



International Dialogue on Migration (IDM)



Return Migration

Challenges and Opportunities



Return Migration: Happening Now

- ❶ **Complex, dynamic, challenging aspect of migration**
- ❷ **Profound consequences for countries of origin, transit, destination and migrants themselves**
- ❸ **Considerable impact on development, trade, health, international relations**
- ❹ **Capacity for countries of origin to receive returnees**
- ❺ **Major human rights implications**





Return Migration: Happening Now

- Return of highly-skilled Indians
- Sierra Leone: post-conflict return
- Poland: return of nationals from the UK
- Philippines: return of overseas workers

Migration Increasingly
Complex

Most Return Spontaneous





Return migration: Key Features for Policy Makers

- ④ **Return migration concentrated at extremities of lifecycle***
 - Involves primarily young persons recently arrived in host country;
 - Older persons, particularly those of retirement age.

- ④ **“Marked threshold effects” after a few years of residence*:**
 - Majority of returns (20% to 50%) occur within the first three years;
 - Either to home country
 - On to a third country (secondary emigration)
 - After five years return rate is relatively low.

- ④ **Some countries, such as Canada, the US and New Zealand, more successful at retaining immigrants*.**

* OECD: *International Migration Outlook, 2008*



Return migration: Key Features for Policy Makers

Migrant mobility greater between countries with similar level of development*

When income disparities greater

Migrants more likely to stay put

Return rates to OECD countries:

On average, twice as high as those to developing countries

Four main reasons for return migration*:

1. Failure to integrate into host country;
2. Individuals' preferences for their home country;
3. Achievement of a savings objective
4. Opening of employment opportunities in home country thanks to experience acquired abroad

* *OECD: International Migration Outlook, 2008*



A Comprehensive Approach To Return Management

Return: last-resort or
anticipated possibility?





A Comprehensive Approach To Return Management



Respect for human rights at all stages

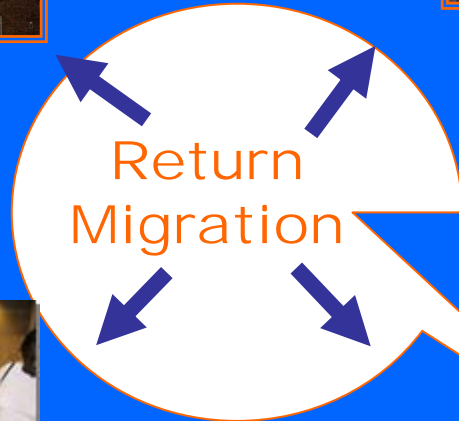


A Comprehensive Approach To Return Management

Development



Human Rights



Health



Trade





A Comprehensive Approach To Return Management

Policy and Programmatic Activities

Pre-departure orientation for migrants

participating in temporary and circular migration schemes which require return

Information about rights & responsibilities

Consular assistance and protection

Information about economic opportunities in the home country





A Comprehensive Approach To Return Management

Policy and Programmatic Activities (cont.)






- ④ **Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programmes**
- ④ **Short term and virtual return if conditions remain unfavourable**
- ④ **Coherence between national policies and international standards**





Assisted Voluntary Return & Reintegration

Key Features

-  **Takes account of migrant's decision**
-  **Must ensure respect for human rights**
-  **Consideration of vulnerabilities**
-  **Allows migrants and societies to prepare for return**
-  **Provides information / counselling, financial and/or logistical support**





Assisted Voluntary Return & Reintegration

Key Features

- ❶ **Avoids legal and social stigma of forced return**
 - **Relevant for the image of migrants in home and host societies**
- ❷ **Takes into account return and reintegration capacity**
- ❸ **Should include reintegration assistance for individuals and their communities**
- ❹ **Allows for evaluation of the reintegration process**
- ❺ **May foster more effective contribution of returnees to home country**

**Origin & Destination Countries
as Equal Partners**





Return: Innovative Approaches

🔄 Short-Term

🔄 Virtual Returns

- Transfer of skills and knowledge to country of origin
- Physically remain in destination country
- Use of information technology
- Important in early post-conflict reconstruction phase
- In an insecure environment
- Partnerships between:
 - Governments
 - Academic institutions
 - Civil society
 - Private sector





Return and Development

Strengthening
the Link

Key role for co-operation between:

- Countries of origin
- Countries of destination
- Other stakeholders – Diaspora representatives

“Brain gain”

- Assessment of labour market needs
- Special visa regimes
- Incentives (financial, social, professional)



Attract qualified nationals from abroad



- Transfer of skills and know-how
- Entrepreneurial initiatives
- Transnational contacts
- Investment capital
- Soft skills





Return and Development

- ④ **Returnees contributions (financial and otherwise) valuable**
- ④ **Burden of development must not fall on individual initiative**
 - **Private nature of any returnee's assets**
 - **Personal dimension of decision to contribute**
 - **Reduce social and institutional expectations**
- ④ **Not a substitute for development policies or foreign aid**





Concluding Remarks

Elements of
Effective Return

- ④ Factoring return possibility at every stage of the migration life-cycle
- ④ Making return sustainable:
 - Policies and activities addressing fundamental conditions that prompted migration in the first place:
 - Good governance
 - Political, economic, social stability
- ④ Promoting voluntary over involuntary return





Concluding Remarks

Elements of
Effective Return

- ④ Making return work for:
 - Individual and societal development
- ④ Respecting human rights of returning migrants
- ④ Fostering multi-stakeholder cooperation
 - Partnerships between countries of origin and destination





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