



International Organization for
Migration

International Dialogue on Migration

**Migration and
Transnationalism:
Opportunities and Challenges**

Geneva, 9 & 10 March 2010



IDM 2010

- Overarching theme: **Migration and Social Change**
- 1st Workshop (9-10 March) “**Migration and Transnationalism: Opportunities and Challenges**”
- 2nd Workshop (19-20 July) “**Societies and Identities: the Multifaceted Impact of Migration**”



Defining Transnationalism

- Various definitions exist
- In general: exchanges, connections and practices across borders
 - ➔ Activities and identities are no longer necessarily contained in a single national space



Focus on Migrants and their Families

Every migrant can be an agent and a subject of transnationalism

- Being in several places at once / Being “neither here nor there”
- Multi-sited lives and cross-border connections and exchanges
- Important role of those who stay behind



The Global Context

Globalization as a context for transnationalism

- New information and communication technologies
 - Enhanced ease of transport
 - More intense international trade
- Enhanced circulation of persons, goods, information and ideas across borders
- Greater connectivity between societies



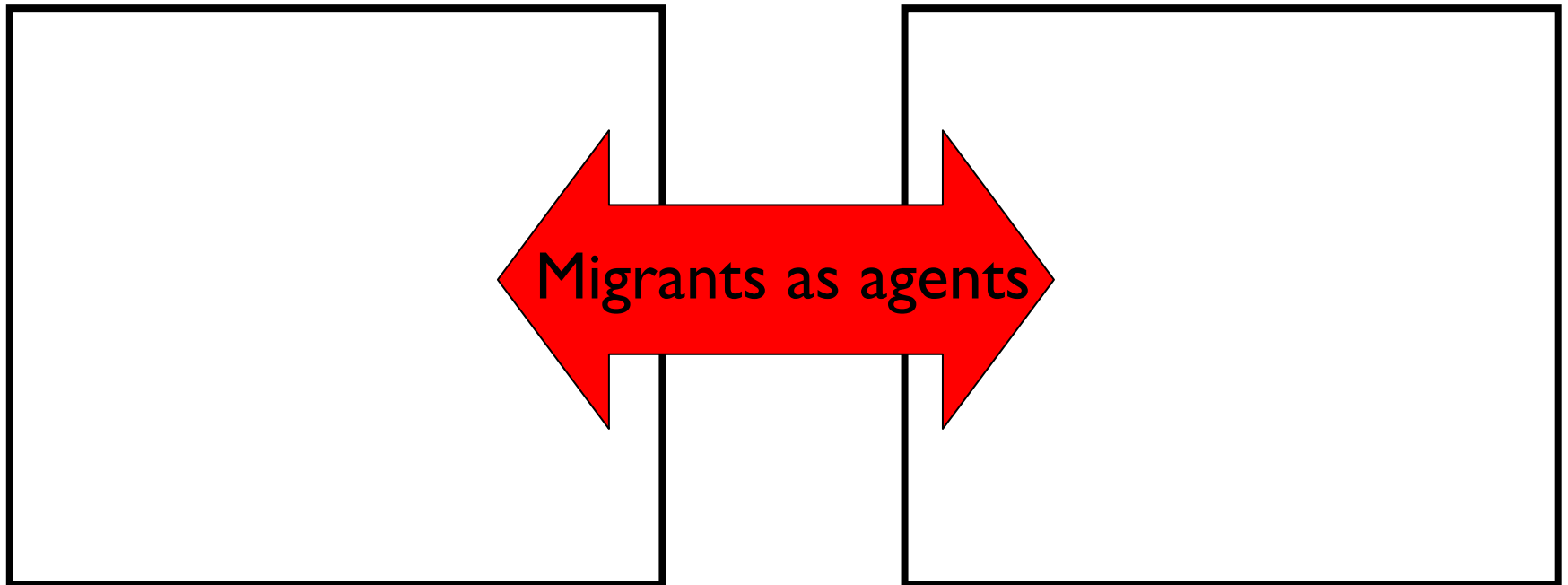
Transnationalism: A New Lens

- No new form of migration but a different way of looking at migration
- Angle of analysis for the broader issue of migration and social change
- Focus on the connections which migrants establish between countries



Consequences for Policymaking

Policymakers tend to think within their national spaces



Think outside the box



Transnationalism & Families

Opportunities:

- Multicultural existence → expanded horizons

Challenges:

- Identity issues and family disruption

Policy Considerations:

- Focus on family unity / reunification
- Respond to changing gender roles
- Support to transnational families (esp. children)
- Attention to 2nd and 3rd generation



Transnationalism & Civic and Political Participation

Opportunities:

- Greater contributions by migrants; enhanced sense of belonging; better social cohesion

Challenges:

- Concerns surrounding split loyalties
- Access to rights and benefits

Policy Considerations:

- Facilitate participation at different levels
- Ensure portability of social benefits



Transnationalism & Migrant Networks

Opportunities:

- Harness role of networks as conduits of transnational activity

Challenges:

- Overcome suspicions and create channels for engagement and communication

Policy Considerations:

- Systematic partnerships with migrant networks and diaspora



Key Messages for Policymakers

Thinking and acting transnationally

- = focus on cross-border connections created by migrants
- = target policies to maximize benefits and reduce costs of transnational activities for migrants, their families and society
- = opt for comprehensive approaches that involve all relevant partners
- = engage in bilateral, regional and international cooperation



Conclusion

- Transnationalism is a reality
- It needs to be considered as part of comprehensive migration management
- Policies need to go beyond traditional dichotomies of host/home country considerations