conceived for *No Di (I nostril diritti – our rights)*, an association of migrant women in Italy funded by the Italian government and the EU/EQUAL programme. It forms part of a larger IOM project, "The image of migrants in Italy, through media, civil society and the labour market", which gives migrants a chance to tell their story, promote their culture and be key players in the dissemination of news and information on migration.

This is Ana Maria Chica Coral's story, freely translated from the original:

Some months ago, I participated in a seminar on the theme "identity" promoted by the Italian migrant women's association *No.Di*. When it was my turn to speak in my small working group, I realized I didn't know what to say. I remember uttering three faltering sentences without really saying anything.

Later, I thought about the difficulty I had in defining myself, and of the answers I found the one that most helped me to understand was the realization that in the last five years, since arriving in Italy, I had had to make many changes in my life. I had worked as a secretary, a Spanish teacher, cultural mediator, translator – all of which I had never done before. Changing jobs really doesn't mean changing one's identity, but you have to wear different clothes that are not yours and that often do not fit comfortably.

This might seem insignificant or superficial at first sight, but is definitely more complex than that. When one has migrated, especially from a poor to a rich country, it is very hard to put a value to one's previous working experience. Immigrants who arrived earlier advise you to forget what you were doing before and to start from scratch. Therefore, one needs to reinvent oneself. Surely this process can be enriching from a human perspective, but at the same time it is painful, because it means putting aside all that you long for and have learned, to be able to do what the new reality imposes. Compared to the many migrants who have been forced to leave their families and children behind, it might not seem very important, even trivial, but to give up a job one loved and identified with is like giving up a part of oneself.

When I was offered the chance to make this video, it was as though I could recuperate a part of myself that I had left suspended somewhere: my profession, and what it meant to work as a journalist. I finally had the chance to work on the creation of a communication tool focusing on immigrants and, more specifically, on women. It meant having a "voice" again as a journalist, and giving other women the chance to speak and to convey their experience.

Picking up journalism again meant finding people with whom to share the same professional interests and, in this case, to tell life stories of women. For Marta (my companion in work, ideas, concerns, adventures and, luckily, many good laughs) and for

myself, it was clear that this was an opportunity to talk about the reasons why some women leave their country to live elsewhere, even though the conditions are not favourable. It represented a chance to talk about their faith in life, a faith so strong as to push them to choose such a risky and tough option as emigration, and of their courage to endure painful moments.

Interviewing Matsumeh, Suela, Maria Jose, Luz Maria and Adriana moved us deeply. I saw myself reflected in their answers to our questions, in their role as immigrants, women who hold on and do not give up. The only possible answer to the fear and insecurity of this new life is to work, work, and work again, partly out of necessity and partly to drown out the voices and memories in your head, and not to think.

I have many memories of this 20-minute long video. Not only of our work to produce the sound and the images, but also of the scents and tastes. The enticing perfume of Persian rice, or of the Peruvian "tanmales". Or the nostalgia of African drums and the Albanian violin played in the garden of a castle. Our main characters' accounts, their stories and the images and feelings they conveyed during these days spent together was not all they gave to us; taking time from their work they invited us to meet their families, and taste their food and listen to the music of their countries.

Surely the taste that remains and lingers on is that of friendship and female solidarity, the pleasure in doing something you believe in and the love of journalism, which, thanks to this video, I have been able to pick up again. These five life stories tell about dreams and are, in turn, a dream come true for us who filmed them.

Source: IOM Rome, Italy, 2004; MRFRome@iom.int

CHAPTER 18

MIGRATION AND THE CONTEMPORARY WELFARE STATE¹

Closed borders have turned into a luxury that is rapidly becoming unaffordable.

INTRODUCTION

THE INTERNATIONAL debate on migration is often simply one about open borders versus protected societies. On the one side are those who perceive migration primarily as a threat to cherished ways of life and want to close national borders. On the other are those who clamour for open borders and see protective measures as privileges for insiders that block global economic growth. The first use communitarian arguments about the need for strong solidarity to maintain high levels of social protection, while the second use liberal arguments to posit the reverse.

But both sides may well fail to see the real dilemma. Proponents of closure often lose sight of the reality that closing borders is more likely to increase irregular migration, including human trafficking, and the universal moral standards set by international human rights treaties and national constitutions. Proponents of openness tend to downplay the challenges that market-led labour migration regimes pose for the sustainability of contemporary welfare states.

This chapter looks at the affinities between immigration and integration regimes on the one hand,

and the prevailing welfare regime and the political economy on the other.² It is argued that there is a causal link between the way different welfare states have adapted to the challenges of post-industrialization (Esping-Andersen, 1999) and the migration policies that the states in question are pursuing.

The reasoning behind this argument is that welfare regimes are paid for from taxes or (statutory) social contributions and as such tend to increase non-wage labour costs. This, in turn, constrains employment, which imposes on businesses a strategy of mounting productivity and quality competition. This is the “high road” so much extolled by progressive literature on the subject. As wage and productivity levels rise in tandem, low-productivity labour is ultimately pushed out. Since deindustrialization forces states to find new jobs for low-skilled workers, the level of labour costs becomes crucial. Finding new employment opportunities for redundant workers while preserving the goals of equality and protection is the challenge of post-industrialization, and impinges directly on issues of migration.

The chapter looks at three well-known “worlds of welfare capitalism” (Esping-Andersen, 1990) and how differently they tackle the challenges of post-industrialization:

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2. “Political economy” here refers to the way in which the economy is politically structured. Note that this “structuring” is never solely done by the state, but always involves voluntary agencies, employer organizations and labour unions, and it impinges not only on the number of available “markets” but also on the dominant orientation among economic agents (Engelen, 2003a).

i) In the “corporatist world” of Austria, Germany and (partly) the Netherlands, the state is highly dependent on well-organized “insiders” who are unwilling to sacrifice social equality and protection to increase employment and flexibility, and are passing the costs of post-industrial restructuring onto large numbers of “outsiders” such as women, youth and immigrants;

ii) In the “liberal world” of the UK, the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, where the level of equality and protection is much lower, the dominant response has been to lower the wage floor even further in an attempt to make low-production activities – primarily personal and (simple) business services – economically viable, in the process accepting ever larger degrees of income and wealth inequality;

iii) In the “social democratic world” of Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland, the employment effects of deindustrialization are absorbed through active labour market policies and an expansive public service sector, requiring high and ever rising levels of public spending, which raises urgent questions about the social and economic sustainability of the levels of taxation this requires (Esping-Andersen, 1999).

In the post-industrialization era, states seem to be compelled to grasp only one horn of the “trilemma” of unemployment, equality and balanced budgets at the expense of the other two (Esping-Andersen, 1999), a choice that is highly determined by the type of welfare regime.

In the light of the bitter dispute in Europe on migration issues, it is surprising that the policy tension between open borders and social protection is not discussed more in the relevant literature. The most pressing question for European states today is whether they can afford to close their borders to maintain current levels of social protection. Or, more generally, to what extent a more accommodating migration regime and a well-developed welfare regime may actually be incompatible?

The chapter describes the predicament faced by welfare regimes such as those in the US, which are

strong on openness and flexibility, but much weaker on equality. It raises important questions about the need for effective integration policies to counter the segregationist tendencies current in liberal market economies. By contrast, the longer-term viability of European states’ welfare regimes is threatened by the rapidly worsening demographic outlook; while their open and export-oriented economies have rendered national boundaries increasingly porous, raising doubts about the possibility and desirability of closed borders.

The chapter demonstrates how the “corporatist” and “social democratic worlds”, respectively, will have different approaches to these challenges, but will both have to introduce some form of labour migration to cope with the tasks facing them. Closed borders have turned into a luxury that is rapidly becoming unaffordable.

The chapter concludes with a brief exposition on the kind of citizenship regime that could facilitate openness to migration, while still offering a modicum of social protection.

OPENNESS, FLEXIBILITY, MOBILITY AND INEQUALITY

THIS CHAPTER distinguishes between different “worlds of welfare capitalism” by the measure of “decommodification” that occurs. This criterion refers to a situation where “a service is rendered as a matter of right, and a person can maintain a livelihood without reliance on the market” (Esping-Andersen, 1990). As such, it presupposes the backdrop of a *marketized* and commodified economy. While originally meant to denote the degree of income replacement, it can also be applied to economies as a whole in order to determine the extent to which socially required goods and services are allocated by markets.

Seen in this light, a highly commodified economy is one where buying power is the main criterion of

distribution; where market allocation is the dominant mechanism of coordination, and where moral restrictions on market exchange are largely replaced by the utilitarian logic of cost-cutting profit maximization (Streeck, 1997).

Liberal welfare regimes clearly betray a high level of commodification in all of these senses. Generally, they provide a low level of income replacement in case of unemployment or incapacity, link such income replacements to means tests, and prefer in kind over cash transfers. Moreover, economic success translates easily into advantages in other societal spheres, such as education, health care, and even politics. This results in a low level of protection, a high level of poverty, a wide wage spread, relatively high income and wealth inequalities, as well as high inequalities in access to politics, health care and education.

Following the above, commodification implies not only that social and economic reproduction largely occurs through market exchange, resulting in a large number of market interfaces, but also that these interfaces will be of a particular kind. The political economy of liberal welfare regimes generates a relatively high level of economic uncertainty, not only for workers but also for firms, and an adversarial, low trust business climate (Whitley, 1999). The outcome is a predominance of contractual relations, a highly litigious legal culture, an outspoken preference for individualized insurance schemes for workers and a combination of market-mediated outsourcing strategies and proprietary integration, instead of trust-based cooperation on the part of firms (Whitley, 1999).

Another crucial and closely related aspect of the liberal regime is the presence of deep and liquid equity markets. Contrary to appearances, equity markets do not serve as conduits for the aggregation, mobilization and allocation of capital. Instead, they serve as exchanges for property titles, allowing owner-managers to liquify their assets and investors to diversify their risks (O'Sullivan, 2000). As such,

deep equity markets over time tend to disperse ownership, changing owner control from a personalized mode of power into a systemic one. Thus, corporate governance is increasingly effected through a shareholder-oriented ideology that is an integral part of a new, "financialized", accumulation regime, consisting of a complex mixture of non-profit and for-profit institutional investors, financial conglomerates and highly-specialized intermediaries (Scott, 1997; Clark, 2000; Lazonick & O'Sullivan, 2000; Boyer, 2000).

When combined, these attributes have resulted in high speculative portfolio building that has deflected corporate attention away from investment in production, training and education, and high performance workplaces. With this, employment relations have become ever more asymmetrical and precarious, while low union membership, precarious organization rights, and a predominance of on-the-job training have made it difficult for unions to counter the gradual shift in distribution of corporate revenues from labour to capital that is at the root of increasing economic inequality, increasing poverty, and a growing wage spread.

Moreover, unions have turned into sectional self-defence organizations, which aim to protect core workers, while placing the costs of mobility and flexibility on the peripheral worker. The result has been a multiplication of the number of available low value-added markets, creating numerous opportunities for the growth of micro firms in the personal and producer services.³

Because of their minimalist interpretation of citizenship rights and resultant low level of wage replacement and non-wage labour costs, liberal regimes have been able to pursue relatively generous immigration policies. Vice versa, some even believe that a generous migration policy has been an integral part of an attempt to keep workers' rights under managerial control (Burawoy, 1975; Korver, 1990).

3. See, e.g. Sennett, 1999; Schor, 1992, 1998; O'Sullivan, 2000; Lazonick, 1991; Cappelli et al., 1997; Appelbaum et al., 2000; and Ehrenreich, 2001.

The high incidence of private insurance is also accompanied by a long history of immigration (private insurance would in any case have defeated any efforts to set up European-style welfare systems). In addition, since a high degree of commodification means that there are a large number of accessible markets, liberal regimes are noted for the lack of explicit economic integration policies. The “market” is supposed to take care of that.

In summary, there are strong institutional complementarities between minimalist welfare arrangements, a low wage economy, open migrant admission policies and underdeveloped integration policies.

While the general openness, flexibility and mobility of this regime has served immigrants well, there are increasing signs that ensuring only market accessibility is not enough. The constant influx of cheap labour has reduced institutional incentives to pursue labour replacing (capital goods) or labour upgrading (training) investments. Instead, low value services absorb ever larger numbers of poorly educated immigrants, as well as natives. Should this trend continue it could ultimately result in capital replacing strategies – already visible in low-wage services and agriculture in the US (Schlosser, 2003) – which could have a downward effect on the innovativeness of some parts of the US economy in the long run. Also, the huge loss of middle-ranking jobs during the 1990s led to a rapid erosion of traditional avenues of social mobility and integration (Wright & Dwyer, 2003), resulting in a society of “segmented assimilation” described by some as “American Apartheid” (Massey & Denton, 1993).

Thus, the challenge facing the US is how to combat segmentation and segregation, while keeping the current openness and flexibility towards immigration, not only for the moral objective of ensuring equal life chances, but also for the long-term innovativeness of the American political economy. Hence the question: how long can equality be regarded as a dispensable “luxury”?

PROTECTION, EQUALITY, CLOSURE, RIGIDITY AND INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EXCLUSION

THE SECOND, “continental” regime is known for its high level of income replacement, generous social services and corporatist political economy. Broadly, there is considerable overlap between the continental and Scandinavian regimes: both provide a high level of protection against the vagaries of the labour market, and both lean towards a “high skill/high wage equilibrium”, simultaneously forcing and allowing firms to pursue capital and skills-intensive strategies based on long-term relations with capital providers (banks), suppliers, competitors and workers. As a result, the dominant mode of competition is best described as cooperative (Cooke & Morgan, 1998).

These political economies lack the mobility characteristic of the US, and hence do not have to bear the social and economic costs, or reap the benefits, of radical economic changes. Instead, they excel in incremental technical, organizational and institutional changes that require more voluntary collaboration, a less conditional type of mutual commitment and a longer-term focus.

The current modes of economic governance in Scandinavia and the European continent clearly facilitate such a collaborative, long-term logic. High quality, public vocational training systems offering portable skills shift the locus of power from the employer to the worker (Thelen & Kume, 2001; 2003). Combined with a higher level of unionism and a more cooperative polity in which governance is more frequently delegated to voluntary associations, this produces an industrial relations system in which workers tend to have far-reaching legal protections and rights, resulting in a low level of managerial discretion and consensual, horizontal management practices.

The long-term focus is also noticeable in the institutional make-up of the firm–capital nexus. Since stock markets tend to be shallow and lack liquidity,

there is no well-developed market for property titles and hence no easy way out for owner/managers. As a result, a large number of firms remain outside the reach of public equity markets (Wojcik, 2002; 2003), while those firms that are publicly quoted, were, until recently, largely sheltered from shareholder speculation because of stable, long-term relations with house banks acting as large committed stakeholders (Scott, 1997).

This results in a radically different market orientation of businesses. Rather than aim for the maximization of portfolio returns, they tend to focus primarily on technical excellence, using quality rather than price as the main instrument to gain competitive advantage. This is reflected in the composition of boards of directors. Consisting overwhelmingly of lawyers and financial experts in liberal environments, board members of companies in corporatist environments tend to have a product, industry or even firm-related background, resulting in a greater emphasis on product, process and product markets over portfolio building. The upshot is less of a “shareholder culture”, a limited “market for corporate control”, and only a small number of (wasteful) mergers and acquisitions.

Lacking a deep equity market, the pension system in corporatist countries generally has a “pay-as-you-go” character rather than a capitalized one. This reflects the lack of liquid assets on the one hand, and the power of a well-organized labour movement on the other. Labour unions have been able to deflect attempts by employers to buy the loyalty of individual workers through firm-based pensions in order to

maintain economy-wide class solidarity; while the need for employers to buy the loyalty of their workers has been mitigated by a publicly funded vocational training system. The training solves both the problem of “poaching” of highly skilled workers by competitors and of under-investment in training because of the inability of workers to take skills with them.⁴ Also, the availability of earnings as a source of new productive investments is increased by the ability to use supplementary corporate pension savings as a source of cheap capital (e.g. the so-called “book reserves” in Germany and Italy),⁵ and by giving firms easy access to the surpluses of corporate pension funds (as in the Netherlands).⁶

Given the high level of decommodification and collaborativeness, and the unconditional trust required of this type of political economy, there are strong insider-outsider dynamics at play. Since corporatist regimes provide ample opportunities for well-organized interests – in general highly skilled, highly paid white male workers – to block institutional changes, the effects of deindustrialization are either cushioned by labour supply reductions through generous early retirement arrangements, or externalized onto less well-organized outsiders. This results in high levels of unemployment among youth and immigrants and a stark trade-off between work and childcare for women. Since women increasingly tend to opt for (full time) labour market participation, the overall fertility trend is sloping downward, dropping below replacement level (2.1 children per woman) (Esping-Andersen, 1999).⁷

4. “Poaching problems” refer to the under-investment in general, industry-specific skills that results from the threat that some employers will free-ride on the investments in human capital of others. “Portability problems”, in turn, refer to the inability of workers to take their skills with them as a result of their high firm-specificity. An emphasis on firm-specific skills, in turn, is a rational answer of the individual firm to the poaching problem. The result of the need to find individual answers to these collective action problems is a low skill environment (Crouch et al., 1999).

5. Large German and Italian firms are legally allowed to keep corporate pension savings on their books as silent reserves. This was explicitly meant by the legislator as a source of cheap capital to facilitate capital investment.

6. Although the Netherlands is the only corporatist European country with a well-developed capitalized pension system (Clark & Bennett, 2001), implying a certain distance between fund and firm, corporate pension funds have proven to be rather lax in maintaining this distance and have “donated” to their donors a total amount of € 5.6 billion in the period 1998–2000, either in the form of lump sum paybacks or in the form of “contribution holidays”.

7. Fertility in the EU currently ranges from 1.19 and 1.21 in Spain and Italy respectively to 1.90 in Ireland, 1.76 in France and 1.75 in Denmark (UN 2003a). But there are enormous regional differences. In parts of Europe, couples appear to have opted for “decimation”, (e.g. only 0.7 children per couple in the southern regions of Italy). Spanish and Italian fertility ratios suggest that those countries, ceteris paribus, will cease to exist 200 years from now. At current projected rates of fertility, Italy’s population will decline from 57 million to 45 million by 2050.

The exclusion of domestic groups from the domestic labour market is matched by equally strong exclusion at the border. Due to rising xenophobia – in part a result of inadequate integration – both “reluctant” immigration countries such as Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and “newcomers” such as Italy and Spain have increasingly resorted to restrictive first admission policies (Cornelius et al., 1994). Currently, there seem to be only two doors left open for immigrants: general refugee programmes or family reunification programmes. Labour immigration is made up primarily of high-skilled experts from the US, other European countries and Asia, and is hence not perceived as migration at all, nor is it associated with the integration problems ascribed to post-colonial and guest worker immigration.

The convergence of first admission policies is much less obvious with integration policies. This is largely because the latter are predominantly shaped by national citizenship traditions and the structure of the polity at large, both of which reflect highly idiosyncratic political histories (Brubaker, 1992; Soysal, 1994; Castles, 1997). Hence within the group of states making up the continental model, a wide range of integration policies can be found, from “assimilationism” to “multiculturalism”. Predominant across these, however, at least in practice, are “differential exclusionary” policies that include immigrants in one societal domain, mostly labour markets, and exclude them from others, mostly political citizenship (Castles, 1997). Whatever the policy, there appears to be a general trend towards assimilation in legal, cultural and religious domains and “benign neglect” in the socio-economic one.

PROTECTION, EQUALITY, CLOSURE, RIGIDITY AND EXTERNAL EXCLUSION

DESPITE many similarities, the Scandinavian and continental models part company on their systems of social reproduction *per se*. Continental countries have radically reversed the policy priorities of the 1950s

and 1960s – valuing full employment and an egalitarian income structure over balanced budgets and low inflation – and have bought “healthy” public finances at the cost of both high unemployment and low fertility (Korpi, 2003). Scandinavian countries, on the other hand, have reacted to the challenges of post-industrialization by expanding their public sectors and absorbing displaced workers (from “brownstone industries”) and large numbers of re-entering mothers.

The Scandinavian model has thus stuck to the goal of full employment, resulting both in an abundance of care facilities as part of the universal, in kind welfare arrangements characteristic of social-democratic welfare models, and relatively high levels of fertility. On the downside are rising budget deficits and increasing public indebtedness, despite high and rising tax rates. Hence, in the continental case the dominant constraint is of a demographic nature, while in the Scandinavian case it is budgetary.

Recent evidence suggests that the budgetary constraint is less prohibiting than expected. Due to the universal character of the Swedish welfare system and its high quality service provision, the socialist reversal of tax cutbacks in 1991, which threatened to erode its long-term financial viability, could count on widespread electoral support. Sweden is the only OECD member, where the general level of taxation actually rose during the 1990s (Steinmo, 2003). Whether this example can be replicated in other Nordic countries, and whether or not it requires an ethnically homogeneous population, as Steinmo suggests, bears further investigation.

The demographic constraint, on the other hand, represents a threat that is less immediate but much harder to avert, and to which not even the Scandinavian welfare regimes are immune, as demonstrated below.

Despite notorious methodological problems, it is hard to contest the UN prediction that the dependency ratio in most European countries will rise spectacularly

over the next 50 years.⁸ Since the number of births in most European countries will decline dramatically, and the median life expectancy will continue to rise, a declining number of workers will have to provide for a growing number of pensioners. This will drive up non-wage labour costs and erode the competitiveness of firms in world export markets. Currently there is widespread fear among Europe's ruling elites that the "greying" of the population will set in motion a downward spiral of economic decline.⁹

This issue can be "resolved" in three ways, none of them easy to implement:

i) *By incrementally adapting or radically changing current pension systems;*

With capitalized systems the level of redistribution between generations is lower than in non-funded "pay-as-you-go" systems, either because funded pensions are contribution-related (as in defined contribution plans), or because they have a double source of income: returns on investments as well as contributions (as in defined benefit plans). Hence, the more pensions are provided by capitalized funds, the less their long-term viability is endangered by demographic pressures.¹⁰ This largely explains the growing interest among German, Italian, French and EU policy makers in funded pension systems (Clark, 2003a; 2003b; Engelen, 2003a).

ii) *By shifting the low fertility equilibrium upwards;*

This "solution" is rarely seriously debated, and is also seen by some to be at odds with the aim of increasing female labour participation. A recent study looked at the respective contributions of declining family size, on the one hand, and the postponement of births on the other, to the projected overall population decline in Europe (Lutz et al., 2003). It found that delayed maternity accounts for 40 – 46 per cent of the

projected decline over a period of 10 to 40 years. This has important policy consequences; for, policies aimed at boosting the number of children per couple are not only unpalatable to Europeans and Americans, but have also proven to have limited effect (Gauthier & Hatzius, 1997). Policies aimed at reducing birth delay, however – such as day care centres, flexible working hours and part-time jobs, or work-compatible school hours and holidays – do not suffer from these constraints and have proven to be much more effective.

iii) *By implementing a policy of open borders to expand the pool of future earners.*

Even though the numbers of immigrants needed to keep the dependency ratio constant is too high to be politically feasible (UN, 1999b), a growing number of countries are considering labour migration regimes along the lines of the models offered by traditional immigrant countries. Germany is a case in point, with its recent "green card" programme for east European and Asian ICT-experts, and new Immigration Act due to be implemented in 2005. The new Act tempers Germany's infamous *ius sanguinis* with a measured dose of *ius soli*. These legislative measures were directly based on the recommendations of a high-ranking government commission (*unabhängige Kommission "Zuwanderung"*), which concluded in 2001 that Germany had in fact become an immigration country and needed regulated first admission and integration programmes.¹¹ This was a radical break with the exclusionary stance towards non-European immigrants that the German government had adopted in 1973 when it officially aborted its guest worker (*Gastarbeiter*) scheme.¹²

There are growing indications in Europe that political pressures for open borders will be influenced by the organization of the pension systems. Where a "pay-

8. See Engelen, 2003b: 1360-1361 for a brief discussion of these methodological issues.

9. A growing number of multinational organizations have argued this since the mid-1990s, and pressed for funded pension arrangements as a solution (e.g. the UN (1999a; 2002a; 2002b; 2003a; 2003b), World Bank (1994) and OECD (1995; 1996; 1998).

10. See Disney, 2000, Weller, 2001 and Engelen, 2003b: 1361-1364.

11. See www.bmi.bund.de/Downloads/Zuwanderungsbericht.pdf for its final report.

12. Most of its recommendations overcame substantial resistance by the opposition and passed both "Bundestag" and "Bundesrat" in 2002. But due to irregularities in the voting procedure of the German second chamber (the "Bundesrat"), the German Supreme Court struck down the new Act.

as-you-go” system prevails, as in Germany, France and Italy, governments are likely to feel compelled, for their own survival, to create a more generous admissions policy. Where there is a more balanced mix between capitalized and “pay-as-you-go” systems, as in Sweden, Switzerland and the Netherlands, demographic arguments will generally be less convincing, resulting in a weaker political case for a more open admissions policy.

There are two qualifications: first, the margins of the option of shifting from a low to a high fertility equilibrium are not as wide as some proponents of the Scandinavian model would like. While a comparison of birth delay in Sweden and the Netherlands clearly illustrates the different “fertility effects” of the Scandinavian and Continental models,¹³ there is reason to doubt the ability of the Scandinavian model to maintain its late 1980 levels of fertility. Despite some claims that Sweden is beyond “demographic stress” because of its active support of young families, and resultant birth rate at or about replacement level (i.e. 2.1) (Steinmo, 2003), the UN recently presented much lower figures (1.56 over the period 1995–2000) and ranked Sweden fifth in the top ten countries with the oldest populations, below Japan, Italy, Switzerland and Germany, but well ahead of France and the Netherlands (UN, 2003b). The reasons were worsened economic conditions, resulting in rapidly rising female unemployment from 1990 onward, and declining availability of child care for low-income earners as a result of budget cuts (Andersson, 2000).

The second qualification has to do with the viability of pension restructuring. As highlighted by the current pension panic in the UK, the US and the Netherlands caused by falling share prices (and hence declining incomes) and rising pension obligations as a result of ageing, funded pension systems also play a key role. Given the size of worldwide pension savings, the fate of pension systems has increasingly become intertwined with that of leading equity markets. It has been argued that the stock market boom of the 1980s

and 1990s was largely the result of a “scarcity effect”, as increasing amounts of pension savings entered the stock market and started chasing decreasing amounts of equity (Toporowski, 2000). Maturation will transform pension funds from net buyers of equity into net sellers, setting in motion a reverse flow of capital from stock markets, which is likely to have a declining effect on share prices. Hence the expectation that global stock markets are unlikely to reach the levels of the late 1990s for many decades.¹⁴

In other words, despite claims to the contrary, funded pension systems might also be subject to demographic stress, ultimately forcing affected governments to reconsider their migration stance and open their borders to more labour migration.

CONCLUSION

THE ABOVE discussion illustrates that all three “worlds of welfare capitalism” can be both beneficial and detrimental for migration, and that both attributes are tightly coupled. Open migration tends to go together with a high level of inequality, uncertainty and a segmented economy. A highly protected welfare regime on the other hand, tends to go hand in hand with high wage levels, a relatively impenetrable but high-quality economy, and a stark insider-outsider dynamic, both internal and external (the Continental model) or only external (the Scandinavian model).

In other words, the basic policy choice appears to be between high immigration and high inequality on the one hand, and low or limited immigration and a high level of equality on the other, raising the intriguing questions: what would a combination of the best of both worlds look like? And how could it be brought about? Do states indeed face such a stark choice, or are there sensible institutional middle courses that would combine openness and protection, mobility and security, accessibility and equality?

13. The average child-bearing age in Sweden, is 26.3, compared to 25.9 in 1970. In the Netherlands, where childcare facilities are in limited supply and have only recently become available, the average childbearing age has soared from 24.3 in 1970 to 29.1 in 1999, one of the highest in Europe.

14. Dent 1998; Siegel 1998; Shiller 2001; Sterling & Waite 1998; Toporowski 2000; England 2002; Engelen 2003b.

It is possible to avoid the stark choices analysed in this chapter and to experiment with institutional combinations of the three “worlds of welfare capitalism” that could bring about a “fourth” both more empowering and more open to entrepreneurial individuals, whatever their place of birth, helping them to reach higher levels of socio-economic participation. But the route is not an easy one. Given the current political climate in Europe and the US, it is much easier to “make” markets than to correct their outcomes.

The US faces the challenge of supplementing a relatively mobile and flexible economy with empowering mechanisms that provide immigrants with sufficient security and protection to transform the “differential exclusion” of today into the “differential inclusion” of tomorrow. The defining feature of the latter mode of incorporation is its emphasis on upward mobility.

Most European countries, on the other hand, face the opposite challenge of opening up their protective, high quality economies for entrepreneurial immigrants in a manner that does justice both to their moral (not legal!) right to better life chances as well as to the requirements of their welfare regimes.

One way to proceed is by using the available status differences between citizens, immigrants and temporary residents to construct a so-called “stairway to citizenship”. According to this, newcomers could acquire rights incrementally, with each step being linked to detailed specifications about requirements, support facilities, goals and vesting periods, ultimately leading to a full set of “citizenship rights”.¹⁵ This is not to say that becoming a citizen is or should be the endpoint of all migration; the “stairway of citizenship” is not a “stairway to heaven”. It is rather a case for a variety of statuses, that could be so linked as to allow individuals to reach the “rungs” they want, while ensuring that their rights and responsibilities are choices rather than fate. The development of a European concept of citizenship, located at a

supranational level, goes some way toward a post-nationalization of citizenship rights – arguably a crucial first step in the construction of a “stairway to citizenship”.

A policy of closed borders is rapidly becoming an unaffordable luxury, while helping newcomers to become upwardly mobile is rapidly turning into a necessity. Without realizing and acting on this, Europe could gradually turn into a “gated community” of pensioners who depend for their livelihood on the proceeds of the much younger economies in Southeast Asia and South America, while the liberal economies of the US and others may eventually turn into low-wage economies commandeered by a small number of highly skilled, affluent “masters” surrounded by vast numbers of under-privileged, low-skilled workers. Neither vision of the future is socially, economically or politically attractive.

15. See Engelen, 2003a for an elaboration.

TEXTBOX 18.1

MIGRANT INTEGRATION POLICIES

"Integration" refers to the level of economic and social functioning in a society, and its meaning, scope and expectations can differ widely among states. It touches on issues of culture and belonging, nationality, identity and citizenship that are critical for any society seeking to ensure social stability in an increasingly pluralistic world. It is an area of responsibility falling primarily within the domestic domain of states hosting immigrants, and has very little basis in international law, which can provide for the protection of individual rights but not obligate governments whether or how to achieve the social, economic and cultural functioning of its immigrants.

National policies on integration therefore vary widely depending on individual state policies on migration, tolerance of difference, and the perceived need for social harmony. The integration approaches tried to date invariably reflect individual state policy preferences regarding the temporary or more permanent nature of immigration within their territory. Permanent immigration programmes pursued in countries like Australia, Canada, the US, the Netherlands and Sweden have been accompanied by planned, proactive strategies to help immigrants and host communities deal in their encounters with different cultures. Temporary immigration policies, on the other hand, show less integration efforts and are mostly reactive.

Four general integration approaches exist today, aimed at permanent and regular migrants:

1. **Assimilation** – based on the expected outcome of full citizenship, and sharing of common civic values with the native population. A one-sided process of adaptation in which migrants adopt the language, norms and behaviour of the receiving society.
2. **Segregation** – does not expect migrants to assimilate into the culture of the host society, and is generally applied to temporary migrants. The temporary nature of the immigration system leads to granting migrants limited social rights.
3. **Integration**, also known as "melting pot" – a two-way process of mutual accommodation between migrants and the receiving society, where these two groups accept and contribute to a common culture. People of different cultures learn from each other's culture, while each individual or cultural group retains some sense of cultural heritage and diversity.
4. **Multiculturalism** – recognizes cultural plurality in modern societies and tries to regulate this through principles of equality. Migrants remain distinguishable from the majority population through their language, culture and social behaviour without jeopardizing national identity. It privileges a culture of tolerance for different ways of life.

Most governments introduced some basic policies and laws against discrimination and xenophobia, though in few countries is there specific legislation regarding integration, preferring administrative mechanisms that allow greater flexibility, depending on the circumstances. In some cases, integration policies come as part of immigration policies. Increasingly, countries of origin are taking an interest in the admission policies of host countries, and how their emigrants are treated abroad. The way an immigrant settles into the new country can directly affect how the individual engages with the country of origin, also in terms of maintaining productive links with the home society.

The more successful integration approaches have generally combined strong central governance and monitoring with equally strong on-the-ground cooperation of local governments, the community and the migrants. (At a joint EC/OECD conference in Brussels in 2003, Australian immigration programmes were cited as improving economic returns to the country, in part because of the highly centralized integration schemes.) Integration considerations are also increasingly factored into selection criteria for skilled immigrants, to facilitate longer-term integration planning, which, in turn, can aid the evolution from temporary to permanent status, as desired. This has been the approach by Canada and Australia with their Points Assessment Schemes for skilled immigrants; while European states have not factored "settlement propensity" into their selection criteria, but focused on ensuring that those already in the country are given appropriate language, job, education and other social support to encourage their integration.

The segregation model foresees the least possible integration of foreigners, whose presence is seen as temporary and determined by labour market needs that do not require any measures to deal with the consequences of cultural diversity. Germany, the Gulf states and Japan are examples of countries which have adhered to this model. Immigration realities and labour market needs, however, have led Germany to review its legislation, and the new German Immigration Act, to come into force in 2005, departs from this premise and includes integration provisions.

The assimilation approach, with which France is closely associated, expects that migrants will adapt and adhere to the culture of the country, while identifying themselves very little with the native culture. The US, having been shaped by immigration, embraces the integration approach in which individuals from different backgrounds and cultures accept their respective differences, while also actively engaging to develop a common culture.

All models have their shortcomings. Regardless of the approach followed by countries in the past, all of them have, for different reasons (including economic circumstances, religious considerations, terrorist threats) recently reviewed their integration approaches. The projected need for immigrants and the growing movements of people have made this imperative. Most reforms focus on cultural understanding and language skills: the Dutch government toughened its liberal integration approach by introducing mandatory courses for new migrants, and the US plans to include rigorous testing of language and culture as a precondition for gaining citizenship.

Migrant integration is now a key preoccupation of EU policy makers. The EU Council in June 2003 set out a strategy for a comprehensive and multidimensional policy on integration based on the principle of immigrant rights and obligations comparable to those of EU citizens. The November 2004 EU Council calls for the establishment of a set of common basic principles which, though non-binding, support a European framework on integration. Complementing national citizenship, also, is the EU's "Citizenship of the Union", which under Directive 2004/58/EC of 29 April, 2004, accords all EU citizens the right to move and reside freely in the territory of the member states. This provides a platform for the promotion of EU citizens' participation in public life across Europe.

In the past, integration policies were shaped more by concerns about the impact they would have on national identity. In today's globalized environment, public opinion is more likely to embrace integration and social inclusion policies that promote a sense of belonging, participation and respect for values and the rule of law, while also balancing host societies' acceptance of diversity and the migrants' commitment to participation. Successful integration will also depend on how closely connected these policies are with those targeting racism, xenophobia and discrimination.

Source: AVRI, IOM Geneva.

TEXTBOX 18.2

THE CZECH EXPERIENCE OF MIGRANT INTEGRATION

In the past few years, the Czech Republic has rapidly become a major immigration country. With an estimated 566,000 regular and irregular migrants in the country, accounting for 5.5 per cent of the total population, local authorities have made integration a high priority. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is working with IOM on appropriate integration services for newcomers.

In 2003, the first year of the project, a website entitled "Home in the Czech Republic" was designed in Czech and translated into five languages (English, Vietnamese, Russian, Ukrainian and Armenian (www.domavcr.cz)). The site offers information on, *inter alia*, residence requirements, family reunification, employment, how to set up a business, health care services, social security, education and citizenship. Links were also established with local immigrant organizations and leaders to inform them about these new services, involve them in selecting the content of the site and offer capacity building and skills development workshops. The site was expanded in 2004 to offer information in Bulgarian, Georgian and Chinese.

In a press interview a Ukrainian migrant working with the project team confirmed that the information provided is specific to the needs of each community:

Sometimes it is very hard to get any information, even for Czechs, and they speak the language... Ukrainians often do not speak the language or are not familiar with legal terminology. And, unlike the Vietnamese minority, which is concerned mainly with trade-licensing issues, Ukrainians need more information on social issues, including marriage and what rights are guaranteed by international contracts between the Czech Republic and Ukraine (Prague Post, 15 April 2004.).

Source: IOM Budapest.

MIGRATION AND HEALTH

CHAPTER 19

INVESTING IN MIGRATION HEALTH¹

Well managed migration health, including public health, promotes understanding, cohesion and inclusion in mixed communities. Investing in migration health can make good economic sense and be an aid to effective integration of migrants in their communities.

INTRODUCTION

MIGRATION can have significant health implications for migrants and affected communities alike, which, if ignored or neglected, can be costly for all involved – socially, politically and financially. Some governments with highly regulated immigration programmes routinely address migration health² as an integral part of migration management. But most do not. In a world of high mobility, complex transnational networking, rampant clandestine immigration and increasingly fragile health scenarios in many regions, policies about migration health have become an international imperative.

This chapter argues that it pays for governments to invest in migration health. It reviews the relationship between health and economic growth, in particular the economic impact of infectious diseases. Using health determinants specific to migrants, it also examines economic and health aspects of migration itself, and the disparities between host communities and the migrants concerning health as well as access to health care, with reference to labour and irregular migration. Finally, it offers some useful pointers linking migration and public health policies.

WHAT DETERMINES THE HEALTH OF MIGRANTS?

Health determinants are “the underlying factors which affect people’s health”, and can include, for instance, the health environment where they live, or travel to or from. Other factors include lifestyle (diet, tobacco, alcohol), socio-economic conditions (living and working conditions, physical and psycho-social environment) and “life chances” (how children live and grow up, educational and employment opportunities, gender discrimination).³

The *migration-related determinants* of health define the level of vulnerability of migrants in a society, which can in turn impede a successful migration outcome for both the individual and the affected community (Grondin, 2004). In addition to the health environment in the place of origin, transit and destination (including disease prevalence), they include patterns of mobility (regular vs. irregular) that define the conditions of the journey and their impact on health; the legal status of migrants in host societies that often determines access to health and social services; and familiarity with the culture and language of the host community. Health determinants need to be understood by policymakers when they devise migration health management policies, which then need to be factored into larger public health policies.

1. The author of this chapter is Dr. Danielle Grondin, Director of the Migration Health Department, IOM Geneva.

2. Migration health is a specialized field of health science that focuses on the wellbeing of both migrants and communities in source, transit, destination and return countries and regions. In the preamble of its Constitution, WHO defines health as “a state of physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”; www.who.org/about/definition/en/

3. See the Commission of the European Communities, 2002.

HEALTH AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

HEALTH policies as they relate to the wellbeing of the individual and the community always have a price (Rauch-Kallat, 2003) - usually set by the state, and carried by the taxpayer. But the costs of public health and welfare can often be offset by the benefits wellbeing brings to the economy, in line with the adage that “health is wealth (...) health is a cause of progress” (Byrne, 2003).

A number of studies have demonstrated the benefits to governments of investing in the health of their peoples: better health can raise productivity and per capita income, and speed up growth of per capita GDP (Figure 19.1) (Bloom, 2004). It does so by raising national income, improving education, stimulating national savings and encouraging foreign investment. Life expectancy is an important denominator of income potential and capacity for savings and investments (ibid).⁴ In recent decades, East Asia has illustrated the economic benefits of a larger and healthier labour force: “life expectancy increased from 39 years in 1960 to 67 years in 1990 with a concomitant decline in fertility rates; the ratio of working-age people to the dependent population rose from about 1.3 to over 2, which stimulated a much higher production level and a higher GDP per capita” (ibid). In certain circumstances, one extra year of life expectancy can raise GDP by about 4 per cent (ibid).⁵ Health is thus an important factor contributing to different economic growth rates.

Investing in health enhances the quality of life and raises life expectancy by reducing the burden of disease on individuals and communities. “Health matters more (...) in low-income than in higher-

income countries” (ibid). Diseases reduce individual income, public revenues and the potential for economic growth. WHO reports that the losses amount to dozens of percentage points of GNP of the poorest countries each year (WHO, 2001). A combined effort to reduce communicable diseases, malnutrition and maternal mortality, which affect the poor more than the rich in developing countries, could be an effective strategy for poverty reduction.

In its 2001 report on investing in health for economic development, WHO estimated that approximately 330 million DALYs (disability-adjusted life years) would be saved for each 8 million deaths prevented: assuming, conservatively, that each DALY saved generates an economic benefit of saving of 1 year’s per capita income of a projected USD 563 in 2015, the direct economic benefit of saving 330 million DALYs would be USD 186 billion per year, and plausibly several times that amount (ibid.).

This is significant, particularly in view of the potential of ill health to reduce people’s receptiveness to education, lower their earning capacity and opportunities for work and increase the risks of mental illness and social problems (Figure 19.1) (ibid.).

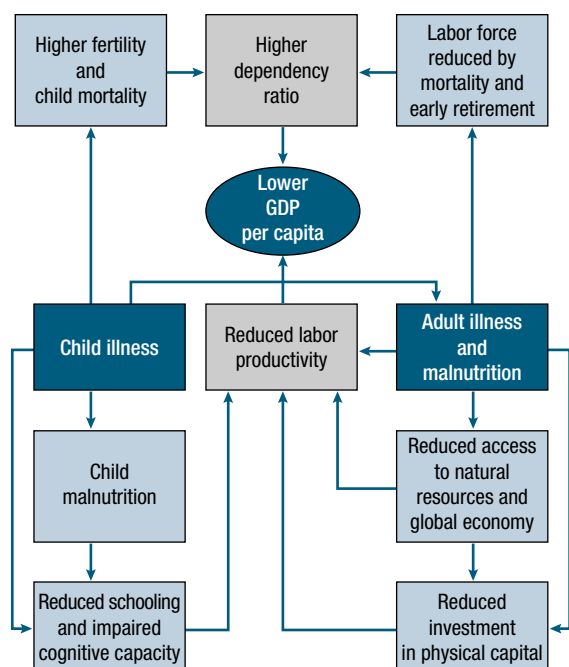
4. *Living longer is associated with higher income (Bloom, 2004). See also the table on life expectancy and rate of change in years per decade in the World Development Indicators 2003, World Bank, Washington.*

5. *WHO reports that an investment in health that results in a 10 per cent improvement in life expectancy at birth for each individual, could raise economic growth by at least 0.3 to 0.4 per cent a year. (The statistical example was generated using economic variables designed to account for cross-country patterns of growth, thus holds for all economies: “Standard macroeconomic analyses of cross-country growth are based on a model in which economic growth in a particular timeframe is a function of initial income (because of conditional convergence), economic policy variables, and other structural characteristics of the economy, including indicators of population health.”) WHO notes that there is about 1.6 per cent difference in annual growth between a high-income country where life expectancy at birth is 77 years, and a least developed country with a life expectancy at birth of 49 years (WHO, 2001).*

FIGURE 19.1

HEALTH'S LINKS TO GDP

Poor health reduces GDP per capita by reducing both labor productivity and the relative size of the labor force.

**Source:**

Ruger, Jennifer Prah, Dean T. Jamison, and David E. Bloom, 2001, "Health and the Economy," page 619 in *International Public Health*, edited by Michael H Merson, Robert E. Black, and Anne J. Mills (Sudbury, Massachusetts: Jones and Barlett).

More research is needed, particularly on how well the assumption "robust health = robust economy" may apply to poorer countries with reduced employment generation prospects, and on the specific effects of health versus other social conditions that may be related to health and wealth.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND THE ECONOMY

The repercussions of untreated infectious diseases go well beyond individual and public health, and may affect the economy of an entire country or continent.

- The AIDS pandemic in Africa, for example, is shattering the economies of the whole continent,

decimating workforces and reducing the productivity of tens of millions of working-age adults. It kills adults in their prime working years, and disables many when they fall ill. Costs for care are high, and replacement training is often unaffordable or inappropriate, which further depletes economic assets and impedes economic growth. In Eurasia, if measures are not undertaken soon to curb the disease, it is predicted that by 2025 India could lose 40 per cent of its annual economic growth, China 33 per cent and Russia 40 per cent (Behrman, 2000).

Elsewhere, other diseases have taken their economic toll:

- The recent plague in India has cost the country around USD 1.7 billion in lost tourism, transport services and exports (ibid.).
- Worldwide there were 8,096 SARS cases and 774 people have died of the disease,⁶ which also had a negative impact on tourism, trade and travel.

There are a number of examples, particularly in developing countries, of the value of investing in health, particularly preventive health.

- The programme to eradicate smallpox in the late 1960's, with a return of about USD 10 for every dollar invested (Global Forum for Health Research, 2004), is still generating dividends today – a better return than many large corporate investments can generate.
- Malaria costs Africa USD 12 billion a year in production loss (ibid.). Yet anti-malarial drugs, 95 per cent effective, cost only USD 0.12 per dose, and insecticide treated bed nets, costing USD 4 a piece, can reduce child mortality by 25 per cent (ibid.). Malaria is said to lower economic growth by 1 per cent or more per year in areas of high prevalence (WHO, 2001)
- A Control Programme against Onchocerciasis (a parasitic disease also known as "river blindness), targeting 30 million people in 11 Sahelian countries, has to date cost USD 700 million. Yet it has prevented an estimated 600,000 cases of blindness

6. See WHO on SARS www.who.int/csr/sars/country/table2004_04_21/en/ (accessed on August 26, 2004).

and has opened up 25 hectares of agricultural land, enough to feed 17 million people a year (Global Forum for Health Research, 2004).

ECONOMIC AND HEALTH DIMENSIONS OF MIGRATION

IOM has taken the lead in migration health programmes and research globally. In cooperation with WHO, governments and other agencies, IOM takes a holistic approach by addressing the wellbeing of both migrants and communities in source, transit, destination and return countries and regions. It contextualizes migration health in the broader policy field of development, trade, security, integration, peace and human rights (Grondin, 2004). This section examines migrants' circumstances in receiving societies, the wide-ranging benefits of investing in migrant health, the socio-economic drivers of migration, and the health-related consequences of extreme forms of irregular migration such as trafficking in persons.

INVESTING IN MIGRANT HEALTH

Economic prosperity depends on a healthy workforce. As many of the wealthier receiving countries turn to immigration to help correct the effects of declining birth rates and ageing populations, they are compelled to consider ways of optimizing the wellbeing of this additional workforce. Migration brings human capital, fuels economic growth, enriches the social and cultural fabric of communities, and contributes to the technical and economic growth of both developed and developing societies.

But for many politicians, health is seen in terms of expenditure rather than investment, a cost rather than a benefit (Byrne, 2003). Some countries' immigration

rules and regulations prohibit the entry of migrants with health conditions deemed to place an excessive demand on host health and social care systems (Canada and Australia). Others, faced with mounting national health care costs, are looking critically at migrant populations bringing costly health conditions to the country. The recent debate in the UK Parliament about whether to screen certain categories of migrants for the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) before departing from source countries is an example of a selective and populist short-term financial tactic to contain cost increases. The debate does not address the risk for HIV introduced into the country by travelling nationals, neither does it address the more complex and global financial difficulties with the national health care system.

The right to health and welfare is an unassailable entitlement of all persons (including migrants) under international laws on social, cultural, civil and political rights.⁷ But the "right to health is not to be understood as a right to be healthy" (UN, 2002). The right to health implies access to health services and practices, including physical, mental and social health, delivered in a way that is culturally sensitive, non-discriminatory and non-stigmatizing. It also implies the establishment of public health policies and practices that would integrate all members of a community, including migrants, regardless of their citizenship and migration status.

Migrant integration⁸ is a marker for successful immigration, and as such calls for a broader interpretation of 'migrant health', beyond just infectious disease control, to include considerations of chronic conditions, mental health, cultural beliefs and understanding of health, and human rights. Migrants in a state of wellbeing are likely to be more receptive to education and employment, and more participative in the host community. Where public health is attended to broadly, migrants may not be

7. These rights are enshrined in, e.g., the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1996), the Migration for Employment Convention (1949), the Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers (Council of Europe, 1977), the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (1990), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and others.

8. Integration implies being a full member of a society with all the rights, privileges and obligations of the native born, participating and contributing to that society.

singled out as a health threat to others, and hence would be less exposed to xenophobia and discrimination (Grondin, 2003).

Well managed migration health, including public health, promotes understanding, cohesion and inclusion in mixed communities. Investing in migration health can make good economic sense and be an aid to effective integration of migrants in their communities.

DISPARITIES IN HEALTH BETWEEN HOST COMMUNITIES AND MIGRANTS

GLOBALLY, there remain enormous disparities in health between developed and developing countries. But there are also disparities in health within countries, including rich countries, based on socio-economic groupings. Poverty is the critical health denominator for all. The poorest have poorest health (WHO, 2003). There are direct proportional relationships between socio-economic status and rates of long-standing illness (Lundberg et al., 2001), chronic diseases like cardio-vascular diseases (UK, 2004) and injuries (Graham, 2003). Confronting health disparities also means confronting the unequal distribution of wealth and socio-economic determinants (ibid.).

THE DISADVANTAGES AND VULNERABILITIES FOR MIGRANTS

Being foreign-born and from an ethnic minority state can in some cases be an independent factor related to long-term illness (Sundquist, 1995). For example, in some countries, people of different ethnic origin reportedly have a higher incidence of infant mortality and congenital malformation than the native born (Bollini, 1993; Lehman, 1990). In addition, some “first and second-generation immigrant women of reproductive age (have) an increased risk of debilitating long-standing illnesses (LSI)” (Robertson et al., 2003). Here, ethnicity can be an independent risk factor with an important link to social class, where “ethnic minority groups (...) confront a cultural

barrier, new language, social devaluation, discrimination and a lack of social support, i.e. a constellation of factors that might have increased the morbidity from mental and physical diseases and self-reported LSI (ibid.). Finally, studies conducted in Europe and North America show that migrant women of different ethnic origin have poorer antenatal care than native women (15% versus 8%) and suffer more stillbirths (0.82% versus 0.67%) (Bollini 2001). Many of these problems are connected to a lack of migrant-oriented health policies and insufficient training for health professionals in caring for those from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

The US Center for Disease Control (CDC) has reported that foreign-born persons accounted for 53.3 per cent of new cases of TB in 2000 (USCDC, 2004). The rate of decrease in tuberculosis among the US-born population has been 3.5 times that of foreign-born persons (El Sahly, 2000)

The migration journey is an experience that encompasses the lifestyle-related health determinants often shaped by socio-economic conditions of the source, transit and hosting community. Consequently, it can expose migrants to a heightened risk of physical and mental health problems (IOM, 2003), including reproductive health (Bollini, 2001), rendering migrant populations among the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in most communities (Institute of Public Health, NRW, 1998).

Access to and utilization of available health and social services, as required, can decrease morbidity and mortality, improve quality of life and contribute to a potentially more productive and satisfying life. Migrants are able to access such facilities where (Bollini, 1993):

- i) countries have specific health policies for immigration, such as Australia, Canada, the UK and Sweden;
- ii) health care systems are comprehensive, often including services structured to meet the specific needs of ethnic communities, irrespective of legal status;

iii) there is access to political representation by migrant communities, such as in Canada, Sweden and the US.

Globally, many if not most migrants do not have such access to care. The reasons are many, but are often related to their immigration status. Irregular or undocumented migrants have the least access to health and support services. Such access also varies widely for asylum seekers, from health evaluation upon arrival for public health purposes (immunizations, detection and treatment of infectious diseases, e.g., tuberculosis), to limited access during the processing of their asylum claim, which can take months or years, or immediate access to basic health services upon arrival. The reasons for these restrictive policies vary, but they share one underlying aim: to reduce health and welfare costs. There is even a view that generous “access” policies would attract more requests for asylum.

In contrast to irregular migrants, immigrants, permanent residents and other long-term migrants often have the same access to available health and social services as the local population. Even when services are available and access is granted, irregular migrants do not use them or use them in a manner that may exclude benefits, for fear of deportation. But even migrants with legal status may not use these services because they do not know about or understand them, or the services offered are “foreign” to their cultural and religious belief.

Policymakers and health management strategists need to consider the potential for “collision of cultures” in mixed communities. Often isolated and socially excluded, migrants can face cultural and language barriers, social devaluation compared to their previous status in the country of origin, and discrimination and stigmatization. The marginalization of migrants, or their exclusion from social participation in host communities compounds the risk of poor health associated with material deprivation and relative poverty.

There are a variety of reasons for the disparity in access to and utilization of health care and social

services between migrant and native populations, also at the behavioural level. The disparity has implications for the health of both migrants and communities. For example, many Africans in the UK, although they have access to all available health care and social services, are late to contact HIV care and support services, resulting in diagnoses at later stages of HIV infection (Traore, 2002). Migrant populations also often live in rented dwellings that lack the necessary safety and sanitary equipment, and where children are exposed to a higher risk of accidents and lead poisoning. If they are denied access to health care, this can have deadly and costly consequences for the migrants and the government. In France, asylum seekers who are not allowed to work while their claim is being processed, and receive less than 300 euro a month, often work underground and run the risk of exploitation and resulting ill health (Lamara, 2003).

Public health campaigns often target native populations, but fail to catch the attention of migrants. In Europe, for example, the health care agenda is not geared to services to migrants for a number of reasons, including a lack of political will, insufficient cultural sensitivity and the absence of migrant representation during the policy-making process (Edubio et al., 2001).

More research is needed to understand the complexities of access to and utilization of health care and social services in migrant populations. Access to care is not only a question of health policy and management, but also of social stability, prevention of discrimination and stigmatization, and promotion of inclusion through awareness and cultural sensitivity in health matters and empowerment of migrant communities to access services (Commission for Racial Equality, 1991; Sacks, 1983).

HEALTH DIMENSIONS OF LABOUR MIGRATION

MIGRATION for employment is not always safe, nor always covered by regulations protecting migrant workers, employers, and economies of source and hosting countries. Labour migrants are more vulnerable to ill health than nationals working in the same occupations, with a reportedly higher incidence of accidents, illness and injuries. In Europe, occupational accident rates are about twice as high for migrant workers as for native workers (Taran, 2003). When separated from spouse and family, migrant workers are more vulnerable to risk behaviour, resulting in a higher risk of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, and, in the case of women, rape and unwanted pregnancies (Estrella-Gust, 2001).

Social exclusion, discrimination, poor living conditions and poverty in general all impact on the mental health and social adjustment of migrants in the host community. These vulnerabilities to higher disease burdens in host working environments add to the already precarious situation of those who carry diseases from the country of origin, or acquired in transit. This can only be further exacerbated by the lack of access to health services.

It has been established that work-related stress is the second most common occupational health problem in the European Union, affecting over 40 million, 28 per cent of the population in the region, with an estimated cost of more than EUR 20 billion in lost time and health care costs.⁹ But critical data on the costs of ill health of migrants are still lacking.

The growing movement of healthcare workers from developing to developed countries adds another

dimension. Drawn by greater financial and career opportunities, the migration of health professionals exacerbates the shortages of health staff in the countries of origin and undermines their ability to care for the local community.¹⁰ Developing countries are endeavouring to manage this flow, including the facilitation of return migration, through bilateral agreements, for instance those concluded between South Africa and the UK, and between Poland and the Netherlands, to name some.¹¹

Mindful of the higher risk of disease among migrant workers, IOM collaborates with governments, private sector recruiters and other partners to promote better migrant health. For example, IOM has assisted in the development of audio-visual training and health awareness material for pre-departure orientation of prospective labour migrants in the Philippines; monitored the occupational health and operational aspects of a nurse exchange programme between Poland and the Netherlands, and contributed to the development of a website to inform Pakistani nurses about opportunities for work abroad, including legal requirements, occupational standards and working conditions.

Trade globalization aims for highest economic gains. This could be complemented by global efforts to reach the highest standards in social and health care of migrant workers and their communities. This is particularly necessary for low-income countries (Bhargava et al., 2001), where life expectancy is lowest and the disease burden much higher than in better-off countries.

AGRICULTURAL MIGRANT WORKERS

The International Labour Organization (ILO) recognizes construction, mining and agriculture as the three most dangerous occupations in the world,¹²

9. See the website of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, as quoted in *Newsletter on Occupational Health and Safety 2003*; 13: pp. 32-35.

10. For further discussion of the costs to African and other governments of training health professionals who take their skills and training abroad see OECD, 2004, and the chapters in this report: "Migration Trends in Sub-Saharan Africa" and "Balancing the Benefits and Costs of Skilled Migration in the Asia-Pacific Region".

11. See also the Textbox "Bilateral Labour Agreements: Effective Tools for Managing Labour Flows".

12. For further information, see ILO's In Focus Programme on Safety and Health at Work and the Environment, especially in Hazardous Sectors, www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/hazardwk/index.htm

albeit essential to the economic performance of many countries, developed or developing. In the US, the USD 28 billion fruit and vegetable industry¹³ is highly dependent on migrant farm workers; yet, the health of many of these workers is comparable to that in many developing countries (Leon, 2001). A great number of the migrants are either non-citizens or have no legal residence status; most earn low wages, with 60 per cent of farm worker families on incomes below the poverty level (USDOL, 2000). These persons are generally not protected by illness insurance, and absenteeism from work due to illness or injury may result in a loss of job. They rarely have access to workers' compensation (Davis, 2003), occupational rehabilitation or disability compensation. In Ontario, Canada, although migrant farm workers were paid USD 11 million in employment insurance premiums in 2000, they did not qualify to collect the benefits.¹⁴

Agricultural work is labour intensive, often undertaken in poor and dangerous conditions; working hours are usually long, often in harsh weather, with daily exposure to pesticides and other toxic substances, in an unfamiliar working environment where the language barrier may prevent migrants from being aware of safety recommendations or recognizing safety warnings.

MIGRANT CHILD LABOUR

Child labour is a form of slavery. It is one of the most invidious means for poor societies to fight their poverty, spur development, address labour shortages, and/or simply give vent to their greed. The numbers of children forced into slave labour can only be guessed at. Over 30 per cent (i.e. over 80 million) of the world's working children are in sub-Saharan Africa (Muchiri, 2003). Other regions also employ children, many of whom are migrants. The occupational health and other attendant risks that adult labour migrants face are compounded in the case of children, because of the impact their work has

on their development and growth potential. A 2000 study of Hispanic children of migrant farm workers shows that children make up almost 25 per cent of farm labour in the US, placing them at risk of injury or even death from accidents caused by machinery. Poor access to healthcare because of family mobility, lack of health insurance, cultural barriers and lack of economic resources all threaten the health of these children (Hellier et al., 2000).

IRREGULAR MIGRATION: THE HEALTH DIMENSIONS

THE HIGHEST risk to migrant health occurs when the migration journey is irregular, not solicited or welcomed by a host country or region, and the migrant ends up undocumented. This not only poses risks to the health of the migrant, but is also a public health concern, particularly in regard to communicable disease control and surveillance, reproductive health, occupational and environmental health, and sanitation. After arrival, undocumented migrants often live in crowded, unsanitary conditions that increase their health risks (Thomas-Hope, 2003); yet their illegal status prevents them from accessing health and social services. Their unstable and marginal circumstances may contribute to mutual unease between migrant and native communities, and fuel sentiments of xenophobia and discrimination against all migrants.

There are regular reports of human rights violations against irregular migrants. Central American migrants on their way to the US face major risks when crossing Mexico, as they can be subjected to violence by groups of delinquents, and extortion by various authorities. Women migrants are more vulnerable to violence, sexual abuse and hence sexually transmitted infections than men.

13. Refer to the National Center for Farmworker Health Inc., www.ncfh.org

14. See "Cultivating Health and Safety" The Migrant Agriculture Workers Support Centre found at www.whsc.on.ca/Publications/atthessource/summer2002/cultivatinghs.pdf

UNDOCUMENTED MIGRATION AND HEALTH: THE CASE OF THAILAND

Thailand has over one million undocumented migrants, mainly from Myanmar and other neighbouring countries. Most of them are unskilled “economic” migrants, asylum seekers and trafficked persons seeking their fortune and/or protection in a country that is politically stable and in need of unskilled, low-paid labour. Thai communities with large populations of undocumented migrants have been found to have an increased risk of communicable diseases such as polio, HIV, malaria, filariasis and tuberculosis (Kittipavara, 2004). The migrants themselves are at a high risk of exposure, as illustrated by the case of the Burmese migrant workers in Thailand who have an overall HIV rate of 4.9 per cent, double the estimated rate among the Thai (2.2%) and Burmese (1.9%) populations (Srithanaviboonchai et al., 2002).

The costs of health services for migrants in Thailand, including undocumented migrants along the Thai border, have risen from 79 million THB in 1997 to 170 million THB in 2003, clearly imposing a strain on health and welfare services and the budgets for the care of Thailand’s nationals (Kittipavara, 2004).

TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS AND ITS HEALTH DIMENSIONS

TRAFFICKING in persons is a multi-billion dollar criminal industry causing huge social and financial costs for many countries, communities and families. Without going into the details of the scale of the phenomenon globally,¹⁵ this section focuses on the health implications of trafficking, particularly within the “adult entertainment” industry, where the revenues appear to be highest.¹⁶ The most severe consequences of trafficking in persons include the

health related ones (London School of Hygiene, 2003). The impacts on trafficked persons are devastating: rape, beatings, torture, inhuman sexual abuse. The effects on mental, reproductive and overall physical health can be long-lasting, due to complications associated with malnutrition, injuries and often forced substance abuse (Javate De Dios, 1998; Raymond, 2002).

THE TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The case of trafficked children and adolescents needs to be handled differently from that of trafficked adults, because behavioural patterns acquired during this early period set the pattern for adult life: some 70 per cent of premature deaths among adults are due to behaviours initiated in adolescence (WHO, 1998). Children are trafficked both for economic and sexual exploitation. The “black labour market”, such as peddling and begging, seen in many large European cities, usually involves younger children, mostly boys, handed over by their poor families lured by promises of a better life for the children. Older children can be trafficked as cheap construction labour, and held in slavery-like conditions incompatible with their level of physical development. UNICEF estimates that about 1.2 million children are channelled into the sex trade every year (UNICEF, 2004); but very little is known about the true scale.

The consequences of sexual exploitation are particularly devastating for: a) mental health (anti-social behaviour, severe depression, post-traumatic stress syndrome and suicidal tendencies) and b) reproductive health (compared to adolescents worldwide, children involved in prostitution have a 6 to 16 times higher chance of contracting a sexually transmitted infection (UN, 2000)). Some 50 – 90 per cent of children rescued from brothels in Southeast Asia are infected with HIV (World Congress, 1996). Sexual exploitation of children means that children may give birth to children. Sexually active adolescent

15. See also the statistics chapter “Counter Trafficking” of this Report.

16. Trafficking in women and girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation is estimated to bring profits of USD 7 billion annually (Hughes, 2001)

girls, who do not use contraception, have a 90 per cent chance of becoming pregnant within one year. Sexually exploited children, both girls and boys, are often raped; and children are more susceptible than adults to dying from the violence associated with this.

Trafficking is costly to societies. Trafficked children are deprived of the protective environmental health determinants that promote mental and developmental wellbeing of children and adolescents: good family relationship, good peer relations, social networks, education to enhance communication skills, cognition and clear cultural and linguistic identification. ILO estimates that the economic gains from eliminating child labour, particularly sexual slavery, would be tens of billions of dollars annually, because of the added productivity that future generations of workers would bring with increased education and improved public health (ILO, 2002).

BUDAPEST CONFERENCE ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

In March 2003, a Regional Conference was held in Budapest on Public Health and Trafficking in Human Beings in central, eastern and southeast Europe.¹⁷ It brought together public health and counter-trafficking officials, also at the ministerial level, from Albania, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro (including Kosovo), Slovakia, Switzerland, Ukraine, the US, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions. The objective of the conference was to address the public health aspects of trafficking in persons, in particular the consequences for public health of the sexually-transmitted and re-emerging infectious diseases, psycho-traumatization, and physical and emotional abuse suffered by the victims.

The conference resulted in a set of recommendations on ways to increase the standard of health assistance to trafficked victims, and a coordinated health policy approach. The Budapest Declaration builds on and complements those international instruments against trafficking of persons that cite the need to provide physical, sexual and psychological health care to trafficking victims.¹⁸

The conference also raised public awareness of this serious issue and paved the way for future regional cooperation among states in the region. The Declaration is the first concrete follow-up to the Brussels Declaration with regard to health issues, and could serve as a framework at regional levels, international and bilateral levels for a more comprehensive approach to victim protection and assistance, including individual health, public health and trafficking.

CONCLUSION

THIS CHAPTER has explored some of the major health-related costs of migration, and demonstrated how investing in migration health could mitigate those costs and bring economic and social gains to governments, society and the migrants. What is needed now is the intellectual acceptance of this by policy makers, and the political will for action and financial support. Investing in health is not the responsibility of health sectors alone. Since the health disparities mirror disparities in the key health determinants - i.e. socio-economic and political conditions - this investment would need to be cross-cutting, i.e. linked with other broader efforts to tackle poverty, widen education opportunities for all, regardless of gender, and facilitate employment.

17. The conference was organized by IOM, with the support of the US Ambassador to Hungary and USAID, and in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, Family and Social Affairs of the Republic of Hungary.

18. These include the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (2000); the Brussels Declaration on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2002); and the Council of Europe's Recommendation R(2000) 11 on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation (19/5/2000).

A case is made for public health policies and health management strategies to support the social and political integration of migrants, regardless of their immigration status, and respecting cultural identities. Such policies would correlate best with education, welfare, labour and justice concerns by:

i) Reducing overall risks to poverty within migrant communities by eliminating administrative barriers that limit access to employment and decent living conditions, and promoting education and training to upgrade skills.

ii) Improving access to, and utilization of, healthcare and social services through:

- “globalizing” access to health and welfare services. The ground-breaking decisions by the European Court of Justice and EU Commission to permit the cross-border access of patients to various health systems in Europe are a first step in that direction;
- overcoming cultural and language barriers, while being culturally sensitive;
- providing training and health promotion material for health literacy among migrant communities, particularly on preventive services;
- developing out-reach public health programmes (e.g. vaccinations) for migrants, who often fall through the net of public health systems because of their mobility (difficult to reach) and their lack of entitlements.

iii) Harmonizing cross-border access to, and scope of health care and welfare coverage for migrants, particularly for asylum seekers and refugees. This would decrease the “forum shopping” tendency, optimize standards for continuity of care and strengthen global public health monitoring.

iv) Involving migrant communities in setting priorities and procedures for service delivery, and to advocate for the benefits of health in migrant communities.

v) Setting a policy of non-discrimination in the provision of health care and welfare services.

At an international seminar on Health and Migration in Geneva in June 2004,¹⁹ governments and international organizations agreed that health must be considered an integral part of migration management. They further identified a need for stronger partnership approaches to this issue between and among governments, organizations and communities at national, regional and international levels. Well managed migration health presents opportunities for improving global health to the benefit of all. Improved individual wellbeing should also support larger efforts at economic, political and cultural cooperation between countries and regions – an issue warranting further research in the interests of harmonious international relations.

19. The seminar was organized by IOM as part of its *Dialogue on Migration* and was co-sponsored by WHO and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It brought together health and migration officials for an exchange of views and to build capacity and understanding of the complex relationship between health and population mobility.

CHAPTER 20

GLOBAL MOBILITY, HIV AND AIDS ¹

The failure to address HIV in relation to migration, and migration in relation to HIV, potentially entails heavy social, economic and political costs.

INTRODUCTION

IN HIV/AIDS² the world is facing a crucial social issue, as the pandemic threatens to undo decades of investment in health, education and human resource development. In the countries most affected by AIDS, all economic sectors are affected by a weakened and ultimately dwindling labour force. Societies must find new approaches to care for and socialize millions of children who have seen their parents fall ill and die. Along with migrant health in general, the link between HIV and population mobility is one of the most critical challenges currently confronting governments, donors and humanitarian and development agencies.

The failure to address HIV and AIDS in relation to migration, and migration in relation to HIV and AIDS potentially entails enormous social, economic and political costs; yet the field continues to be seriously under-researched and either not addressed, or only inappropriately addressed by policymakers. This chapter draws on presentations made during the International AIDS conference held in Thailand in July 2004, and on recent publications, to summarize the debates concerning global mobility and HIV, and to posit some policy actions that could make a difference.

HIV/AIDS IN GENERAL

By 2004, virtually every country was affected by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and between 35 and 42 million adults and children were infected with HIV. In 2003, almost 5 million people were newly infected, and almost 3 million died worldwide. About half of those infected are women and girls. Half of all new HIV infections strike people between the ages of 15 and 24 years (UNAIDS, 2004a).

What distinguishes the AIDS pandemic is its unprecedented and devastating impact on social and economic development in some of the poorest countries. If other epidemic diseases typically affect the more vulnerable, such as children and the elderly, AIDS strikes workers and parents at the height of their productivity and it strikes slowly. For the affected individuals,³ as for households and communities, the impact of the illness is one of progressive and profound changes over many years: “by the time the wave of HIV infection makes itself felt in the form of AIDS illness in individuals, the torrent of the epidemic is about to overwhelm medical services, households, communities” (Barnett and Whiteside, 2002). AIDS is thus both an emergency and a long-term development issue.

1. The author of this chapter is Mary Haour-Knipe, Senior Adviser, Migration and HIV/AIDS, IOM, Geneva.

2. Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS).

3. The initial infection, which may barely be noticed, is followed by a period without symptoms, which may last 8 to 10 years in developed countries, less in developing countries. This is followed by a period of increasingly severe ill health. AIDS deaths are preceded by a period of long and debilitating illness.

In response, intensive research has led to the development of antiretroviral (ARV) treatment to fight HIV infections, financing has increased considerably, the cost of ARV drugs has dropped, concerted efforts are making it possible to extend treatment to millions of people in low- and middle-income countries whose lives depend on it, and increased attention is being given to prevention.

However, all this is not yet sufficient to halt or reverse the epidemic and the long-term consequences of AIDS can have wide-reaching effects. If current infection rates continue and there is no large-scale treatment programme in the worst affected Sub-Saharan African countries, up to 60 per cent of today's 15-year-olds in those countries will not reach their 60th birthday. Impoverished households will break up as the orphaned children of deceased parents and grandparents migrate elsewhere; children will become more vulnerable to infection where there are no publicly supported services, and the number of health workers will be progressively depleted as they, too, become infected.

HIV/AIDS AND POPULATION MOBILITY

THE SESSION on population mobility at the XV International AIDS conference in Bangkok, July 2004,⁴ was part of ongoing international effort to increase understanding of the complex relationship between migration and HIV/AIDS. Presentations given at that session form the backbone of this chapter.⁵ Some of the recent data concerning HIV and migration are reviewed, and the key challenges of responding substantively to the issue are discussed. Case studies from Uganda and Thailand are used to illustrate migrant risk and vulnerability.

DATA CONCERNING HIV, AIDS AND POPULATION MOBILITY

As our understanding of HIV and AIDS increases, so does our understanding of the complex and circular relationship between HIV and population mobility. At the beginning of the epidemic before human immunodeficiency virus is prevalent, and in countries or regions with adequate epidemiological monitoring, the first cases of HIV can sometimes be traced to individuals or groups passing through, such as truck drivers, people displaced by conflict, military personnel, or returning migrant workers. But, HIV is now present in every country of the world. At later stages in the epidemic, when HIV is already entrenched in a particular area, migrants, refugees, internally displaced people (IDPs) and individuals in transit for professional or other reasons may find themselves in situations where they are at increased risk of becoming infected with the virus, and thus becoming vehicles of its further spread.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POPULATION MOBILITY AND HIV

Work undertaken at Erasmus University in the Netherlands uses country data from demographic and health surveys to plot the correlation between the proportion of recent immigrants in urban populations and the urban HIV prevalence in Africa using sentinel surveillance data (Voeten et al., 2004). Graph 20.1 shows HIV prevalence among pregnant women by the proportion of female urban residents aged 15 to 49, who moved to their current location during the last 12 months, by country and by region, for 26 Sub-Saharan African countries. It clearly shows that, overall the higher the proportion of immigrants, the higher the HIV prevalence. For example, HIV prevalence among pregnant women was negligible in Senegal, where demographic surveys showed that less than 3% of

4. During the symposium session organized by IOM, UNHCR and CARAM Asia, Dr Cynthia Maung, Director, of the Mae Tao Clinic, Mae Sot, Thailand, set the stage by describing HIV/AIDS risks and vulnerabilities of mobile populations, after which the Honourable Christine Amongin Apuru, State Minister for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, Kampala, Uganda, Dr. Paul Spiegel, Senior HIV/AIDS Technical Officer, UNHCR, Geneva, Dr. Irene Fernandez, chair, CARAM-Asia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and Dr. Michael O'Dwyer, Senior Health and Population Adviser, DFID South East Asia, Bangkok, Thailand, respectively presented the views of governments, international organizations, NGOs and donors in addressing such risks and vulnerabilities.

5. Other recent reviews available include a brief review of AIDS and mobility in Africa, prepared by IOM for the 'Scenarios for the Future'.

women had recently moved to their current home, but far higher in Malawi where more than 20% had done so.

The data shown in Graph 20.1 is gross, but intriguing. Another recent study examines in more depth the relationship between mobility, sexual behaviour and HIV infection in an urban population in Yaoundé, Cameroon. Among a representative sample of 1,913 urban residents, an HIV prevalence of 7.6 per cent was found among men who had been away from home for periods longer than 31 days during the previous year; 3.4 per cent among men who had been away for less than 31 days, but only 1.4 per cent among those who had not been away from home in the previous year. The association between men's mobility and HIV remained significant after controlling for other important variables, and was related to risky sexual behaviour (Lydié et al., 2004). However, there was no correlation between women's mobility and HIV

infection, a finding that needs to be explored in other populations.

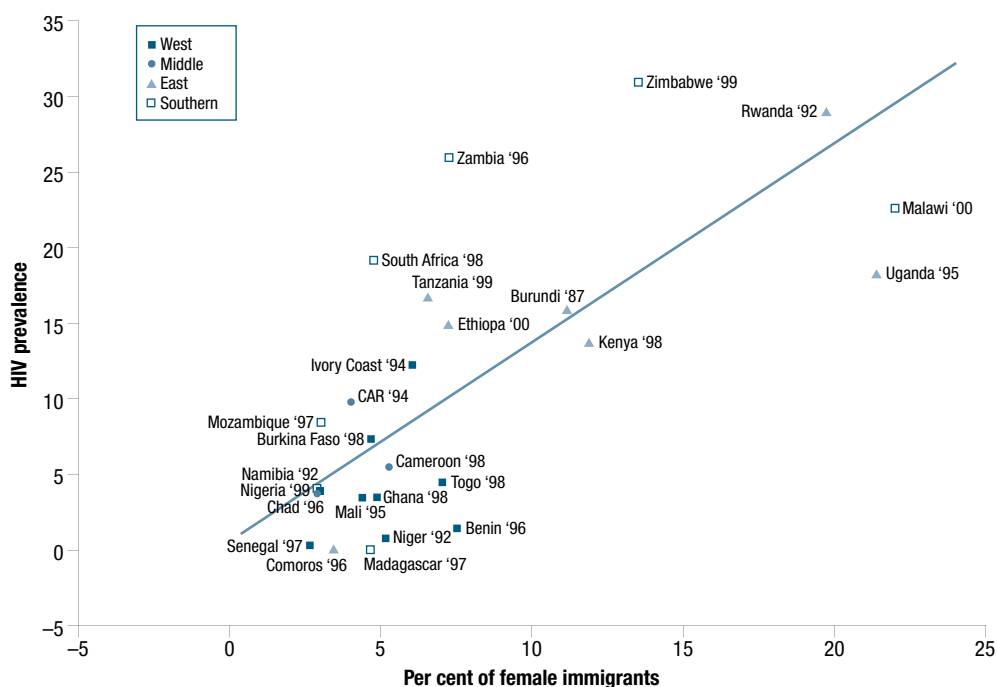
LABOUR MIGRATION

For labour migrants, some information on HIV is available, in part because a number of countries, particularly in Asia, systematically require HIV tests for departing, and occasionally also for returning migrants. In the Philippines, as of July 2004, the National AIDS Council estimates that 32 per cent of the 2,073 Filipinos infected with the virus were overseas workers (*Philippines Social and Environmental News*, July 14, 2004). In Bangladesh, the figure for returning migrants is around 41 per cent.⁶ In both instances, the high prevalence of HIV

6. Report of the Bangladesh AIDS Prevention and Control Programme, 1997-98, cited in UNDP, 2001.

GRAPH 20.1

HIV PREVALENCE AMONG PREGNANT WOMEN, BY PROPORTION OF NEW IMMIGRANTS, 26 SUB-SAHARA AFRICAN COUNTRIES



Source: Voeten et al., 2004.

among migrants may be simply because migrant workers undergo more HIV tests than non-migrants.

Several studies from Asia show that migrant women are particularly affected. In Indonesia, a support group reported that as of April 2003, 15 of the 24 individuals who had recently tested HIV positive in Banyuwangi, East Java, were women.⁷ Most were migrant domestic workers and sex workers. The migrant domestic workers had been infected during employment in Taiwan and Hong Kong, some apparently through sexual contact with their employers or their employers' sons.⁸

Reports from several developed countries show that non-nationals are disproportionately affected by HIV and AIDS. In Japan, by the end of 2002 non-nationals accounted for 33 per cent of HIV cases and 72 per cent of the females infected with HIV, remarkably high rates in proportion to the 2 per cent foreign population in Japan (Japan Center for International Exchange, 2004). Several West European countries, e.g. Belgium, Norway, the UK and Switzerland, have been reporting for years that migrants were missing out on HIV prevention efforts, because they either find the efforts targeted at the 'general populations' in these countries inappropriate, or irrelevant, or because they fail to understand the relevant messages in a foreign language, and with foreign images.

When local counselling and testing facilities, and health services, fail to reach out to people of a different language and culture, these normally discover their HIV infection status later, and fail to receive early treatment (Haour-Knipe, 2000). More recently, several European countries have seen an increase in infections reported among people coming from countries with generalized epidemics, predominantly Sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS, 2004a), many of whom were unaware that they were infected. It is difficult to ascertain whether they arrived already infected, or became infected once in the destination countries.

It is frequently assumed that migrant men acquire HIV while away from home, and transmit the virus to their wives or partners on return. However, this assumption is being challenged by recent studies in South Africa (Lurie et al., 2003, Lurie, 2004). In a region with an advanced AIDS epidemic (at the end of 2003, South Africa reported HIV prevalence of 21.5 per cent (UNAIDS, 2004a)), studies of couples with only one infected partner revealed a surprising number where only the woman was HIV positive. The reasons have not yet been determined, but could be related to the fact that only about half of the migrant men sent money back home to their families, leaving their partners with little choice but to sell sex in order to support their families. Clearly, more research is needed to understand women's vulnerability, as both migrants and partners of migrant men.

THE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIV, AIDS AND CONFLICT

INCREASING attention has recently been given to the relationship between HIV and conflict situations.⁹ There are several well known ways in which armed conflict can increase the risk of exposure to HIV infection, including disruption of traditional sexual norms when population displacement occurs in chaotic circumstances, and conditions of severe deprivation for women and girls, who may be coerced into exchanging sex for money, food or protection. The presence of large numbers of armed men in or out of uniform is often accompanied by the creation of a sex industry in the affected area, increasing the risk of HIV infection for both the sex workers and the men. Recourse to rape as a weapon or means of subjugation also multiplies the risk of HIV. In Rwanda, 17 per cent of the women who had been raped tested HIV positive, compared with 11 per cent of women who had not been raped (Spiegel, 2004).

7. Reported in the *Suara Pembaruan* daily, a support magazine published by the NGO Yayasan Pelita Ilmu (Fernandez, 2004).

8. Indonesia Country Report to UN Special Rapporteur, 2003 (Fernandez, 2004).

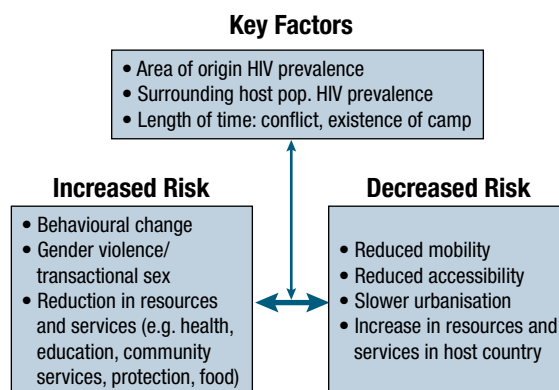
9. See especially the section on AIDS and conflict, UNAIDS 2004 a, and Spiegel, 2004.

Other risks are the result of collapsing health systems, including the breakdown of HIV prevention and care programmes, and safe blood transfusion systems. During the war in Sierra Leone, epidemiological surveillance in antenatal clinics showed that HIV prevalence rose from 4 to 7 per cent between 1995 and 1997, and that 11 per cent of the peacekeepers returning home to Nigeria from Sierra Leone were HIV positive - more than double the prevailing rate in Nigeria at the time (UNAIDS, 2004).

However, the interface between HIV and conflict is not a simple or uniform one. The factors that can increase HIV risk during conflicts are sketched in Textbox 20.1. Those that may decrease HIV transmission in such situations have received less attention. They include such structural factors as reduced mobility and accessibility (e.g. destroyed infrastructure reducing travel to high prevalence urban areas, displacement to remote locations) and, in the case of long-term post-emergency refugee camps, the possibility of improved protection, health, education, and social services. Key factors to be considered include HIV prevalence in affected communities prior to conflict, HIV prevalence in communities surrounding displaced populations, exposure to violence during conflict and flight, and the interaction between displaced persons and local communities (see Figure 20.2).

FIGURE 20.2

HIV RISK FACTORS: CONFLICT AND DISPLACED PERSONS



Source: Spiegel, 2004.

It is often assumed that because of the HIV vulnerability associated with conflict, refugees must have a higher rate of HIV prevalence than the surrounding host population, and that they exacerbate the epidemic. Recent studies by UNHCR are challenging this assumption, showing that globally people seeking asylum tend to move from countries of lower HIV prevalence to countries of higher prevalence. In Africa and in Europe especially, countries of asylum report levels of HIV prevalence higher than those that had prevailed in countries of origin (Spiegel, 2004).¹⁰ A study carried out after the war in Sierra Leone in 2002 found that HIV infection levels were much lower (1-4%) than those documented during the conflict (Kaiser et al., 2002). Similarly, although Bosnia and Herzegovina was a war zone from 1992 to 1995, the country has continued to record very low HIV prevalence (0.0003% of the population in 2001) (UNAIDS, 2004a). The same appears to be true for Angola and southern Sudan.¹¹

Studies of HIV prevalence among pregnant women recently carried out in more than 20 refugee camps

10. In countries with more than 10,000 refugees, and for Africa in 2003, overall HIV prevalence was about 5.5 per cent in countries of asylum, compared with rates of just over 4 per cent in countries of origin. Figures for Europe are about one half of one per cent for countries of asylum compared to less than a quarter of one percent for the refugees' countries of origin.

11. Paul Spiegel, personal communication to the author.

housing some 800,000 refugees in Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan and Tanzania show that three of the four countries' refugee populations had significantly lower HIV prevalence than the surrounding host communities.¹² Depending on their level of interaction and behaviour, refugees living for many years among a host population with higher HIV prevalence may become infected. When repatriation occurs, returning refugees may have a higher HIV prevalence than those who did not leave the country of origin; but they may have better HIV/AIDS knowledge and more consistently engage in protective behaviour than those who stayed. This appears to be the case in Angola (Spiegel and De Jong, 2003).

These counter-intuitive and paradoxical findings concerning HIV and conflict are important, as they go beyond myths and stereotypes to help increase understanding of the complex dynamics behind vulnerability. Most importantly, they point to areas where populations are liable to move between areas of different HIV prevalence, and where it will make a difference to intervene with prevention and care. Uganda was one of the first countries to be affected by AIDS, but has managed to reduce its HIV prevalence from 18 per cent in 1990 to 6.2 per cent in 2003. It is often cited as an example of sustained success in addressing HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS, 2004). The government first established a National Committee for the Prevention of AIDS in 1985, and since then has pursued and strengthened policies to integrate HIV and AIDS awareness, counselling, treatment and prevention into all its activities. It has given strong political leadership on reducing the stigma attached to HIV and AIDS.

The right to state-provided health services is enshrined in the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and, as of June 2004, free ARV treatment is becoming progressively available to those who need it. At the Bangkok AIDS conference, the Honourable

Christine Amongin Aporu, State Minister for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees in Uganda, pointed out, however, that the country had not yet adequately integrated mobile and displaced populations into its HIV/AIDS strategies and programmes.

As of April 2004, Uganda, with a population of 26 million, counted almost two million refugees and IDPs, including over 1.6 million people displaced by the Lord's Resistance Army in north and northeastern Uganda, most of them women and children. Every evening some 44,000 children and youth leave their homes to seek safety in the towns for the night. The risks for such young IDPs are very high. They include psychological and physical trauma, hopelessness, stigmatization and lack of education when schools close and teachers flee to safer locations. HIV-related risks include rape, as well as the necessity to sell sex in exchange for food or protection. Contraceptive use is limited, fertility rates are high, and the likelihood that HIV will be transmitted from mother to child is also high as appropriate care is lacking.

The impediments to AIDS prevention in such circumstances are manifold; starting with the prioritization of immediate basic needs, that pushes AIDS to a distant level of priority. As the situation continues, poverty and chronic insecurity give rise to hopelessness and demoralization, making it less likely for IDPs to take up opportunities to receive counselling. Such opportunities can also be hampered by the difficulty of establishing programmes in insecure areas, or maintaining health units when health workers flee, and impassable roads that make the effective use of mobile clinics impossible. Funds to finance HIV and AIDS activities in refugee settlements and IDP camps are lacking, and the cost of HIV and AIDS treatment is prohibitive. Even gathering the evidence on which to base programmes may be difficult, since data regarding HIV and AIDS in camps is unreliable as IDPs frequently move on in search of safety.

12. For example, prevalence was estimated to be 5 per cent among the 80,000 refugees in Kakuma camp in northwest Kenya in 2002, compared to 18 per cent in the surrounding Lodwar district. Among the 120,000 refugees in the Dadaab camp on the opposite side of the country, HIV prevalence was estimated at 0.6 per cent in 2003, compared with 4 per cent in neighbouring Garissa in 2002 (Spiegel, 2004).

TEXTBOX 20.1

HIV/AIDS IN UGANDA

Uganda was one of the first countries to be affected by AIDS, but has managed to reduce its HIV prevalence from 18 per cent in 1990 to 6.2 per cent in 2003. It is an excellent example of sustained success in addressing HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS, 2004). The government first established a National Committee for the Prevention of AIDS in 1985, and since then has pursued and strengthened policies to integrate HIV/AIDS awareness, counselling, treatment and prevention into all its activities. It has given strong political leadership on reducing the HIV/AIDS stigma.

The right to state-provided health services is enshrined in the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and, as of June 2004, free ARV treatment is becoming progressively available to those who need it. In her presentation at the Bangkok AIDS conference, the Honourable Christine Amongin Aporu, State Minister for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees in Uganda, pointed out, however, that the country had not yet adequately integrated mobile and displaced populations into its HIV/AIDS strategies and programmes.

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KEY CHALLENGES

KEY CHALLENGES to addressing HIV and AIDS within the context of migration include inadequate and inappropriate attention, stigma and discrimination, and the lack of access to prevention, care and support available to migrants.

INADEQUATE ATTENTION TO HIV/AIDS AND MIGRATION

The last few years have seen a massive increase in donor funding of HIV and AIDS initiatives. Bilateral aid

has risen from USD 822 million in 2000 to USD 1.35 billion in 2002, a 64 per cent increase over three years, while multilateral aid rose from USD 314 million to USD 460 million during the same period. Contributions to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria reached USD 917 million by the end of 2002 (UNAIDS, 2004b). Encouraging as this may seem, it must be seen against other efforts taking place – or not taking place – to reduce the global inequalities that fuel the epidemic. For example, the cost of debt servicing in developing countries clearly affects the amount of money available for health and social services: Zambia, for instance, a country with almost one million HIV-positive people, spends 30 per cent more on servicing

its debt than on health.¹³ Cameroon spends 3.5 times as much on debt repayment as on health, and Mali spends 1.6 times as much (Oxfam, 2002).¹⁴

HIV rates continue to rise, and total funding is still far short of what is needed to combat the epidemic. UNAIDS recently estimated that the USD 4.7 billion committed to HIV and AIDS in 2003 would need to be doubled by 2005 to fund treatment and prevention programmes. The need will double again by 2007 (UNAIDS, 2004). Given the shortfall, efforts are being made to ensure efficient use of resources and improved coordination among donors: a recent encouraging development has been widespread support for the ‘three ones’ approach at country level. Key principles of the “three ones” are one agreed HIV/AIDS action framework, one national AIDS coordinating authority, and one country-level monitoring and evaluation system (ibid).

But Michael O’Dwyer, Senior Health and Population Adviser, DFID Southeast Asia, questions to what extent, if any, these rapidly growing resources are being used to address the needs of mobile and displaced populations. At the Bangkok AIDS conference, O’Dwyer pointed out that the coordinated ‘three ones’ approaches will not meet the needs of migrant populations, unless the needs are explicitly addressed in a national strategy and action framework. Precisely this is lacking: countries’ resources have been allocated to nationals, neglecting people just passing through. Although the Declaration of Commitment by the UN General Assembly requires countries ‘By 2005, (to) develop and begin to implement national, regional and international strategies that facilitate access to HIV/AIDS prevention programs for migrants and mobile workers, including the provision of information

on health and social services”,¹⁵ by 2003 fewer than half had done so. Only 47 per cent of the states responding to the Secretary General’s survey reported having an HIV prevention policy for cross-border migrants (UNAIDS, 2004a). In countries such as Malaysia, migrant workers do not feature in the National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan, although more than 20 per cent of the population comprises migrants. The situation is similar for refugees.¹⁶

Cynthia Maung, Director of the Mae Tao Clinic, Mae Sot, Thailand, and recipient of the 1999 Jonathan Mann Award for health and human rights, brought these observations into vivid perspective at the XV AIDS conference in her discussion of the particularly marginal condition of internally displaced populations and migrant communities in Thailand, another country cited as successfully addressing AIDS. Approximately two million migrant workers from Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar live in Thailand. Most are not registered by the government and thus have no access to the Thai public health system. Such populations are overlooked in national HIV surveillance.

The HIV epidemics in China and India are expanding, but the regions bordering Myanmar face the worst localized epidemics in both countries, and Burmese communities on the Thai-Myanmar border also face a generalized epidemic.¹⁷ The neighbouring countries of Thailand and Cambodia have reversed their HIV epidemics over the past decade through major investment in prevention strategies, in particular condom promotion, but there has been little effort to address the HIV and AIDS-related needs of communities on the other side of the borders. Lack of access to the Thai public health system hinders the communities’ ability to address such public health and social issues as

13. In 2004 the proportion of government revenue absorbed by debt was expected to rise to 32 per cent (Oxfam, 2002; World Bank/IMF/IDA, 2003, cited in UNAIDS 2004, p. 148).

14. Along similar lines, Kenya spends USD 0.76 per capita on AIDS, and USD 12.92 per capita on debt repayments (Kimalu, 2002, cited in UNAIDS 2004, p. 148); and the first 14 countries identified as key recipients of the United States President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief together spent USD 9.1 billion in servicing their debt in 2001 (Ogden and Esim, 2003, cited in UNAIDS 2004, p. 148).

15. Para. 50, United Nations General Assembly. Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS. UN, 2001.

16. Of the 29 countries in Africa with more than 10,000 refugees, UNHCR has been able to review 22 National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plans. While 14 mention refugees, 8 fail to do so. Of those that do mention refugees, 4 fail to list the specific activities planned (Spiegel and Nankoe, 2004).

17. For example, the Mae Sot clinic, which provides antenatal services to over 2,000 people from Myanmar per year, has noted a rise in HIV prevalence among pregnant women from 0.8 per cent in 1999 to 1.5 per cent in 2004. Data from the clinic’s blood donor programme show a similar trend, reaching 1.6 per cent in 2004.

drug and alcohol abuse, gender-based violence, teenage pregnancy and unsafe abortions. When services are available, language barriers, fear of police, lack of transportation and the negative attitudes of health workers and employers can still pose significant barriers. Migrants often delay the decision to seek health care, leaving minor illnesses untreated until they become severe enough to require emergency care.

Maung pointed out that services for voluntary HIV counselling and testing for migrant workers are lacking within the Thai public health system. Grass-roots health organizations have recently begun to offer such services, but interest remains low because of community stigmatization, and the few options available for treatment. There is little job security, and migrants fear they may lose their positions if found to be HIV positive. In addition, although many of the Burmese fled their country for political reasons, they are not systematically recognized as refugees, but considered 'illegal migrant workers'. This means the host government cannot recognize the grass-roots organizations that serve them: for example, the 'back-pack' health teams working with the Mae Tao Clinic have no official status, and their training certificates are not recognized.

The long-term consequences of such marginalization are potentially grave: denied official status, the children of such unrecognized populations face the same barriers to health and education - cycles of vulnerability thus continue when the status of migrants is linked to access to health services and to education.

INAPPROPRIATE PUBLIC ATTENTION TO AIDS AND MIGRATION

It is rare in any country to find recognition of the wide range of migration issues within the HIV and AIDS discourse, in particular recognition of the ways in which migration can be an integral part of poverty alleviation and international development. Instead, there is a widespread perception that migrants consume more than their share of limited resources and contribute disproportionately to the spread of diseases. A number of factors contribute to this perception, including

governments' lack of capacity to carry out the epidemiological analysis that can put HIV prevalence in perspective, and unwillingness to devote scarce resources to meet the needs of 'alien' populations.

The Bangkok AIDS conference symposium on migration stressed that stigma can be a major handicap to addressing AIDS and migration. In the words of Irene Fernandez, Chair of CARAM-Asia and recipient of the 2002 Jonathan Mann Award for health and human rights: "Migrants are seen as aliens or outsiders, as people who do not belong to our community or nation. Political leaders refer to them as 'illegals'. There is no such thing as an illegal human being on earth, but we have drawn our territorial boundaries according to countries, and the right to stay is determined by fulfilling conditions established by the countries."

Fernandez pointed out that the media in many countries often portray migrants as responsible for an increase in crime rates or diseases in the country - especially of communicable diseases. She noted that the Malaysian government, among others, carries out raids at entertainment centres, during which foreign women are arrested and detained. The result is not only stigmatization of foreign women but also arbitrary arrest, detention and deportation. Stigma and discrimination have long been recognized as a constraint to identifying the people who need prevention, care or treatment services in the first place, and to gaining access to such services thereafter. It was noted that stigmatization and discrimination against migrants are pervasive, including among health workers.

The speakers also pointed out that governments have often dealt with the issue of AIDS and migration by imposing requirements for HIV testing of immigrants. CARAM-Asia noted that many receiving countries in Southeast and Northeast Asia, as well as in the Middle East, require overseas semi-skilled and unskilled migrant workers to undergo testing for HIV and other infectious diseases. CARAM noted that such testing is often carried out with a patent disregard for good practice, including informed consent and pre- and post-test counselling.

CONCLUSION

THIS CHAPTER has explored the relationship between HIV/AIDS and migration, in particular those factors driving migration that can also increase migrants' vulnerability to HIV, such as human rights abuses, economic deprivation, social inequality and socio-economic instability.¹⁸ It has shown how mobile persons can become vulnerable to HIV through the migration process itself, and that this can be gender-differentiated. Women may well be vulnerable as migrants and as partners of migrants, but can also become vulnerable when their partners have migrated. There is need for wider research on the situation of women migrants.

The complex relationship between conflict and HIV/AIDS has been illustrated by a case study from Uganda. Recent evidence shows that in some situations, and for reasons about which one can only hypothesize at this stage, populations isolated in regions of protracted conflict may actually be *protected* from HIV.

Government policies on HIV and AIDS have to date given limited attention to migrants.¹⁹ In some receiving countries migrants lack access to health and social services; they may fear host country authorities, including health authorities, and often suffer from discrimination by employers, police, social services and a wide range of others, including health workers. Some key challenges in this regard are discussed in the context of Burmese migrants in Thailand.

The chapter describes AIDS as a long and slow event, hard to perceive or measure other than in retrospect (Barnett and Whiteside, 2002), thus highlighting the need to plan and react long before the full effects become apparent. Some of this planning should focus

on the larger global problems, such as reducing economic imbalances, or shifting expenditure from debt servicing to public health, fostering the poverty alleviation effects of migration, and preventing and resolving conflicts. A first direct policy priority is to ensure that migration is included in national AIDS Strategic Plans and proposals to funding institutions such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. HIV and AIDS issues should also be factored into migration policymaking and actions to address the consequences of natural disasters, conflict, development or any other actions or events that cause population movement.

Related to this is the need to improve the evidence base by gathering HIV and AIDS epidemiological data that take account of migration, analysing social and economic factors that increase HIV vulnerability and transmission, qualitative research around some of the surprising findings presented in this discussion, and comprehensive reviews that will feed policy formulation.

Effective prevention policies begin with an assessment of who should best be targeted. For example, although women are especially vulnerable in this area, it would be unfair and inappropriate to place sole responsibility for AIDS prevention on them. Clearly, men should also be engaged. A basic policy dilemma in AIDS prevention is whether to focus on populations seen to be particularly at risk, or to expand the focus to others. The chapter gives some policy guidance on this: HIV risks created by mobility concern not only those who are mobile, but also surrounding communities and communities of origin. AIDS prevention efforts should thus address all affected parties on the migration continuum.

Another key policy challenge is how to address the 'double stigma' of the disease and the 'foreignness' of migrants. International efforts to reduce the stigma

18. Among the many themes the chapter was unable to cover is the migration of health workers. Critically important to efforts led by WHO to assure that 3 million people in developing countries are on antiretroviral therapy by the year 2005 is the availability of health personnel to correctly administer and monitor such treatment. One way to ensure such availability would be to reverse the loss of health personnel from developing countries, recruited to work in developed countries, or in the private sector in their own countries. See also the chapters "Investing in Migration Health" and "Balancing the Benefits and Costs of Skilled Migration in the Asia-Pacific Region".

19. This is true even of those governments with reportedly successful HIV and AIDS policies, such as Uganda and Thailand.

related to HIV and AIDS provide some useful lessons, among them that interventions for AIDS prevention must be rights-based, i.e. based on the principle that the right to information and protection applies to all. This can help reduce the stigmatization of particular individuals or groups for 'spreading AIDS'. It can also increase empowerment, self-esteem and confidence in health systems, leading more people to seek and receive information on HIV prevention, as well as counselling and care.

Active outreach with HIV and AIDS prevention information is important, but policy changes to reduce risk and vulnerability in the first place are even more important. Such changes may include straightforward measures to protect the safety of women and girls in refugee camps, or more complex ones such as modifying policies concerning single sex labour migration, improving access to education and housing, and supporting income generation. More fundamentally, they could address the root causes of risk and vulnerability, or help control the 'worst forms' of migration - such as trafficking and forced migration - that create situations where individuals are highly vulnerable to acquiring HIV, and unable to adopt safe behaviours.

One policy option that attracts expert consensus concerns blocking the virus from entering a country by barring access to people who are HIV-infected: WHO and UNAIDS have strongly advised in a number of UN fora and documents that HIV/AIDS-related travel restrictions have no public health justification.²⁰ The potential health consequences of purely control-oriented approaches are negative: they are highly unlikely to effectively exclude all HIV-infected travellers, they undermine public health efforts at HIV prevention and care by driving people underground where their clandestine status excludes them from accessing services, they encourage nationals to see HIV and AIDS as 'foreign problems',

and they divert funds that could more efficiently be allocated to prevention and care programmes.

Finally, there is the critical issue of migrant access to care and treatment for HIV. World economic imbalances and inequalities create differences in access to ARV therapy, which means that death rates for HIV-infected adults in low- and middle-income countries are now up to 20 times higher than in industrialized countries. The reasons for addressing inequalities between developed and developing countries may well be ethical, but they are also practical. With easy access to information, it would be natural for those who can do so to migrate in search of the life-saving treatment they know is available elsewhere.

Migration to developed countries for access to care is a poor solution, since it can add to xenophobia, as migrants are seen as a burden on health resources. In developing countries, it can perpetuate inequalities, since it is beyond the means of most people requiring treatment. From a public health perspective such migration is even potentially dangerous, as migrants without regular status are likely to receive non-mainstream treatment that is irregular, inadequate and haphazard, ultimately leading to new strains of HIV that become resistant to ARV. These new pathogens will in turn travel, affecting more people in other places. Mobile populations, including refugees, must be included in strategies to make HIV and AIDS treatment available globally. In the words of the authors cited at the beginning of this chapter, "Health and well-being are not individual concerns: they are global issues... [they] are human rights; they are also public goods... like the road networks, clean air and clean water.(...). President Franklin Roosevelt said: "We have always known that heedless self-interest was bad morals; we now know that it is also bad economics."²¹

20. For a review of the issues and relevant documents see 'UNAIDS/IOM statement on HIV-related travel restrictions, June 2004'; www.iom.ch/en/PDF_Files/HIVAIDS/UNAIDS_IOM_statement_travel_restrictions.pdf or www.unaids.org/en/other/functionalities/ViewDocument.asp?href=http://gva-doc-owl/WEBcontent/Documents/pub/UNA-docs/UNAIDS-IOM_Travel-Restrictions_en.pdf

21. Roosevelt (cited in Navarro, 1998). Cited by Barnett and Whiteside, 2002, p. 348.

INSTITUTIONAL MEASURES TO MANAGE MIGRATION

CHAPTER 21

MANAGING MIGRATION IN THE WAKE OF SEPTEMBER 11: IMPLICATIONS FOR A COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS ¹

Deterrent actions in the migration sector at a time of high concern over security may not necessarily follow the same logic as for internal management actions related to social benefits management.

INTRODUCTION

A PUBLIC survey conducted in the US in 2004 asked the question: “Should governments spend more to prevent illegal immigration?”² The response among the groups surveyed was divided, with over half (55 per cent) of non-immigrants, and over a third (34 per cent) of immigrants responding in the affirmative. The fact that such a question was debated publicly is instructive.

A country’s citizenry usually expects some tangible results from its government’s investment in migration management; and governments usually consider the costs and benefits of managing migration in financial, social and political terms. Government officials try to justify their policies and resource investments in terms of measurable benefits to society, including in the less easily “measurable” areas of social stability and national security, but also weighed against commitments to international principles of protection of migrants’ and refugees’ rights.

This chapter examines the rationale for governments’ continual investment in certain areas of migration management, and how applicable a tool cost-benefit analysis is to evaluate these measures. It looks specifically at costs and benefits of controlling or

reducing irregular migration. It concludes that, while all investments must have discernible benefits, a straightforward expenditure/benefit relationship in this area of migration management may not always be possible or expected, and that the parameters have changed since September 11 with the new focus on security. It highlights examples and suggests how these might inform policy and programming in the area of technical assistance for migration management.

WHY INVEST IN IMPROVED MIGRATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS?

WHAT ARE some of today’s driving forces and rationales behind the ongoing investment of human, financial and political capital in managing migration? Recent events such as September 11, and several key policy papers provide some pointers on this for migration policymakers.

In the US, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, led to the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in October 2001, representing the largest government reorganization undertaken in the US since 1947. The DHS 2004 budget of USD 36.2 billion, of which USD 18.1 billion are directed to securing the nation’s Borders and Transportation

1. The authors of this chapter are Charles Harns, Head, Technical Cooperation for Migration Service Area, IOM Geneva, and Maureen Achieng, IOM Chief of Mission, Port au Prince.

2. Refer to the Immigration Survey, National Public Radio/Kaiser Family Foundation/Kennedy School of Government, 2004.

Systems (BTS), and USD 1.8 billion to improving immigration services, represents an increase of 7.4 per cent over FY 2003 and over 64 per cent over FY 2002 for such activities (DHS, 2004a). Another element of this same strategy is the establishment or reorientation of some foreign assistance budget lines towards efforts to build anti-terrorism capacities in other states, with the aim of producing multiple benefits (Taylor, 2004).

Similarly, in the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) announced a five-part strategy as part of the Canadian government's Anti-Terrorism Plan, including a commitment to invest approximately CAD 49 million to, among other things, strengthen CIC's abilities to increase detention capacity and deportations. The outlay included the addition of up to one hundred new staff to enforce upgraded security at ports of entry (Government of Canada, 2001).

Looking to the European Union, the objective of its new framework for relations with its eastern and southern neighbours,³ outlined in the Wider Europe Communication (Commission of the European Communities, 2003), is to develop a zone of prosperity and a friendly neighbourhood with which the EU can enjoy close, peaceful and cooperative relations. This Wider Europe Communication, which builds on the experience of the earlier PHARE, TACIS and INTERREG programmes,⁴ seeks, inter alia, to promote stability and prosperity within and beyond the new borders of the EU in order to avoid drawing new dividing lines in Europe. It further contends that the EU's capacity to provide security, stability and sustainable development to its citizens will 'no longer be distinguishable from its interest in close cooperation with its neighbours'.

Behind the objectives of this Wider Europe Communication is the recognition of differences in living standards across the EU's borders with its neighbours, which would create challenges in various areas of governance, necessitating efficient and secure border management to protect shared borders and facilitate legitimate trade and passage. A key focus for the New Neighbourhood Instrument is more efficient border management given its recognized importance for joint prosperity and security. The principal aim is to facilitate trade and secure the EU's borders against smuggling, trafficking, organized crime, terrorist threats and irregular immigration (including in transit).

A key external relations priority of the EU is to promote stability and peace in southeastern Europe (western Balkans),⁵ in order to bring the region into line with its wider objective of security and prosperity across the continent. To this end, a total of EUR 6.8 billion has been committed to that region since 1991. Starting in 2000, aid to southeastern Europe was to be streamlined through the Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stability in the Balkans (CARDS) programme.⁶

Administrative capacity building, one of six main sectors of cooperation, seeks to strengthen public institutions deemed necessary for the countries of the CARDS region to develop closer ties with the EU within the framework of the Stabilisation and Association (SAP)⁷ process, and integrated border management is stated as one of several key activities.

The rationales for investing in improved migration management are remarkably consistent across countries, namely to reduce irregular movement and the influence of criminal groups in those movements,

3. These include the western countries of the former Soviet Union, the western Balkans and the Mediterranean.

4. INTERREG Community Initiative: a financial instrument within the framework of the European Union's Structural Funds which supports cross-border and transnational cooperation among Member States and neighbouring countries.

PHARE Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) programmes: this was a pre-accession driven instrument in the candidate countries, which sought to support cross-border cooperation with Member States and between candidate countries.

TACIS Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) programme: supports cross-border cooperation in the eastern border regions of Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova.

5. Covering Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro.

6. Adopted with the Council Resolution (EC) No 2666/2000 of 5 December 2000. See also the chapter "Migrants in an Enlarged Europe".

7. This term relates to the EU strategy for and EU membership perspectives of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro.

reduce security weaknesses in the migration sector, encourage migration as a tool for economic development, and ensure the protection of the most vulnerable migrants (UK Home Office, 2002b). Achieving these ends implies investments, choices based on priorities and expected outcomes, and some discernible relationship between costs and benefits.

COSTS AND BENEFITS

THE NEED to justify public spending, the limited resources resulting from governments' competing spending priorities, and the increasing focus on migration management in most countries, are all factors influencing any attempt at cost-benefit analysis in this area. Experience suggests that this may be an ambitious undertaking: a cost-benefit analysis in the area of migration management, assuming that the essential data are available, may, at best, produce approximations rather than exact ratios.

For one, there are no clear definitions of costs and benefits. What constitutes a cost in one context may not necessarily be one in another context. For instance, while erecting an electric fence to deter illegal entries obviously involves a cost, does a higher death toll resulting from migrants using more dangerous routes count equally as a cost? (The trebling of the number of agents stationed along the Mexican-US border in the 1990s is said to have resulted in an increase in the death toll related to illegal migration (Martin, 2003).) Such an exercise is further complicated by the difficulty in determining the dependent variables, including the policy goals to be achieved, and the fact that these, even in the same political context, change over relatively short periods of time (ibid).

Migration policies often pursue multiple goals, making it necessary to determine which of the competing goals is to be given highest priority, and,

in turn, which costs should be factored in. Also, while it may be possible in some instances to identify benefits derived from increased enforcement, the question of how to ascribe a quantitative value to the benefit to enable a comparison of costs and benefits, is much less straightforward.

For example:

In the *US*, about half of the budget of the former US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) is estimated to have been spent on preventing illegal immigration in recent years. This figure grew twenty-fold in two decades, from USD 250 million in 1980 to USD 5 billion in 2000. Yet, in the same period, the estimated number of illegal foreigners rose from 3 to 9 million, despite several regularization programmes. This increase in irregular immigration, as borne out by the number of apprehensions for the same period – 910,361 in 1980, compared with 1,814,729 in 2000 (Briggs Jr., 2003) – partly explains the major increase in investment. Earlier assessments of the Border Patrol, responsible for monitoring the long borders with Mexico and Canada, had revealed chronic underfunding and understaffing, which also account in part for this significant increase in spending.

Canada appears to demonstrate a close relationship between official migration goals and actual outcomes. But this may have as much to do with the fact that Canada does not have a land border with a major emigration country, and that its immigration policy favours the admission of skilled foreigners, as it does with the effectiveness of immigration enforcement measures. This positive outlook notwithstanding, in a 2003 report on the efficiency and effectiveness of the control and enforcement measures by Citizenship and Immigration Canada⁸ (CIC) the Auditor General of Canada notes that enforcement is under increasing stress and is falling behind in some areas.

The *UK*, like the *US*, places strong emphasis on its immigration controls at the border, more recently adding carrier sanctions to make airlines, shipping

8. Refer the Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2003, "Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the House of Commons", Chapter 5: Citizenship and Immigration Canada – Control and Enforcement, Ottawa.

companies, railway and track operators bear the cost of careful screening. Its Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) in the Home Office spent USD 5 billion in 2002 on immigration enforcement and asylum support. Supporting the work at the borders are the internal enforcement and compliance mechanisms. One of the most pressing issues is that of in-country management, which includes benefits entitlement to migrants and removals and returns of some cases (UK Home Office, 2002a). This area of migration management may be well suited for activities to be shaped and evaluated by traditional cost/benefit analysis.

One tool used by the IND to resolve the caseload of migrants who do not qualify to be served through the asylum system or to remain in the country under another status, is the use of a Voluntary Assisted Return Programme (VARP). The goal of VARP is to provide a humane and cost-effective means of returning these migrants to their home countries. The UK finds that “VARP provided significant cost-savings for IND in comparison with the alternative of removing unsuccessful asylum seekers following the completion of the asylum process” (UK Home Office, 2002a).

The driving forces behind current priority policy and operational initiatives are many, but illegal migration and the links between weak migration management and security breaches and, from the in-country management perspective, abuses of asylum and migrant benefit systems, are two key concerns for policy makers today. Each may require a different approach to cost/benefit analysis.

COSTS AND BENEFITS OF INTERNATIONAL DETERRENCE

FOR THE PURPOSE of this discussion, international deterrence of illegal migration includes actions to build and sustain capacity for detection, interdiction and removal of migrants with no right to enter or remain in the country. The arguments for deterrence have varied over time, both in intensity and in rationale. Prior to September 11, 2001, the rationale was based largely on the perceived threats to economic and social order posed by large numbers of persons entering and, at times, taking up residence without permission, and accessing social benefits while their status was being determined. Irregular immigration did not affect all countries in the same way; it was treated as a minor annoyance by some receiving states and as a major challenge to sovereignty by others. Some major source countries saw it as neither, preferring to redefine it as the natural social order and a mechanism working towards more global economic equity and, from that perspective, essentially a human rights issue.

Few governments were consistent on the matter. Although some states felt challenged and violated by this migration, they nonetheless often gave mixed signals, for example by refusing to crack down on employers of irregular migrants. Some states promoted a human rights approach but practised questionable human rights standards for minorities in their own countries, and at times engaged in the same expulsion or deportation practices they criticized in others.

September 11 changed the entire debate considerably. National security, and the security of one’s allies, became the dominant rationale for improved international deterrence systems. While the responses naturally focused most directly on the protection of the US, the implications and actions at other, more vulnerable points along migration routes across the world were an integral consideration from the start. Thus, the responses gradually became global in nature

with complementing activities even in far-away locations such as Central and South Asia, East Africa, Australia and in places closer to the US, including parts of South and Central America and the Caribbean, and in all of Europe.

Rather than displace the arguments around the general challenges of illegal migration, the security agenda added a new and decisive rationale for improving measures to deter illegal entry and residence. At the same time, the possible connection between terrorism, smuggling, trafficking and other transnational organized crime exerted its influence (Reuters, 7 September 2004). Irregular border crossing and residence had to be addressed much more strongly. The 'cost' factor of this equation moved well beyond the economic arguments for or against illegal migration that preceded the terrorist attacks. The costs became as compelling as the images of the falling twin towers, and the benefits as compelling as the prevention of similar events. In this new paradigm, all reasonable action would be taken and, within that mandate, the costs would be managed as best as possible.

There are a number of striking examples of the resulting actions in this area, and each sheds light on the argument that the costs of inaction, or inadequate action, are perceived to be so high that significant investments are justified, and that a direct relationship between investment and payoff is not an appropriate measure to apply.

One example is the US effort to strengthen its capacity to identify *mala fide* persons during border checkpoint procedures. An important feature of this effort is the US-VISIT⁹ programme's initiative to capture biometric indicators from most persons entering and departing through US checkpoints. While this had already been conceptualized one year prior to the September 11 attacks, the extent and speed of its implementation were strongly influenced by these events. The cost of the programme in 2004 was estimated at USD 328 million (Associated Press, 9 March, 2004). In the first

nine months of its use that year, 280 persons with significant criminal records were identified as they attempted to enter the US (*International Herald Tribune*, 7 October 2004).

While the maths are easy, the basis for judging overall cost/benefit is not, nor is it meant to be a simple relationship. The US-VISIT's goals are to track the entry and exit of individuals, but it is also meant as an aid to internal enforcement of visa overstayers. The September 11 hijackers had entered the US with visas, and several had overstayed the visa timelines; thus, in addition to discovering *mala fide* travellers at the entry point, US-VISIT will be a significant tool to discover and investigate such overstayers. It is explained and defended in those terms, among others (DHS, 2004b). The costs per interdiction action in the pilot year are high and presumably will decrease over time. Sensitivity to costs is certainly part of management vision, and costs are managed in part through the usual competitive processes with the private sector firms involved. However, there is no target figure that the identification of *mala fide* travellers, including possible terrorists, must reach to justify the programme.

By comparison, cost-benefit analysis prior to September 11 did not have the weight of national security pressing on the scales, and justification in precise financial terms was more feasible and more defensible. An example of this is found in the Danish experience with airline liaison officers in the mid- to late 1990s. Starting in 1995, the Danish government decided to post immigration attachés abroad in strategically selected embassies. A few years into the experiment, a cost-benefit analysis was commissioned to assess the efficacy of this means of deterring irregular immigration into Denmark.

The costs behind all cases of impeded irregular immigration into Denmark that could be directly attributed to an immigration attaché were compared with the likely costs of asylum processing, upkeep at asylum centres and social/unemployment benefits, if

9. "US-VISIT" is the Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology System (Department of Homeland Security).

the attempted irregular entry had succeeded. Even though the final report pointed to significant savings as a result of the posting of immigration attachés, there was some doubt about the method of computation on the grounds that, a) it was not possible to attribute any case of impeded irregular immigration wholly to one factor (in this case the immigration attaché) and, b) the stated cost of upkeep of an irregular entrant is only an estimate, and therefore far from accurate. The ensuing discussion over the report's findings led to the eventual phasing out of the immigration attaché positions three years after they were first introduced (Afgivet af Udlændingestyrelsen, 1997).

COSTS AND BENEFITS OF INTERNAL PROCESSING AND CONTROL ACTIONS

IMPROVEMENT of the in-country control and tracking of migrants' benefits is another important pillar of migration management. These social benefits are most often linked with asylum processing and can include direct support payments alongside medical, housing and other forms of state-subsidized support. Perceived or actual abuse or mismanagement in this area often leads to calls for reform, supported by estimates of financial losses if policies, systems and procedures are not improved.

A recent example of reform activity in this area supported by cost/benefit analysis are the efforts of the IND in the UK in implementing the Immigration Biometric Identification Programme (IBI), a system to secure migrant beneficiaries' identities and manage their access to benefits. Within a remarkably short time, and still during the initial deployment phases, this system was reported to be saving GBP 120,000 per week in support payments, with a registered caseload of 40,000 claimants. Start-up costs were estimated at GBP 24 million, with GBP 15 million continuing costs (United Kingdom Parliament, 2004). Given that the initially reported savings were based

on less than total deployment, and that operating costs were anticipated to decline over time, the investment is defensible in purely financial cost/benefit terms.

Another area of internal migration control is that of identifying and removing visa overstayers, particularly those working without authorization. Australia's Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) is focusing increased attention on this. Noting that "locating and removing overstayers and people in breach of their visa conditions from Australia costs the taxpayer millions of dollars each year" (DIMIA, 2004), DIMIA has initiated a number of strategies, including an internet-based, real-time entitlement checking system that allows employers and licensing authorities to check a potential employee's right to work in Australia before he/she is employed. This is a free, 24-hour service. In addition, a special call-in line has been created to report persons who may be working illegally. These initiatives are too new for a cost-benefit analysis at this stage, but have a certain in-built cost-benefit rationale, also based on other deterrence-by-example experiences.¹⁰ While they add to the immediate cost of locating and removing overstayers (by adding new administrative mechanisms), they are intended to reduce the number of such persons in the country and diminish the attractiveness of overstaying for others, thereby ultimately reducing the problem and the overall investment in this area of internal control.

CONCLUSION

THE CURRENT migration landscape compels governments across the globe to continuously examine their migration management systems at points of origin, transit or destination for their sustained ability to tackle the complex interrelationship of migration with other policy priorities, such as security.

¹⁰ An example is the reduction in unauthorized boat arrivals in Australia in 2001-2002 following more stringent measures (see the sub-chapter "Oceania Migration Dynamics").

Responding to this challenge requires significant investments out of limited resources, for which there are competing priorities. Against this background, the value of cost-benefit analyses in the field of migration management would seem evident if governments are to take informed decisions regarding the allocation of resource to competing areas of governance, and in view of the range of possible actions.

However, it appears that accurate cost-benefit analyses are particularly difficult to apply to the deterrence and security aspects of migration management. This seems to reduce their value as the primary basis for decision making in these areas. Rather, governments opt for the most reasonable measures in response to the immediate migration challenges, and try to ensure the lowest possible cost for these interventions through competitive bidding processes, routine reviews and *ex post* evaluations.

By contrast, for the internal management of migrant benefits and other internal control and enforcement mechanisms (e.g. assisted voluntary return as a cost-effective alternative to prolonged welfare support, detention and deportation (IOM, 2004)), there is a good case that cost-benefit analysis is both justified and possible. Essentially, this is a matter of “comparing apples with apples”; comparing financial outlays in status benefits with financial outlays for system improvements that reduce financial fraud and misuse.

In sum, deterrent actions in the migration sector at a time of high concern over security may not necessarily follow the same logic as for internal management actions related to social benefits management. As the costs of abuse of social benefits are largely financial, the remedial actions are shaped and measurable in those terms. Costs of lapses in security related to migration management are, justifiably, measured along different and multiple lines, as are the benefits to be reaped from improved security.

TEXTBOX 21.1

VISA SYSTEMS IN THE 21ST CENTURY – THE AUSTRALIAN MODEL

People today move for tourism, business or social purposes on a scale and at a speed much greater than most permanent immigration movements, putting increasing pressure on immigration authorities to facilitate this movement quickly and satisfactorily. But governments also need to ensure that migration is orderly, safe and non-threatening to society and the individual concerned. Visas are still among the most effective ways to manage cross-border movements. But how to design them to be quick, efficient yet vigilant at the same time?

The Australian Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) has resorted to some useful and efficiency boosting strategies to achieve this balance.

Challenges Facing Immigration Authorities

Immigration authorities in any destination country are pulled in two directions:

To facilitate regular migration: service industries such as tourism and international education, businesses reliant on quick recruitment of overseas skilled workers, and family sponsors all want visas faster and more conveniently. Businesses are driven by the fact that, as workforces in developed countries age, global competition for mobile and highly skilled people intensifies. Governments at state and local levels are also seeking a stronger voice in migration planning, particularly skilled migration, to help boost their local economies. All this calls for greater facilitation of cross-border movement.

To control irregular migration: when legal migration increases, it is usually shadowed by more irregular movements, involving sophisticated immigration fraud (notably identity fraud and visa non-compliance). More cases are being security checked, also because of growing links between smuggling, trafficking, organized crime and terrorism. Equally, there are risks to all when mobile populations carry communicable diseases with them, particularly TB and HIV/Aids. These risks call for strengthened monitoring.

At the same time, most immigration agencies today face serious constraints on finances, IT systems, human resources and accommodation. In-country, border and overseas facilities are struggling to cope with burgeoning caseloads, and legislation and information systems cannot keep pace with the rapidly changing developments in migration.

But the consequences of not dealing adequately with these challenges are even more serious, and can lead to delayed processing of cases, backlogs, grievances by dissatisfied applicants and sponsors, diversion of resources into secondary administrative functions like inquiries and appeals, and ultimately reduced efficiency in critical areas like security checking. The consequences can be both expensive and deadly.

Some Key Strategies

Against this background, DIMIA has over recent years pursued some strategies to improve the design and delivery of visas. These are all at various stages of implementation.

i) *More Transparent and Objective Visa Criteria.* Subjective visa criteria have been replaced with more transparent and objective ones, resulting in more consistent decision making and fewer appeals to review tribunals, and a reduction of the scope for allegations of bias. Time-consuming labour market testing has been replaced by a list of skilled occupations and minimum salary levels. Moreover, specific financial and English language benchmarks for overseas students have replaced the discretionary benchmarks previously applied by government decisionmakers. All of this has enabled applicants to better assess their own chances and reduce rejection rates.

ii) *Partnerships with Expert Third Parties.* Assessing eligibility for a visa can often require subject expertise not held by immigration officials. These functions are thus out-sourced to third parties:

- assessment of skills of potential migrants (National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR)). This raises migrants' chances of having their qualifications recognized and being employed in Australia;
- assessment of applicants' English language skills via the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) rather than via interviews;
- testing of medical needs of Australians who sponsor migrants as caregivers.

Changes such as these have made decision making more objective, and reduced appeals and complaints against decisions. Electronic links with partner agencies will in the future ensure greater efficiency and integrity by reducing the potential for document and identity fraud.

iii) *Front-end Loading and Concurrent Processing.* "One-stop shop" processing of applications requires migrants to submit all necessary documents at the time of application, and immigration decisionmakers to undertake all relevant case checks concurrently rather than consecutively. Supported by a combination of legislative and procedural change, this has markedly lowered processing time.

iv) *Matching Visa Processing to Objective Assessments of Immigration Risk.* Objective indicators and quality data are used to better identify cases requiring additional integrity checking. Resources are thus not wasted needlessly on checking all cases, the majority of whom are non-risk. Risk indicators include non-return rates, visa non-compliance rates and rates of document fraud in the caseload. A new system ("Safeguards") will soon be introduced, to give more guidance on which cases to check and refer.

v) *Migrant Self-Assessment.* High visa refusal rates can mean that many applicants are wasting their time and money in applying, and the authorities are diverting resources into less productive work. One way of minimizing this is to place the onus of assessing their own chances of success of a visa application on applicants. This is supported by special guide booklets, contact centres and an interactive DIMIA website, which have all helped to lower the rejection rates for most visa classes.

vi) *Working More Closely with Sponsors.* In visa categories involving sponsors (parents, temporary resident doctors, sponsored business visitors, long-term temporary residents and others) officials deal directly with the sponsor, who is often more accessible than the migrant. This can greatly streamline visa processing and reduce the need for the sponsor/applicant to deal with more than one office.

vii) *Centralization/Repatriation of Administrative Aspects of Visa Processing.* Increasing caseloads can mean that the resources dedicated to administrative functions, particularly in a litigious environment, reduce the resources for integrity checking and post-arrival monitoring. To address this, DIMIA has begun to repatriate and centralize the administrative aspects of visa processing, most commonly undertaken overseas. Key benefits of this are: reduced visa processing times, resource savings that can be redirected to integrity checking and post-arrival monitoring, improved integrity of visa processing, better client services, more consistent decision making, and improved ability to address training needs of immigration officials.

viii) *Electronic Visa Lodgment and Processing.* Australia has been operating an electronic visa system for many years, and is extending this to a wider range of visa types. To date, only visitor, student, long-term temporary resident, working holidaymaker and on-shore resident return visas are electronic. By 2005, it is planned to expand this to temporary resident doctor and general skilled migration visas.

Electronic lodgment and processing supports the repatriation and centralization efforts noted above. It also improves access to DIMIA services, reduces the resources required for data entry, helps manage fees, and ensures greater accuracy of data, directly from the applicants.

ix) *Monitoring Post-arrival Compliance and Integrity Checking.* Australia's automated exit/entry control system enables it to monitor visa compliance of temporary migrants after their arrival. This can be a significant deterrent against visa abuse and help identify the conditions favouring irregular immigration, thereby improving future policy making. For some visas, it can provide the evidence for later permanent residence.

x) *Enforcement of Sponsor Undertakings.* Employers sponsoring skilled workers from overseas must sign up to a series of legally enforceable undertakings, including payment of a security bond to ensure compliance with visa conditions. These measures enable more streamlined visa processing, higher approvals and increased levels of visa compliance.

Overall Benefits

While it is always difficult to assess the impacts of such policies and measures, DIMIA reports that overall immigration outcomes improved considerably during the period since the above strategies were introduced. Examples of these include: improvement in the employment and income performance of skilled immigrants; a significant rise in approval rates for most visa categories; steady improvements in processing times and clearance of application backlogs, and a reduction in non-compliance with immigration rules.

Source: Abul Rizvi, DIMIA, Canberra; www.immi.gov.au

CHAPTER 22

REGIONAL AND GLOBAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESSES: TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS¹

While neither set of processes follows a specific institutional format, and each has its own development path, some important commonalities are emerging that could make future migration management more efficient.

INTRODUCTION

THERE HAVE been innumerable efforts by governments and intergovernmental organizations to create cooperative mechanisms for the more efficient management of common and shared migration concerns. Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) have emerged since the 1990s primarily out of a need for coordinated action on urgent common issues, such as irregular migration and, in particular, smuggling and trafficking of persons. Global processes, such as the Global Commission on Migration, have appeared more recently in response to a growing perception that globalization calls for more multilateral approaches. Both phenomena reflect the growing recognition by governments that migration also affects other major public policy areas such as development, labour rights, public health and security.

This chapter discusses some common orientations in migration management emerging in the evolution of RCPs and the newer global processes. By highlighting broad trends, it examines their current role in and potential benefits for migration management. While neither set of processes follows a specific institutional format, and each has its own development path, some

important commonalities are emerging, that could make future migration management more efficient.

REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESSES (RCPs) – A STEADY COURSE

Informal in nature, RCPs provide venues for governments that share interests in the area of migration and migration management to exchange views and information and develop non-binding agreements, often a precursor for harmonized regional migration policies. Such *fora* operate parallel to the legal frameworks and more formal structures dealing with migration issues, such as the European Union and the United Nations.²

The proliferation of RCPs since 1996 reflects a major current trend in international migration management, a shift from ad hoc unilateral and bilateral approaches to regional multilateral strategies. RCPs have been initiated in North and Central America through the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM, also known as the Puebla Process), in South America through the Lima Process, in Asia through the Manila Process, in Africa through the MIDSA and MIDWA Processes and within Europe through the Budapest Process and the CIS Conference and Follow-up Process (Klekowski von Koppenfels, 2001). Cross-regional processes such as the IGC³ for Europe, North America and Australia,

1. The author of this chapter is Boriana Savova, with contributions from Gervais Appave, Erica Usher and Michele Klein Solomon, Migration Policy and Research Department, IOM, Geneva.

2. For details on the history, structure and purpose of the RCPs, see chapter 8 in World Migration 2003, pp. 123-139.

3. Intergovernmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugees and Migration Policies in Europe, North America and Australia. Its first meeting took place in 1985 and was initiated by UNHCR.

the Bali Process for broader Asia and the ASEM Ministerial Conference for Asia and Europe⁴ have emerged concurrently to tackle irregular migration globally (IOM, 2003a).

In the past few years, countries in the western Mediterranean region (southern Europe and Maghreb) have engaged in a dialogue on migration issues through the “5+5” initiative.⁵ Two other regional *fora* have recently emerged, the Asian Labour Migration Ministerial Consultations, and the Regional Forum on Asylum, Migration and Sustainable Return in Southeastern Europe. These initiatives could well develop into RCPs in the future. Currently, there are 13 regional consultative mechanisms in place (IOM, 2003b).

But the increasing participation by governments in multilateral cooperation on migration through RCPs does not suggest that bilateral initiatives have become obsolete. In many cases, governments use regional consultations to strengthen bilateral cooperation through building confidence and identifying common interests. In the MDSA process, for instance, possibilities for bilateral labour agreements between countries in the region are being investigated with a view to fostering more development through migration (IOM, 2003c). Other governments have used RCPs to similar ends.

WALKING THE TALK: THE OUTCOMES OF RCPs

At the initial stages of their development RCPs are mostly discussion *fora*, aimed at providing a venue for governments to work towards an understanding of their respective positions and priorities, and identify common ground for further cooperation. The initial meetings typically conclude with declarations in

which states lay out their political objectives, agree to cooperate on certain aspects of migration management and prescribe in broad terms the actions that need to be taken. Within a year or two of their launch, RCPs tend to develop technical objectives in the form of action plans, under which concrete initiatives and projects come to life.

Some consultations, for instance the IGC (Intergovernmental Consultations) and the Bali Process, remain primarily focused on dialogue and sharing data on trends and policies. Others take a more action-oriented approach. Development and training projects, directly targeting current and potential migrant populations, have emerged within the 5+5 process. Job-creation and development activities have been launched in Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia,⁶ in keeping with the 2003 Rabat Recommendations “to encourage social and economic development in regions with high emigration potential” (IOM, 2003d, p. 2).

The RCM in the Americas has moved beyond the enunciation of principles towards operational activities resulting in research studies, expanded training and capacity-building projects, and assistance programmes for migrants. Within the RCM general regional guidelines on safe and orderly return of migrants in the region have recently been endorsed, along with programmes to assist victims of trafficking, public information campaigns and training on ethics and integrity for public officials (RCM, 2004).

In Asia, the relatively new regional consultations of Asian labour ministers focus specifically on labour migration, and the two conferences held so far, in Colombo in 2003 and Manila in 2004, have resulted

4. ASEM (the Asia-Europe Meeting) is an informal process of dialogue and cooperation initiated in 1996 to bring together the EU Commission and member states with ten Asian countries (Brunei, China, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam). The ASEM Summit held in Hanoi, 8-9 October 2004, included the ten new EU members and three new ASEAN countries (Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar) previously not part of the process. Migration became a topic of discussion in the ASEM context following the ASEM Ministerial Conference on Cooperation for the Management of Migratory Flows between Europe and Asia, held in Spain in April 2002 at the initiative of China, Germany and Spain. The Conference agreed on such follow-up activities as information exchange on migrant flows and migration management, cooperation on improving the quality and security of travel documents, combating document fraud, establishing networks of immigration and consular liaison officers and meetings at expert and director general level.

5. See the chapter “Migration Dynamics and Dialogue in the Western Mediterranean”.

6. The PROCHE-project in Tunisia targets development of emigration areas in the country through creating sustainable employment and the development of existing local skills.

in the completion of a number of activities,⁷ as well as recommendations for further work orientation.⁸ At its most recent annual conference in Palau in September 2004, the Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference (PIDC) concentrated on the increasing incidence of migrant smuggling and trafficking in the Pacific region. The PIDC has begun to develop a regional Advance Passenger Information System along ICAO standards, and fosters cooperation and technical assistance among immigration agencies within the region, particularly to strengthen the capacity to identify document fraud and other illegal activities of persons on the move.⁹

As they evolve and consolidate, most RCPs logically progress from the formulation of policy goals to strategies designed to achieve them, and final project implementation. Within more developed RCPs, continued involvement in dialogue and information exchange is often combined with developing and implementing policy goals and initiating projects.

COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO MIGRATION MANAGEMENT

The consolidation of RCPs often goes hand in hand with a growing awareness of the broader context affecting migration, and attempts to address migration issues holistically. Many RCPs have begun discussing classical migration concerns in regard to public health, remittances and development, migrant rights, migrant integration and other related topics. Efforts to approach migration in a comprehensive manner have evolved along two major lines – expanding RCP agendas and broadening participation in the multilateral migration dialogue.

A comprehensive approach that recognizes migration as an interdisciplinary phenomenon also complicates the formulation of migration policies. But, if well managed, this approach also offers advantages, for example the securing of broader support for the outcomes of migration dialogues by engaging a wider circle of international and national actors. A comprehensive and agreed approach also holds the promise of better informed and carefully coordinated policies, able to respond more adequately to complex migration issues.

Greater Role for International Organizations

Another feature of RCPs is their close cooperation with international organizations that have traditionally acted as secretariats of RCPs, or supported their coordinating bodies (Klekowski von Koppenfels, 2001).¹⁰ In some cases, they have initiated the start-up of RCPs and provided non-partisan facilitation of dialogue on sensitive issues. International organizations (IO) continue to organize meetings at the request of governments on specific migratory concerns in their regions. Such meetings can develop into ongoing processes if there is enough commitment among participating states.

As many RCPs evolve from *fora* for the exchange of views to action-oriented mechanisms, IOs are increasingly called upon to provide assistance in project development and implementation in such areas as the harmonization of national and regional policy and practice, economic development in areas of high migration pressure, operational systems for migration management, and capacity building and

7. Activities underway or completed include assessments and good practice papers in a number of priority areas; a compendium of labour migration policies and practices in the ten countries; joint training and development of curriculum and joint activities between labour sending and receiving countries in the implementation of a Migrant Resource Centre (see also footnote 8).

8. Recommendations from the Colombo conference concerned three main areas: 1) protection and provision of services to migrant workers, 2) optimizing benefits of organized labour migration and, 3) capacity building, data collection and inter-state cooperation. Recommendations from the Manila meeting included regulatory frameworks to prevent immigration malpractice; the establishment of Migrant Welfare Funds; pre-orientation services for the migrants and a feasibility study to establish a common Migrant Resource Centre in the Gulf Cooperation Council states.

9. One concrete project in the context of the PIDC is a border management assessment study by IOM for the government of Papua New Guinea, which is set to be replicated for other states in the region.

10. For instance, IOM has managed the secretariats of the Manila Process, the CIS Conference and Follow-up Process, MIDSA, the Dakar Process and most recently the 5+5 dialogue on migration. Other international organizations such as UNHCR, OSCE and ICMPD have similarly acted as hubs for coordinating the meetings and activities of RCMs.

training.¹¹ They are also requested to conduct research and studies on topical issues, such as migration legislation, trafficking in persons, labour migration, migration and health and remittances.

RCPs often also seek the participation of UN agencies, whose representatives frequently attend RCP meetings as observers or participants. As RCP agendas expand, the need for technical expertise on a variety of topics and subjects also grows. In the future, the UN and other organizations are likely to increase their expert contributions to regional consultations.

Interaction with Economic Fora

Some RCPs are seeking to place migration issues on the agenda of regional economic groupings, which have traditionally had little interaction with migration policymakers. As these larger integration processes strive to achieve freer movement of goods and services, the challenge of liberalizing labour movements gains more prominence. A recognition of the interlinkages between labour migration, trafficking and economic development has spurred joint planning and activities between economic groupings and RCPs in recent years. Examples from Africa include the increased participation of the South African Development Community (SADC) in MIDSA's workshops and activities,¹² and the sustained involvement of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the 2001 Dakar Declaration Process and Follow-up Proposals. ECOWAS was one of the founders of the 2001 International Migration Policy Seminar for West Africa, which sparked the Dakar Declaration and Follow-up Proposals. It also funded technical cooperation projects on migration terminology, data sources and legislation to facilitate a meaningful dialogue on migration in the region of West Africa (IOM, 2003e).

Sustained NGO Involvement

While RCPs are governmental processes, many of them have increasingly invited regional NGOs to contribute to both policy issues and project implementation. Inclusion of civil society organizations in regional dialogue is now customary practice in more developed RCPs, like the regional conferences on migration (RCM). Sometimes, NGOs form their own *fora* within RCPs and issue declarations or make proposals that are heeded by governments or even incorporated into their Plan of Action. For instance, the Regional Network of Civil Organizations for Migration (RNCOM) emerged as part of the Puebla Process, and its proposal to assist migrants held in detention centres was adopted in the RCM Plan of Action in 2001. Similarly, NGOs have regularly participated in the MIDSA process, and a regional NGO is included in the steering committee.

Most RCPs have explicitly invited NGO participation in their declarations or recommendations. The 2003 Budapest Declaration, for example, recommended that minimum standards be established for the health care offered to victims of trafficking through a "partnership of governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions" (Regional Conference on Public Health and Trafficking in Human Beings in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, 2003).¹³

Strengthening Participation in Migration Dialogue Within States

The broad range of issues discussed in RCPs has increasingly compelled governments to seek to secure concerted action on these issues within their own ranks. Recognizing that migration could no longer be dealt with single-handedly by one government agency, they have more commonly sought inputs and representation from their ministries of foreign affairs, interior, labour, trade and health. While leadership

11. For more details see the IOM brochure on Technical Cooperation on Migration, 2002, IOM, Geneva.

12. For details see IOM 2003. Annual Report to the USA: Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA) Phase II.

13. For details of the Budapest Conference, see the chapter "Investing in Migration Health".

should lie within a single coordinating committee, the considerations of different government branches need to inform national migration policy decision making.

INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION: PROGRESS ON CREATING A FRAMEWORK OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES

As previously discussed, some of the well-established consultative processes on migration are already interregional in nature. Many RCPs are reaching out to counterparts from other regions to share experiences and best practices.

The joint IGC/APC consultation held in Bangkok in April 2001 was a first step in the direction of interregional cooperation. The first of its kind, this joint meeting offered a unique opportunity to strengthen interregional dialogue, develop a shared understanding of the variety of challenges nations face in relation to asylum, irregular migration and people smuggling, and use such dialogue as a confidence-building measure and stepping stone for future cooperation.

The development in 2002 of the Western Mediterranean Conference on Migration (“5+5”) involving five southern European and five Maghreb countries of origin, transit and destination is another direct result of the desire to develop an understanding of the migration dynamics across regions. Two conferences held since then in 2003 and 2004, have moved this process further towards regional acceptance of the need for cooperative approaches, and closer collaboration with international support organizations such as IOM.

Beyond RCPs, the more recent global processes, such as the Berne Initiative launched by Switzerland in 2001, have taken the lead in bringing together governments across regions to discuss and formulate common understandings and effective practices for the management of international migration. Other calls for more global mechanisms to discuss broad

migration management issues have come from IOM and the United Nations.¹⁴ The three major global processes that have emerged in recent years at the instigation of governments, IOM and the UN – the Berne Initiative, the International Dialogue on Migration and the Global Commission on International Migration – with the goal of placing international migration on the global agenda, are reviewed below.

COMMON OBSTACLES

Limited Resources

Securing sufficient funding to carry out agreed initiatives is a serious obstacle for most RCPs. Funding may come from the annual assessed contributions of participating states, other regional, international and funding entities such as the EU, regional economic groups and international organizations (IOM 2003a). Wealthy destination countries usually make larger contributions to RCPs, which has exposed RCPs to the criticism that, while appearing to cooperate, they allow destination countries to influence migration agendas. Critics argue that as a result resources are invested in discouraging, detaining and deporting undocumented migrants and in border control measures, rather than in development, the protection of migrants’ safety and human rights and improving their overall condition (Nezer, 2000).

While RCPs cannot alter the fact that countries have different bargaining powers, they leave relatively little room for “influence” by virtue of being non-binding, informal and voluntary in nature. Some states might well profit more than others from the final outcomes of RCPs, but the open dialogue offers all participating parties the opportunity to clarify their objectives and circumstances and begin exploring mutually beneficial solutions. As a result of such dialogue, many countries of destination are more willing to invest in development and capacity

¹⁴ The UN Secretary General established the Global Commission on International Migration in 2003. UNHCR has also engaged in a broader dialogue on migration from the perspective of its refugee protection mandate in its Global Consultations on International Protection.

building in countries of origin to address the root causes of migration. Collaboration among governments, NGOs and IOs also fosters a balance of interests and transparency in RCP proceedings. The non-partisan advice of IOs can also help to ensure that agendas are balanced.

The above criticisms are not entirely misplaced. They reflect the growing complexity, also politically, of managing mixed migration flows today. Assuring refugee protection in asylum systems and respect for the rights of migrants in the context of heightened security measures and stricter control continue to be major challenges that many RCPs are yet to address adequately.

Difficulties with Data Collection and Sharing

Data collection and meaningful information sharing have been among the first goals to appear on most RCP agendas, yet among the most difficult to accomplish. Lack of reliable data on migration trends and policies continues to hinder informed policy decision making, despite the fact that data collection and sharing have been improved in the past years. A regional database, SIEMCA, established in 2001 in the framework of the RCM, has succeeded in improving the quality and availability of information, which enabled the publication of research studies on migration flows in the Americas region. SIEMCA has proven valuable in facilitating migration negotiations and the adoption of harmonized policies.

For many RCPs, however, reliable data collection and the mechanisms to achieve this, remain absent from their agendas and plans. Information sharing is a challenge for countries participating in the MDSA, the Budapest Process, the CIS Conference and Follow-up process and others.

Lack of Impact Evaluation Initiatives

One of the current deficiencies of RCPs, hopefully to be addressed as they consolidate further, is a lack of self-evaluation of performance and achievements. The overall impact of RCPs on migration management in their respective regions has so far not been seriously investigated. While activity reports are regularly produced, and outcomes and challenges identified, comprehensive studies of the effectiveness of RCP initiatives in the region are still sparse. Apart from the assessment of the RCM recently undertaken by Canada and Mexico, no impact evaluations have yet been completed.¹⁵ These are difficult to carry out when funding is not stable, but remain an important means to identify deficiencies, take corrective action and confirm the credibility of RCPs.

GLOBAL PROCESSES ON MIGRATION

DESPITE the prominence of migration on international agendas for more than a decade now, efforts to achieve global consensus on its governance have proven elusive. This is partly due to the conflicting perceptions of migration among states. Instead, a myriad of interstate processes on migration have sprung up over the past decade, either bilateral or regional, as shown above. But more recently, there has also been an increasingly urgent call again by governments and agencies engaged with migration for a more global dialogue on migration. This call has been taken up by IOM with its *International Dialogue on Migration*, the Swiss government with the *Berne Initiative*, and the UN with its *Global Commission on International Migration*.

15. Canada and Mexico submitted for the consideration of RCM members an assessment and framework for the Puebla Process for strengthening its activities in the coming years, "Strengthening the Regional Conference on Migration: Eight Years After Its Creation". It includes guidelines for the successful operation of the process, such as commitment by members to the structure of the process, adherence to the agreed meetings and working group structures, and the participation of observers, international organizations and civil society organizations. The framework was endorsed at the IXth annual meeting of the RCM in Panama in May 2004.

INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION¹⁶

IOM's Council has in recent years become a major platform for government dialogue on understanding and cooperation in managing migration at the inter-governmental level. The International Dialogue on Migration was launched in November 2001, on the occasion of IOM's 50th anniversary, in response to a request from member states for IOM to take the lead in the migration policy debate. The Council strengthened its role as a forum for migration policy dialogue through informal and interactive discussions to foster understanding of migration dynamics and policy globally, and to facilitate cooperative approaches.¹⁷

Each year, governments identify a theme for the Dialogue, and workshops are held around agreed topics. Since 2003, there are two additional annual intersessional workshops to allow more continuous discussion, particularly of the linkages between migration and other policy domains. For 2004, "Valuing Migration" was selected as the main theme, *inter alia*, to link the Dialogue to the *World Migration 2005* report. The aim was to strengthen understanding of the costs, benefits and challenges of migration in social, cultural, political and economic terms for all involved, including the migrants and their families. At the November/December 2004 Council session, governments discussed the "Image of Migrants in Society", both in home and host societies, and how this can affect policymaking. How can governments ensure accurate public perceptions of the complexities of migration and the positive contributions of migrants to societies?

Two intersessional workshops in 2004 engaged other key international players on the current burning issues: *Migration and Health*, co-sponsored by WHO and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,

where health and migration officials considered, among others, the public health implications of increasingly mobile populations; and *Migration and Trade*, jointly organized by IOM, the World Bank and WTO, which explored current government mechanisms for managing temporary labour migration and the means to progress in the GATS Mode 4 negotiations to reduce barriers to the movement of service providers.

THE BERNE INITIATIVE¹⁸

The Berne Initiative is a state-driven international dialogue aimed at more effective management of migration at the regional and global level through enhanced interstate cooperation. At its inauguration ("Berne I") symposium in June 2001, delegates from governments, international organizations and academia encouraged the initiator, the Swiss government, to develop a non-binding international policy framework on migration. A first concept of this "International Agenda for Migration Management" was presented to governments from all regions of the world at the Berne Initiative Consultations in July 2003. The result was a non-binding international agenda for migration management comprising:

- a set of common understandings, basic shared assumptions and principles and,
- a set of effective practices drawn from government experiences.

In 2004, IOM, the secretariat of the Berne Initiative, organized four regional consultations on behalf of the Swiss government in Addis Ababa for Africa, in Budapest for Europe and Central Asia, in Guilin for Asia and the Pacific, and in Santiago de Chile for the Americas region. These were intended to move the "International Agenda for Migration Management" a step forward at the regional levels. Participants from origin, transit and destination countries in the same regions focused particularly on what united rather than divided them in this. As areas of consensus emerge, these will be compiled into a platform of

16. For further information on IOM's Dialogue refer: www.iom.int/en/know/idm/index.shtml

17. As of June 2004, the IOM Council consisted of 105 member states, 27 observer states and some observer intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

18. For further details on the Berne Initiative, see IOM, 2004, and: www.iom.int/berneinitiative

common understandings to support effective national migration policies, capacity development and interstate cooperation.

The Berne Initiative readily complements the efforts of existing regional consultative processes on migration, and can transpose the lessons learned from these into the larger global agenda. For the most recent “Berne II” conference in December 2004, participating states agreed to take stock of both the regional consultations and the future of the Berne Initiative, as mutually reinforcing efforts by states to manage migration more cooperatively.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE (ILC)¹⁹

In 2004, the International Labour Organization (ILO) included in its 92nd session of the ILC a general discussion on the challenges of labour migration in an era of globalization. It aimed for a more integrated approach to policies and structures for orderly migration for employment, and improving migrant worker protection through the setting of appropriate standards. The ILC concluded with a resolution for a comprehensive plan of action for migrant workers, to include a non-binding multilateral framework for a rights-based approach to labour migration.

The tripartite nature of the ILO allows greater multilateral engagement of employers, workers’ associations and governments in improving the treatment and conditions of migrant workers and members of their families. Other agencies have been invited by ILO to cooperate in the elaboration of the multilateral framework, and ILO has stressed that the non-binding framework be linked to related processes such as the Global Commission on International Migration, the Berne Initiative, and the forthcoming (2006) High-level Dialogue in the United Nations General Assembly on Migration and Development.²⁰

GLOBAL COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION²¹

AT THE UNITED Nations, migration was flagged as a priority issue for the UN, governments and the international community generally through the Secretary General’s 2000 report on Strengthening of the United Nations: an Agenda for Further Change.²² In 2004, the Secretary General established the UN Global Commission on Migration (GCIM) to pull together the disparate strands of international debate on migration issues, and provide coherent policy guidance.

Distinct but complementary to IOM’s International Dialogue on Migration and the Berne Initiative, the GCIM is an independent entity comprising 19 migration experts, drawn from all regions of the world and bringing together a wide range of perspectives and expertise. It is co-chaired by Dr. Mamphele Ramphela of South Africa, former Managing Director of the World Bank, and Mr. Jan O. Karlsson, Sweden’s former Minister for Migration and Development.

Described as a multi-stakeholder dialogue on strengthening national, regional and global governance (Langenbacher, 2004), the GCIM began its work early in 2004 with an 18-month mandate and three principal tasks:

- 1) promote a comprehensive dialogue on international migration among governments, international organizations, civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders;
- 2) analyse gaps in current policy approaches to migration and the linkages between international migration and other global policy issues and,
- 3) present recommendations to the international community on ways to strengthen national, regional

19. For further information on the ILC, go to: www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/realm/ilc/

20. See also the Text Box “ILO Action Plan on Labour Migration”.

21. For further information on the GCIM, refer: www.gcim.org

22. United Nations General Assembly document A/57/387, September 9, 2002.

and global governance of international migration, and to maximize the benefits of migration while minimizing its potentially adverse consequences.

Over the course of its term, the GCIM is organizing thematic and regional hearings and conducting analyses and research programmes. The outcomes of these activities will be presented in a report to be published in mid-2005.

and is expected to build on the intergovernmental consultation initiatives at global, regional, and inter-regional levels discussed in this chapter.

CONCLUSION

IN THE PAST two years RCPs have continued to attract interest among governments and other organizations active in the field of migration as venues for international dialogue and a means for finding mutually beneficial solutions to common migration issues. While there is still no detailed assessment of the impact of RCPs on migration management, there is consensus that they can make a valuable contribution to managing migration at the regional level. Traditionally used for information sharing, RCPs have become more operational and increasingly engage in technical cooperation with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. While RCPs have made tangible advances in a range of functional and substantive areas over the past few years, they have yet to unleash their full potential.

The global initiatives discussed above are still in their infancy, but already show a high degree of complementarity and convergence of approach and outcome. They are all helping to bring together governments across the migrant origin-transit-destination spectrum, while supporting and dovetailing with the regional processes. The reports and studies emerging from these processes in the coming months and years will tell us more about their concrete outcomes and impacts on migration governance.

The United Nations General Assembly will devote its High-level Dialogue in 2006 to international migration and development. The dialogue will aim at maximizing the development benefits of migration;

TEXTBOX 22.1

APEC BUSINESS TRAVEL CARD – FACILITATING REGIONAL TRAVEL

It has become common in international debates on migration to reach consensus on the need for interstate cooperation. Yet, in reality there are very few successful examples of this on the ground. The **APEC Business Travel Card Scheme** is one concrete illustration of how countries in the Asia-Pacific region have achieved a special form of cooperation to facilitate business migration to their mutual benefit. It offers useful lessons on how to widen and deepen multilateral partnerships in international migration.

APEC Business Mobility Group (BMG)

The evolution of regional economic blocs such as, e.g., NAFTA, EU, APEC and ASEAN, has seen massive shifts towards facilitating regional flows of investment, trade and finance. To facilitate regional trade and investment, APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation)²³ set up a Business Mobility Group (BMG) at its November 1996 meeting in the Philippines. One of APEC's main objectives is to stimulate economic growth in the region and reduce barriers to the free flow of trade. The challenge for the organization is how to do this without compromising national security and the integrity of national borders. The task of the BMG was to assist this process by removing barriers to the flow of business people within the APEC region (Rizvi, 2003).

The BMG became operational in 1997 and is now one of 12 expert working groups reporting to the APEC Committee on Trade and Investment. All 21 APEC countries are represented in the Group, which meets three times a year. Representatives are mainly senior immigration officers of the member states. The Group is convened by the Australian Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA), which also chairs the meetings. Membership of the committee has been very stable, and strong working relationships have developed. Its key objectives are (DIMIA 2003a):

- to simplify short-term entry arrangements for business visitors;
- to streamline processing for skilled persons seeking temporary residence;
- to develop transparent regulatory arrangements to allow for seamless cross-border movement.

An important initiative of the BMG was the development of the *APEC Business Travel Card Scheme*, administered by Australia on behalf of the BMG.

APEC Business Travel Card Scheme

The idea of this scheme is to simplify the entry of cardholders to the participating countries, provide flexible business travel arrangements, and reduce the time and costs for applying for entry visas and permits. In other words, to speed up business travel. The card is issued to interested persons who meet the following criteria:

23. APEC Members include: Australia; Brunei Darussalam; Canada; Chile; China mainland; Hong Kong; Indonesia; Japan; Republic of Korea; Malaysia; Mexico; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Peru; The Philippines; The Russian Federation; Singapore; Taiwan Province of China; Thailand; US; Vietnam.

- they must be a passport holder of a participating state (or permanent resident in Hong Kong (China));
- they must prove that they are a genuine business person who travels frequently within the region for trade and investment purposes;
- no criminal conviction or charges must be pending against them;
- for some countries, they must have the endorsement from a leading business organization within their country, such as a national chamber of commerce.

The card allows business people multiple entries to participating states for stays of up to 90 days. They do not need to apply for a separate entry permit or visa for each visit, and no visa labels are entered into passports. The card is the size of a credit card, and is valid for three years. Cardholders enjoy streamlined express immigration processing at airports through special APEC lines.

Business applicants submit a duly completed form, the home government checks the details of applicants against its own databases, and sends these electronically to each participating country for pre-clearance. The country receiving the details then checks them against its own alert lists and other databases used for checking arrivals. The applicant is thus pre-cleared for entry. This "double vetting" of applicant *bona fides* by the source and receiving country ensures a high degree of integrity. To date, there is no evidence of fraud in the system. Any receiving country reserves the right to refuse pre-clearance if it chooses to do so. The BMG has developed a set of principles, procedures and standards ('ABTC Operating Framework'), as a framework for implementing and managing the scheme.

Within this framework the application process should take no more than three weeks. However, some countries are still finding it difficult to meet this standard. In effect, as this process is a pre-arrival entry checking process, upon arrival it is necessary for the cardholder to produce both the card and a valid passport; and the information in the two documents must coincide.

The supporting database is maintained by DIMIA on behalf of the BMG. All member states control the data regarding their own nationals and have full access to the database.

The first trial run of the scheme took place in 1997 in three APEC member countries experiencing significant immigration – Korea, the Philippines and Australia. The evaluation took over a year, and the scheme commenced on a permanent basis in March 1997. At the end of 2003, 15 of the 21 APEC members had joined the scheme. The remaining six states are expected to join in the near future (DIMIA 2003a). All have agreed on a best endeavours basis to implement one or more of the following (Rizvi, 2003) aspects:

- visa-free or visa waiver arrangements for business people;
- participation in the APEC Business Travel Card Scheme;
- at least three years multiple entry for business people.

All APEC members have at least one of these in place.

The scheme has been recognized by APEC country leaders as a model of the "Pathfinder Approach", now being used within APEC to further other projects. This enables those countries able to move faster on some initiatives to do so and build the momentum for broader application. The approach relies on three key elements:

- i) trial runs of the scheme among a few countries to prove its viability;
- ii) open cooperation among members to build confidence and operational strength, and
- iii) technical assistance, training and initial funding to facilitate its implementation in all countries.

As of 28 January 2004, there were 7,720 active APEC Business Travel Cards, and the success of the APEC Business Travel Card encouraged the BMG to move on to a more ambitious programme of facilitating business travel between the countries of the region.

Complementary Initiatives of the BMG

The BMG agreed on a service standard for processing applications for, and extensions of, temporary residence permits for executives, managers and specialists transferred within their companies to other APEC countries (Rizvi, 2003). Almost all APEC countries are meeting this standard. An important task of the BMG is to strengthen capacity across the region to handle international arrivals and departures. It was agreed that standards would be set for all members and that they would be implemented in both developed and developing states in the region. In addition to the standards for short-term business visitor movement and temporary residence of company transferees and specialists, states have agreed on broader standards for:

- provision of information on temporary travel arrangements;
- travel document examination regimes and detection of travel document fraud;
- development of professional immigration services through training and streamlined practices;
- implementation of Advanced Passenger Information (API) systems.

Complementary standards have been drafted for:

- improving the security of travel documentation through workshops;
- enhancing immigration legislation infrastructure (DIMIA, 2003b).
- a feasibility study on the establishment of a pilot regional movement alert system to strengthen the capacity of border management agencies to detect stolen and fraudulent documentation and persons of concern.

Details of the work of the BMG are available on its website: www.businessmobility.org

Lessons learned from the APEC Business Card Scheme

A number of encouraging lessons can be drawn from this experience of interest to other countries.

1. The **development of cooperation** requires time – it should be based on a feasibility study of a few countries and the establishment of trust and confidence between countries over time.
2. **Consensus** is more easily gained for a limited, highly specific and non-threatening operational objective than for sweeping and massive intervention. Once countries realize there are benefits to be gained from cooperation, the scope of cooperation can be expanded.
3. A **phased approach** to cooperation seems to be the most successful, beginning with discussions and agreement on common principles and standards, and allowing for feasibility studies before implementation of any new system.
4. The **means and resources** for cooperation need to be assured by and for all players, especially for training of staff and installation of appropriate infrastructure. Countries with fewer resources need to be assisted by those with more experience and resources. The BMG's recognition of this and its priority to develop regional immigration personnel and infrastructure was a key lesson of the APEC Business Card Scheme.
5. Advanced computer-based information systems are essential for joint migration management. In the APEC Business Card case, activity is so high that the system will need to be upgraded in 2005. Such systems enable countries generally to manage their migration better regardless of the level of development of their economies. The API initiative, for example, which uses the international airline bookings system, helps raise countries' confidence in their management of incoming and outgoing movements.
6. Capacity building is fundamental to reforming migration policy and improving migration management and cooperation across countries. Those with more immigration experience can help support the efforts of others in a trusting, cooperative and egalitarian manner (e.g. Australia in the Asia-Pacific region).

While the card is clearly important for a highly mobile elite, it has a much wider impact by enhancing trade and investment between countries. In the contemporary international migration system, there is a clear bifurcation between high-income, skilled business people for whom international travel is increasingly facilitated, and the much larger number of poorer, less educated groups for whom international movement is constrained by receiving countries (Castles and Miller, 1998). However, schemes like the Business Travel Card can lay the foundations for broader international cooperation in migration management, with other potential spin-offs. This is a rare example of successful regional collaboration in the area of international migration, and its lessons need to be examined and learned.

Source: Professor Graeme Hugo, Federation Fellow, University of Adelaide, Australia.

