

DATA ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

Migration and development are interdependent processes both of which have been instrumental in shaping the progress of human civilization. Both have influenced the evolution of states, societies, economies and institutions. In fact, the forces of migration have guided the nature of the production system and encouraged political, economic and social progress for centuries. But both terms are also very complex.¹ If an informed discussion of the migration and development nexus and the related policy options is to be possible, it can only be achieved on the basis of sound data.

The linkages between migration and development are many and complex. They are not new, but the focus of the international debate has evolved over time. In the past, the tendency was to focus on the negative implications of migration in relation to development, that is, the lack of opportunities and economic prospects in the home country (root causes) which act as a catalyst for emigration, and the adverse affect this loss of essential human resources (“brain drain”) could have on local development. However, the international community has increasingly come to focus on positive linkages. Thus, it is generally acknowledged that, if properly managed, international migration can be of benefit to local development. This change in emphasis has been amplified by the fact that remittances have doubled during the 1990s and by now exceed official development aid.²

Several additional aspects of migration and development have to be taken into account. Complex “replacement” migration flows³ are occurring and require proper management. It is now also recognized that in addition to money remittances, what is sometimes referred to as “social and political remittances” also occur via the transfer of ideas and practices. Nor should it be overlooked that more women are migrating independently or as heads of families.⁴ The effects of the feminization of migration on development have not been fully explored yet.

Another development requiring attention is the inclusion of labour migration⁵ on trade liberalization agendas as an important topic of discussion. Policy makers are realizing that migration, if properly managed, could have a positive impact on labour surpluses in developing countries by providing job opportunities abroad. However, if not properly managed such emigration could itself lead to labour shortages, especially of skilled professionals in certain sectors of the economy.

¹ Development is a multi-faceted term. The distinction between short-term development goals, associated with remittances being spent on consumption, and more long-term development effects to be achieved through productive investment, has added additional layers of complexity to the discussion.

² According to the 2003 World Bank report on Global Development Finance, in 2001 officially recorded worker remittances to less developed countries amounted to USD 72.3 billion, and are estimated to have risen to USD 80 billion by 2003, whereas official development aid stood at USD 55 billion.

³ Where the migration of highly skilled migrants from one country has caused the migration of people of that same occupational group to migrate to the first.

⁴ *Managing Migration. Challenges and Responses for People on the Move*, World Migration, IOM 2003.

⁵ See the section on Labour Migration in this report for more details.

To understand the impact and relevance of migration processes on development, the availability of reliable and comparable data is essential; for example, to understand and anticipate labour needs and prepare appropriate human resource development plans to address them.⁶ Reliable data and information are essential prerequisites to enable governments to approach diaspora communities and engage them in discussions and practical programmes on development. Reliable and concise data is key to making this relationship work. The major challenge for policy makers is to know which of available data are relevant to understanding the relationship between migration and development, what such data imply and how to use available data in the most effective way.⁷

2. DATA COLLECTION

A clear political commitment is a basic requirement in addressing the issue of data collection for the purpose of furthering development. It has to include clear and achievable objectives and answers to policy-relevant questions. It is not sufficient to merely acknowledge the link between migration and development without also clearly stating the related key interests and policy objectives. Only on that basis is it possible to develop concrete data collection initiatives.

The particular need for migration and development data depends to a large extent on the interests and circumstances of each country, which may themselves be determined by various external and internal interests. For instance, there is typically a certain interest in migratory movements between countries that share a colonial history. Thus, some European countries may show interest in migration from Latin American or African countries. There may be an exchange of census or other data, or cooperation in conducting a special survey which could help to locate and define the size of diaspora communities, which in turn contribute to the formulation of relevant policy options on whether and how to approach such communities, and how they could contribute to a country's development needs.

Data needs, or the use of data of countries of origin and countries of destination may not always converge. Cooperation can nonetheless serve the different interests. Regional cooperation should be encouraged when the countries involved face similar issues. Though specific data on remittances may be of particular interest to only one country, effective methods for collecting data on remittances may be shared by a number of countries. Relevant cooperation could aim at the development of improved mechanisms for data collection, or the exchange of best and effective practices.

To better understand the migration and development nexus, several subtopics can be identified. These include remittances, diaspora support, circular migration/transnational networks, and broader linkages between trade and migration. The methods for data collection

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Not all governments realize this relationship between data and information and policy-making. Data collection initiatives in some regions, e.g., Africa, have made little progress over the last 30 years, even though the number of countries collecting data on migration has increased. United Nations (2002): Activities of the United Nations Statistics Division on International Migration, United Nations Statistics Division, New York.

and the type of data collected in these areas may differ, however the systematic and thorough collection and analysis of data can constitute a sound basis for policy makers and their decision-making process.

Remittances

While abroad, migrants acquire not only skills and experience, but also earnings that they often partly transfer to support their families back home. The World Bank estimates that in 2002 the officially registered flow of migrants' remittances worldwide amounted to USD 80 billion, with over 60 per cent going to developing countries.⁸ However, this does not include funds sent through unofficial channels which, according to certain reports, could increase that number two to threefold.⁹

In many less developed countries, remittances amount on average to 13 per cent of GDP, and often account for a much higher share as, for instance, in Lesotho (26.5%), Nicaragua (16.2%) and Yemen (16.1%). Remittances are however "the private rewards to the exceptional hard work, risk and initiative of the migrant".¹⁰ This has to be borne in mind when policy makers discuss remittances as a possible tool for enhancing a country's development.

Remittances represent a key area through which migration can affect the economic and social development in countries of origin,¹¹ as they have become a major source of income for many countries. For instance, remittances are Colombia's second most important source of income after oil.¹² Although remittances are recorded in the national balance of payments,¹³ whether that money is actually used to further that particular country's economic and social development cannot be seen from such accounts. A case study on migration and development in Somalia, for example, estimates that remittances to Somalia stand at between USD 50 and USD 200 per month and household, and that these remittances were "primarily used for consumption".¹⁴ However, the report goes on to state that remittances are important as a social safety net and that "recent observations show a new trend where remittance money is invested in small businesses or real estate".¹⁵ Estimates of the total amount of money remitted to

⁸ World Bank (2003): "Foreign Investment, Remittances Outpace Debt As Sources of Finance For Developing Countries: World Bank - Europe and Central Asia", <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:20102119~menuPK:34466~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>.

⁹ Ratha, Dilip: "Workers' Remittances: An important and Stable Source of External Development Finance", in: Global Development Finance. Striving for Stability in Development Finance, Analysis and Statistical Appendix, World Bank 2003, pp. 157-175.

¹⁰ Kevin O'Neil: "Summary Report: Discussion on Migration and Development: Using Remittances and Circular Migration as Drivers for Development", Migration Policy Institute, 2003.

¹¹ See the Analysis on the Questionnaire on Approaches to Data Collection in this report for information on how many of the countries responding to the questionnaire during the Workshop on Approaches to Data Collection, collect data on remittances.

¹² Approximately 4 million Colombians (10% of total population) reside and work abroad and remittances are therefore a significant source of national revenue. In 2002, more than USD 1 billion were sent to Colombia.

¹³ Remittances are recorded very differently in different countries. See the website of the International Monetary Fund, at www.imf.org for more information. The IMF also publishes recommendations on how remittances can best be included in a country's balance of payment.

¹⁴ Joakim Gundel: "The Migration-Development Nexus: Somalia Case Study", in The Migration-Development Nexus, International Organization for Migration and United Nations, 2003, pp. 233-259.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Somalia vary from USD 140 million to USD 800 million. This wide range demonstrates the difficulty involved in arriving at reliable data to analyse the actual amounts and their effect on a country's economic and social development.

Remittances can have an important impact on the standard of living of households receiving them. There is general agreement that individual migrants almost always benefit by migrating from a poorer to a richer country,¹⁶ and that through the money they send back home, their families also benefit. Remittances are also spent on health and education and are thus invested in human capital. Nevertheless, the role remittances play in respect of sustainable investments is not well known¹⁷ and more research and improved data are needed to understand the potential long-term impacts of remittances. More analysis is also needed to determine the actually beneficiaries of remittance flows and whether and how it might be possible to channel such flows towards productive investment and sustainable development.

Enhanced collaboration between government agencies and nationals abroad might yield more enduring investments on the part of the diaspora. Such collaboration may involve providing business investment information to members of the diaspora community, or facilitating administrative and tax procedures. The issue of transfer costs is another area where action needs to be taken since current transfer costs and poor exchange rate offers can result in a loss of as much as 20 per cent of the amount remitted.¹⁸

Efforts are being undertaken to encourage more migrants to remit through official channels and invest in home country development. More data and information are needed to identify the most effective mechanisms and incentives to further encourage official transfers, for example lowering of high transfer fees, creating appropriate incentive schemes and fostering expatriates' confidence in the local administration and banking sector.

A major challenge lies in the development of agreed definitions, categories and sources of worker remittances (including migrants' transfers, compensation of employees and other) and of concrete measures to capture remittances that flow through informal channels.

In order to establish a sound basis for policy makers, the data on remittances should include the following:

- Magnitude and characteristics (official and unofficial remittances)
- Origin and destination at national and regional level
- Economic and social impact for both senders and receivers of remittances
- Use of remittances
- The importance, time and sector of investments made possible by remittances and the effectiveness and efficiency of migrant investments.

¹⁶ Graeme Hugo: *Migration and Development: A Perspective from Asia*, Migration Research Series, International Organization for Migration, November 2003.

¹⁷ Kathleen Newland, "Migration as a Factor in Development and Poverty Reduction", Migration Policy Institute, June 1, 2003.

¹⁸ Ibid.

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, Living Standard Measurement Surveys or other large household income surveys provide good data on remittances.

In its *Balance of Payment Statistics*, The International Monetary Fund collects data concerning three categories, 'workers remittances', 'compensation of employees' and 'migrant transfers'. However, it is thought that this underestimates the amount of officially transferred remittances.¹⁹ This may be partly because the categories used by different countries to report the flow of remittances do not correspond to the same definitions. Some countries use the category 'compensation of employment' while others do not distinguish between workers' remittances and other transfers. Depending on the definitions used, some countries also count refugees/asylum seekers and migrants in separate groups. In addition, the data on south-south movements is largely missing.²⁰

To capture the amount of unofficial remittances is even more difficult. To lower transfer costs and facilitate access to banking accounts for migrants would indirectly contribute to improve data collection in addition to attracting more migrants to transfer remittances through official channels. However, it is generally acknowledged that a reorientation of remittance transfers from informal to formal channels presupposes a considerable prior effort aimed at fostering trust and confidence in such formal transfer systems. All of which present challenges not easily overcome. Cooperation between different agencies would help to better understand migrants' socio-economic situation and the impact of remittances for all concerned.

Diaspora

The valuable contribution of diaspora communities to home country development is being increasingly acknowledged²¹ and more countries are investigating various ways to actively mobilize their diasporas. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) refers for the first time to diasporas in its recently adopted Constitution.²² Members of diaspora communities are being encouraged to return to their home countries either permanently or temporarily and to share their skills, while low airfares and modern means of telecommunication also facilitate sustained contact between countries of destination and origin.

Diaspora networks are being created to facilitate and encourage contacts between the diaspora and the country of origin. For instance, the government of Armenia has created a website to contact and provide information to the approximately 10 million Armenians living abroad.²³ Such initiatives can be instrumental in mobilizing diasporas and encouraging them to invest in their home country economies.

¹⁹ See for example Peter Gammeltoft, "Remittances and Other Financial Flows to Developing Countries", in *The Migration-Development Nexus*, International Organization for Migration and United Nations, 2003, pp. 101-133.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ See Analysis of the questionnaire on data collection in the Annex to this report for countries collecting data on diaspora.

²² Decision on the Development of the Diaspora in the OAU Executive Council, Third Session, 2002.

²³ www.armeniadiaspora.com.

Website for the Armenian diaspora

The government of Armenia created a website that provides information to the approximately 10 million Armenians living abroad. The website includes a database listing professionals living abroad, as well as a mailing list through which the government can contact their expatriate nationals. The concept of the database allows Armenians to register voluntarily and provide information on their profession and their living conditions abroad. It provides a comprehensive list of Armenian and diaspora organizations around the world and plays an important role in linking various organizations. The site includes a section on business and investment opportunities in Armenia and, in addition, offers travel or entertainment information.²⁴

The development of a mechanism to systematically obtain data on diaspora communities as well as on returning migrants, using key indicators such as size, gender, occupation, status, academic level and more, depending on the case, remains a major challenge for policy makers. Modern means of telecommunications offer opportunities to engage members of the diaspora around the globe in discussions and networks, as demonstrated by the Armenian example.

Diaspora groups from the least developed countries play a considerable role in the development of the countries of origin, as also in host countries. Some countries have introduced programmes linking their expatriates to the home country as, for example, is the case in Mexico through home town associations.²⁵ In the Philippines, similar contacts are made possible through an overseas employment agency.²⁶

Countries of origin are increasingly interested in maintaining contacts to their nationals abroad, and a growing number among them have established a contact point to facilitate this. The main difficulty for policy makers in this regard is the actual dearth of information on their diasporas, including their whereabouts.

²⁴ www.armeniadiaspora.com.

²⁵ In Mexico, the "3+1" programme involves state, local authorities and migrant associations for the development of micro-enterprises in social, economic and community development projects. For more information, see *Diaspora Support to Migration and Development: Challenges and Potentials*, in *International Dialogue on Migration*, 84th Council Session, December 2002, International Organization for Migration 2003.

²⁶ The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration offers services to Philippine workers abroad, but it also compiles statistical information, e.g., on remittances. Its primary objective is to promote "decent and productive" working conditions for Philippine workers abroad. But the agency maintains contact to its nationals working in other countries and provides exchanges or assistance through repatriation and reintegration programmes. For more information see www.poea.gov.ph.

Migration for Development in Africa, MIDA

The IOM Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) programme is an example of the possible contribution to be made by a diaspora to the development of the countries of origin. MIDA aims at the transfer of vital skills and resources present in the African diaspora to priority sectors back home. It is an institutional capacity building programme in Africa that aims at matching the profiles of migrants with the demand from African countries and the development of useful synergies. The exchange and matching of data gathered both in the countries of origin and in the host countries forms the basis on which the available skills, financial and other resources of diaspora can be channelled to support development projects.²⁷

Related to the topic of diaspora is the issue of citizenship of children born to migrants abroad. Multiple citizenship presents both constraints and opportunities for migrants. The diaspora may be discouraged from investing in their country of origin if it does not recognize dual citizenship. To address such concerns, the Indian government, for example, introduced an initiative in January 2003 granting dual citizenship to Indians living in particular countries abroad.²⁸ About 20 million people of Indian origin are living overseas and the dual citizenship agreement was negotiated in response to a demand by the Indian diaspora. The aim of this initiative is to remove the obstacles for Indians abroad to engage in commercial activities in India. Dual citizenship is expected to reinforce the ties between India and its large diaspora and to lead to further investments.²⁹

The initiative on dual citizenship in India fits into a plan of action initiated by the Federation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) to boost foreign direct investment (FDI) by the Indian diaspora to USD 5 billion by 2008, i.e. ten times the current level of FDI.³⁰

More reliable and precise data and information are needed especially in the area of return migration and emigration, as it would otherwise become very difficult to estimate the actual importance of either 'brain drain' or 'brain gain' for some countries of origin.³¹

The most effective way to collect data on diasporas is to combine both domestic and external sources. Among the domestic sources are consulates, ministries of foreign affairs, education and justice, national statistical offices, and population registers and censuses. In some countries where labour migration is well organized, employment agencies provide valuable data. External sources include international organizations (e.g. UNCHR, IOM), domestic governmental departments³², statistics divisions of international organizations (e.g., the EU's Eurostat) and international census bureaux. The sharing of data and information

²⁷ For more information, see MIDA, Migration for Development in Africa, IOM 2002.

²⁸ Countries to be included in this agreement are the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Finland, the Netherlands and Italy.

²⁹ For more information see the website of the 'Diaspora Division' at www.indiaday.org.

³⁰ www.ficci.com

³¹ See B. Lindsay Lowell and Allan Findlay (2002), "Migration of Highly Skilled Persons from the Developing Countries: Impact and Policy Responses", Synthesis Report, International Labour Office, International Migration Branch, Geneva.

³² Such as the British Home Office.

between the countries of origin and the countries of destination is essential if best use is to be made of both domestic and external sources.

A useful set of data on the diaspora would include:

- Social and demographic data, i.e. education, age, family status
- Economic profiles, including professional training
- The geographic distribution and origin of the diaspora
- Data on return migration

Circular migration/transnational networks and broader linkages

When discussing the costs and benefits of migration the tendency is to place the 'cost' to countries of origin (e.g. brain drain) on one side of the equation, and remittances sent back home on the other side. Such a cost/benefit approach is too simple to take account of the complexities of migratory movements and the relationships between the countries of origin and of destination, and the migrants themselves.

The growth in circular patterns of migration makes the migration discussion even more complex, including the question of integration in the host countries. It also opens new possibilities for development distinct from that of remittances sent home. A recent survey of more than 1,500 first-generation Indian and Chinese migrants in Silicon Valley illustrates the wish of migrants to maintain close contact and the possibly to return to their countries of origin. 74 per cent of Indian and 53 per cent of Chinese migrants participating in the survey stated that they hoped to start a business back home.³³

Different types of financial flows which could have a direct impact on development can be associated with transnationalism or circular migration:³⁴

- The WTO's General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) clearly demonstrates the various interlinkages. For example, to take advantage of open trading conditions under Mode 1 (foreign direct investment) usually requires some movement under Mode 4 (movement of natural persons).³⁵ And movement of natural persons often triggers return investment (FDI) into the country of origin. The importance of such interlinkages for some countries are being increasingly recognized, for instance India.³⁶
- Tourism from countries of migration to the 'old' country is a major source of income for countries such as, e.g., Ireland or Vietnam.
- Charitable foundations, such as home town associations (e.g., for Mexicans living in the U.S.) can provide significant resources for community development at the local level.

³³ Sumantha Chaudhuri, Aaditya Mattoo, Richard Self, "Liberalizing Mode 4: A Possible Approach", OECD-World Bank-IOM Seminar on Trade and Migration, Geneva, November 2003.

³⁴ As outlined in the article by Kathleen Newland: "Migration as a Factor in Development and Poverty Reduction", Migration Policy Institute, June 1, 2003.

³⁵ Sumantha Chaudhuri, Aaditya Mattoo, Richard Self: "Liberalizing Mode 4: A possible Approach", OECD-World Bank-IOM Seminar on Trade and Migration, Geneva November 2003.

³⁶ See the section on Diaspora in this paper.

- A certain nostalgia for the foods and products from the home country creates markets for those products in the countries of residence. This also applies to business areas, such as travel agencies.

Circular migration through seasonal agricultural workers programmes in Canada

In recognition of the potential role of migrants in the development of the country of origin and the country of residence, the Government of Canada set up programmes to ensure reliable and qualified seasonal labour migration from certain countries of origin, such as Mexico or Jamaica. To guarantee the successful continuation of such programmes, close cooperation is necessary between the countries involved. This includes the collection and sharing of data on how many workers participate and whether they do so over several years. Seasonal workers make up one-third of the group of temporary foreign workers entering Canada each year.

A bilateral agreement between Mexico and Canada for the seasonal agricultural programme was initiated in 1974 and is independent of the North American Free Trade Agreement, NAFTA. The number of temporary agricultural workers has risen from 200 in the first year to 10,700 by 2003.

Mexican agricultural workers are required to agree to work for a minimum of six weeks up to a maximum of 10 months in the agricultural sector in Canada. If the participation of a worker is successful, he is again admitted the following year. Statistics show that 70% of agricultural workers participate repeatedly. The two countries share data on who participates, the success of the programme and the mechanisms which allows the programme to remain flexible and adaptable to the requirements of the agricultural sector. Because of the high annual participation rate, investments in training and knowledge by both the Mexican and Canadian governments and the agricultural sector are low.³⁷

However, for a country to be able to take advantage of circular migration for its own development purposes, reliable data and information are needed on:

- Origin and destination of migrants
- Periodicity of migration
- Characteristics of the demand for and supply of migrants
- The impact of circular migration on the countries involved
- The social impact of circular migration on the migrant and migrant families
- Information on the effects of circular migration on social policies, such as transfer of pensions³⁸
- Emigration and return migration.

The nature of transnational movements requires data to be collected from countries of origin and countries of destination, which in turn calls for the coordination of such data from various different sources. Diaspora groups can play a potentially important role to enhance such cooperation.

³⁷ For more information, see <http://dfait-maeci.gc.ca/mexico-city/immigration/agricultural-en.asp>

³⁸ It is important that temporary workers can also combine the benefits and pension entitlements over national borders. The eligibility to pensions could be included in temporary work programmes as an incentive for workers to return to their country of origin when the work contract ends.

3. COOPERATION AND DATA SHARING

Migration and development and their relation to each other have been discussed for many years. In 1994, at the International Conference on Population and Development 179 countries agreed to continue their efforts to establish the complex linkages between population and development work to improve the living conditions in the countries concerned.³⁹

*Governments, with the assistance of the international community, should intensify their efforts to improve data collection and analysis, including gender-based analysis, in the areas of international migration and, in this context, promote the implementation of the United Nations recommendations on statistics of international migration; encourage studies designed to assess the causes of international migration and displacement and the positive contribution that migration makes to both countries of origin and countries of destination; and improve understanding of the links between relevant factors that have an impact on international migration.*⁴⁰

At the regional level, cooperation also figures on government agendas. At several regional meetings the importance of data collection on migration and development has been acknowledged by participating governments in their deliberations and plans of action. For established regional consultative processes, such as the South American Conference on Migration,⁴¹ the Dialogue on Migration in the Western Mediterranean (“5+5”)⁴² and the Migration Dialogue for Western Africa (MIDWA)⁴³ migration and development is a key theme.

An effective approach to sharing relevant data concerning migration and development is to establish a central agency which will work with different stakeholders to coordinate and act as a repository of related information. In some countries, departments have been established to coordinate the development activities of their governments;⁴⁴ however, such agencies do not necessarily focus on the collection of data and information on the migration and development nexus.

Cooperation can also take place between two or more governments as demonstrated in the examples of the above-mentioned regional consultative processes. Furthermore, cooperation can be established between civil society stakeholders (NGOs), international organizations and governments. Data sharing in the area of migration and development can be most effective if cooperation between agencies and national authorities of countries of origin and destination is increased.

³⁹ At the conference, a 20-year Programme of Action was adopted. Since then, follow-up activities have been organized, such as the ICPD+5 conference in 1999. See <http://www.unfpa.org/icpd/> for more information.

⁴⁰ United Nations General Assembly, Special Session on the International Conference on Population and Development, New York, 30 June to 2 July 1999., (ICPD+5), key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, para. 27.

⁴¹ South American Meeting on Migration, 1999, Lima Declaration, Second South American Conference on Migration, 2001, Final Declaration, and Third South American Conference on Migration, 2002, Plan of Action.

⁴² Dialogue on Cooperation in the Western Mediterranean, Ministerial Conference, 2002, Tunis Declaration, paragraph 15.

⁴³ West African Regional Meeting, 2000, Dakar Declaration and West African Regional Meeting, 2000, Implementation and Follow-up, paragraph A.2.

⁴⁴ Examples for this are the Swedish International Development Agency, SIDA (www.sida.se) or the British Department for International Development, DFID (www.dfid.gov.uk). The British DFID also includes a branch on ‘Migration and Development’.

Key players/data collection agencies

Several organizations, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), The EU's EUROSTAT and the United Nations Population Division maintain significant data sets on migration, while other international organizations develop data sets relevant to development (e.g., WTO, the World Bank and the IMF). However, more work is needed to combine migration and development data sets, and research is needed to fill the gaps.

In some countries the collection and production of migration data is assigned to a directorate of nationals abroad,⁴⁵ but other agencies could equally be involved in the collection/production of data. The responsibility of any agency varies according to the key issues (e.g. migration trend, diaspora, remittances) of importance to the respective countries.

4. CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES

- A clear political commitment is necessary to effectively address data collection on migration and development.
- There is a need for clearly defined and agreed terminology to put conceptual ideas to practical work
- The issue of confidentiality and the protection of personal data needs to be addressed.
- Improved methods to reliably estimate unofficial remittances would facilitate the better analysis of the total impact of remittances.
- More evidence describing the impact of remittances on development as well as the economic impact in the country from which remittances are transferred is needed.
- Poor equipment and limited access to IT in many agencies is a serious obstacle to better data collection on, for instance, the impact of remittances on a country's long-term development potential. The lack of resources to address such problems remains a serious challenge for policy makers.

5. CONCLUSION

The issue of migration and development is not new. What has changed, however, is the manner in which the issue is perceived: there is growing recognition of the development potential of migration for both countries of origin and countries of destination. The migration and development issue has expanded to include the challenges posed by brain drain and a new excitement over the potential of remittances, the complexities of circular migration, labour migration and migrants at different skill-levels.

A variety of policy areas in the social, economic and political sectors of both developing and developed countries need to be addressed, including transaction costs,

⁴⁵ In France the Directorate for French Nationals Abroad and Foreign Nationals in France was established in the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

transferability of pensions, legal status of migrant workers, family unit policies, immigrant integration, coordinated development policies.⁴⁶ Only on the basis of cooperation between countries of origin and of destination can these policy areas be addressed so as to make it possible to generate better data and thus a better basis for the decision-making process.

Any discussions of migration and development should seek to systematically assess and effectively address the social, economic and demographic costs and benefits of migration. While some countries have information available on persons who are left behind (particularly family members), little is known of their situation throughout the migration process. For instance, it is not known whether and, if so how, when and in what circumstances children and women, or vulnerable persons are left behind, and whether they suffer or benefit from migration.

The relationship between migration and development, especially the impact of remittances on the economies of developing countries, invites growing interest and debate. Migrants are considered potential agents of development, able to reinforce the cooperation between home and host countries through the transfer of skills and the development of transnational economic networks.

Even if an important need for more and improved data and research in the area of migration and development remains to be met, it can nevertheless be agreed that well-informed policies by governments and the private sector can manage migration to enhance its benefits for development for all concerned.

⁴⁶ For a further assessment of the role of the different areas see also, Kathleen Newland: "Migration as a Factor in Development and Poverty Reduction", Migration Policy Institute, June 1, 2003.