

Report

Working Group B: Migration and Development

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The working group acknowledged that the issue of migration and development is not new. What has changed, however, is the way the issue is seen: it is now increasingly recognised that migration has some development potential for both countries of origin (CoO) and host countries. The migration and development issue no longer focuses singularly on brain drain, but on migrants of all levels of skills. The group acknowledged the needs for comprehensive and accurate data on migration for development policies. Although the issue was largely discussed quite broadly during the meeting, the following points received considerable attention.

Key Points of Discussion:

- Diaspora: Diaspora of LDCs have a considerable role to play in the development of the countries of origin as well as host countries. While host countries such as Canada and the US have a clear program linking migration and local development, there is an increasing interest from CoOs in engaging with their nationals abroad. An increasing number of countries have established an office/directorate for their nationals abroad. However, there are problems in dealing with migration and development, chief among which is a lack of knowledge and information on the diaspora.
- Citizenship: Related to the question of diaspora is the question of the citizenship of persons born abroad, or subsequent generations of migrants. Dual or multiple citizenship can present both constraints and opportunities for migrants. The Congolese diaspora, for instance, face an important barrier in investing in their country of origin since it does not allow dual citizenship. On the other hand, countries with more experience of working with their nationals abroad, like Morocco and Tunisia, have more adequately addressed the issue of permanent return or dual citizenship.
- Remittances: This is one of the key channels through which migration could affect development in the CoO. For many countries remittances (particularly workers' remittances) have become a major source of income. For instance, remittances are Columbia's second source of income after oil. Remittances are generally used for consumption. In Tunisia, for instance, a case study shows that

56 percent of workers' remittances were allocated to leisure, 11 percent to education and over 30 percent to clothing. However, greater collaboration between government agencies and nationals abroad might yield more enduring investments, as in Morocco or Sri Lanka. Such collaboration may involve providing business information to the diaspora, or putting in place facilitative administrative and tax procedures.

- Brain and skill circulation: Contemporary migration is complex as shown in the development of transnationalism. It is therefore important to consider not just the trend and 'stock' of migration but also the circulation of brain and skills. The circulation of skilled persons in a region like Southern Africa has become a key point of discussion in the migration and development debate. This has led to temporary migration that has assumed quite important proportions in some countries such as Egypt, Sri Lanka and Sudan.
- Impact assessment: Migration and development debates should seek to systematically assess and effectively address the social, economic and demographic costs and benefits of migration. While some countries have information on people (particularly family members) left behind, little is known of their situation throughout the process of migration. Little, for instance, is known of how, when and under what circumstances children and women or vulnerable persons left behind suffer and/or benefit from migration.

Key Data Elements Needed to Address these Issues

The data needed depends on the interests of the particular governments and the circumstances of each country. Data needed may be externality or internally determined by the specific interests. For instance Spain's interest in migration from Venezuela was quite important in the cooperation between the two countries on migration issue. Although data needs of CoO and host countries may not be the same, it is thought that cooperation could serve the different interests. The following information is thought to be of policy relevance.

- Diaspora:
 - Social, demographic and economic profiles as well as the geography of the diaspora (where do migrants come from and where are they living). What are their needs and expectations *vis à vis* their country of origin
- Remittances:
 - Size and characteristics (official and unofficial remittances).
 - Origin and destination of remittances at national and sub-national level

-Economic and social impact of remittances on both senders and recipients

-Use of remittances

-Investments by size, time and sector, which are also key to the effectiveness and efficiency of migrant investments.

- Circular migrants

Origin, destination and periodicity of migration

Characteristics of need migrants and actual migrants

Major Data Collection Agencies

There are many sources of data used combining domestic and non domestic sources. In many case the directorate of national abroad where it exists, is charge of the collection and production of migration data. Agencies concerned with the collection/production of data vary according to the key issue (e.g. migration trend, diaspora, remittances) considered.

Diaspora and migration trends: Among the domestic sources are the consulates, ministries of foreign affairs, education and justice, national statistical offices, population registries and censuses. In some countries where labour migration is well organised, such as Sri Lanka, employment agencies provide valuable data. Non-domestic sources include international organisations (e.g. UNCHR, IOM, EUROSTAT), the Home Office, Bureau of Statistics, and Bureau of Census.

Remittances: Financial institutions (including post offices) and customs offices have been quite reliable data sources for official remittances in a number of countries. In some cases (e.g. Sri Lanka), Living Standard Measurement Surveys or other large household income surveys provide good data on remittances.

Unlike the diaspora data, the role of foreign bureau of statistics and home office in providing data on remittance is limited as Statistic Canada's experience indicates. However cooperation between different agencies could help in understanding migrants' socioeconomic situation.

It is crucial to try to find as many data sources as possible at the national and international levels. For instance many host countries have quite comprehensive data on migrants which could be helpful for countries of origin.

Effective Approaches

Although it is still a long way to a best approach to migration and development issues as indicated, for instance, by the lack of comprehensive and accurate date on unofficial remittances, there are nevertheless key stages/aspects of an effective approach.

- A clear political commitment to the issue, with a clear set of objectives and policy relevant questions to answer. It is not sufficient for a country or government to just acknowledge the link between migration and development; it is necessary to clearly state the interests and key policy goals and questions related to the issue.

- Establish a central agency which will work in collaboration with different stakeholders toward achieving those goals. This agency needs to establish structures and systems to effectively collate key information for policy. At the same time the agency and its structure should have some kind of flexibility that allows for the evolving interplay of migration, policy and development. Canada with IMDB and LSIC, Morocco, Tunisia and Sri Lanka show interesting examples of such an approach.
- Try to identify and use as much domestic and other sources of data as possible.
- Increase co-operation between agencies and authorities of countries of origin and destination.
- Given constraints on resources, it would be important and effective for countries of emigration to focus on diaspora and immigrants in key destination countries.

Major Challenges

Some of the major challenges highlighted were:

- Getting a clear political commitment, so that key policy questions can be raised. As mentioned earlier, without such a commitment, particularly as regards migration-related development goals, it would be quite difficult to collect relevant data for migration and development policy.
- The confidentiality (protection of personal information) that governs some statistics becomes particularly crucial in the case of collaboration between agencies from different countries with different laws.
- Lack of methods for a reliable estimation of unofficial remittances.
- Poor equipment in term of IT in many agencies.
- Conflict of interest of some stakeholders (for instance, issue of dual citizenship, permanent/temporary return).
- Limited coverage of consulate registry.

It is crucial to distinguish the different group of migrants and country of emigration from those of immigration. In other words, an effective approach will need to be sensitive to context and circumstances.