XIX. THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS) AND MIGRATION

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

A. INTRODUCTION

At first sight, international migration, despite its growing scope and magnitude, does not feature prominently in the original framework of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The relationship between migration and the Millennium Development Goals has not been widely explored, although both the migration and development communities have become increasingly aware of the link between international migration and development, and official United Nations documents and reports on the MDGs have started to reflect this shift.

Integrating migration into development policy agendas is taking on a new importance in many countries. Several Governments of states that are primarily countries of destination for migrants, such as the United Kingdom, Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands, have started to move in this direction. Similarly, more and more Governments of countries of origin are establishing policies to strengthen the involvement of their diasporas in national development processes.

The link between migration and development is now on the agendas of many actors in the field of international development cooperation, such as the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and of national development agencies like the UK Department for International Development (DfID) and the German Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ). The UN General Assembly has adopted a resolution on International Migration and Development, in which it requested the Secretary-General to report on its implementation to the 59th session of the General Assembly. Furthermore, it decided that in 2006 the General Assembly will devote a high-level dialogue to international migration and development during its 61st session.

However, the coherent and comprehensive integration of international migration in the development agenda of donors, or in strategic development policy frameworks such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs)[1], Country Strategy Papers[2] or Common Country Assessments (CCAs)/ United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs)[3], is still lacking. While some of these reports hint at problems experienced in relation to international migration, for example the loss of qualified human resources or the lack of adequate labour migration management capacity, very few mention the

Diseases), Goal 7 (Environmental Sustainability), and Goal 8 (Creation of Global Partnerships for Development).

B. MIGRATION AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The United Nations "Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration" mentions migration only as one of the causes of the worsening global malaria problem, and migrants as "victims of discrimination, racism and intolerance".[4]

Furthermore, the Road Map states that strategies for moving forward to achieving the MDGs include: "continuing United Nations work to provide technical advice and training and to lead dialogue on specific policies dealing with migration issues and their implications."[5]

Migration is also only briefly mentioned in some of the Millennium Project Interim Task Force Reports, where it is noted mainly for its potentially negative impact on development. Health-related reports, for instance, stress that the brain drain of health professionals impacts negatively on the health situation of the population as well as on the general development situation in countries of origin.[6] In the report on improving the lives of slum dwellers (Task Force 8), migration is described as a phenomenon that needs to be understood in order to achieve the MDG targets in this regard.[7]

Some of the more recent Task Force reports of the UN Millennium Project do contain references to migration with respect to the specific issue areas they address. Some highlight the relevance of taking into account migration-related questions, such as the report of the Task Force on Trade and Development, which stresses the importance of a multilateral trading system, leading, inter alia, to a further liberalization of services, including the temporary movement of people.[8] Other reports mostly focus on potential challenges migration presents to development efforts, such as the report of the Task Force on Health, which deals extensively with the negative impacts of the emigration of health workers from developing countries and the ensuing human resource shortages.[9]

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Target 2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

Inter-linkages between Goal 1 and migration

Migration can be either the cause or the effect of poverty.[12] Likewise poverty might be reduced or amplified by migration. The inter-linkages are as complex as the individual migrants' situations.

Most migrants do not belong to the poorest of the poor, but are individuals who have access to some resources. Empirical evidence demonstrates that an increase in international migration can be positively linked to a decline in the number of people living in poverty (Adams and Page, 2003). On the other hand, one of the issues of growing concern for many countries is the outflow of professionals at a rate faster than they can be replaced, resulting in a shortage of skills. This depletion of the human resource base can present a challenge to development efforts in some countries, potentially contributing to impoverishment.

Nonetheless, the emigration of skilled professionals can also have positive repercussions on the development of countries of origin and eventually turn into a "brain gain". This has been the case, for example, in some Asian countries, where diasporas have helped to foster economic development and establish close economic and political linkages between countries of origin and of destination (Skeldon, 2002). According to the report by the United Kingdom House of Commons, this positive impact depends upon the extent of remittances by the migrants, on the skills they acquire whilst overseas, and on whether they eventually return to their home country (House of Commons International Development Committee, 2004). The most notable areas in which migrants are seen to engage in the development of their countries of origin are outlined below.

Remittances

The most direct link between migration and poverty reduction is through remittances—the funds migrants send home. According to the World Bank, remittances increased by more than 20 per cent from 2001 to 2003, reaching an estimated US $93 billion in 2003 (World Bank, 2004), a figure that does not include the large share of remittances that is transferred through informal channels and therefore goes unrecorded (Puri and Ritzema, 1999). Remittances remain the second-largest financial flow to developing countries after foreign direct investment, more than double the size of net official finance (World Bank, 2004).

Remittances help to reduce poverty by providing families in the countries of origin with additional income. This can be used mainly for consumption, or may enable families to make necessary investments in education and health. Often, remittances thereby assume the function of a social safety net. But remittances are also used to finance community projects such as hospitals and schools, or they are invested in business ventures, particularly in countries with a sound economic environment (Ratha, 2003). A recent study found that "on average, a 10 per cent increase in the share of international remittances in a country's GDP will lead to a 1.6 per cent decline in the share of people living in poverty (Adams, and Page, 2003)."

It is well established that remittances are an important source of finance for developing countries. Remittances transferred to low income countries are generally considered to be a stable flow of income, which, studies have shown, can even increase in times of hardship (Ratha, 2003). In 2003, for 36 countries, the amounts of remittances were greater than both official and private flows (World Bank, 2004). Remittances therefore constitute an important source of foreign exchange, enabling a country to acquire vital imports or to pay off external debts. Remittances, according to the World Bank, can have a

positive effect on macro-economic growth to the extent that they are used to finance health and education expenses (World Bank, 2004). But even when remittances are directed exclusively towards consumption, they generate multiplier effects, especially in poor countries with high unemployment (Ratha, 2003).

Beyond their positive effect on consumption and their potentially long-term development effects, two other characteristics enhance the value of remittances as an important resource for poverty reduction. Remittances are largely unaffected by political or financial crises and violent conflicts, and even tend to increase in terms of hardship. Secondly, remittances are more equally spread among developing countries than other capital flows (Ratha, 2003).

Skills and knowledge transfer

Migrant communities abroad are not just a source of remittances. In addition to their financial engagement, diasporas can help to foster innovation, learning processes, and even political change in the countries of origin. Closer contacts and close coordination with diasporas helps the home countries to benefit from the non-financial resources that their diasporas may bring. This can lead to increased

Indicators:

- Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education
- Ratio of literate women to men among 15-24-year-olds
- Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector
- Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament

Inter-linkages between Goal 3 and migration

The MDGs mirror the Millennium Declaration's commitment to gender equality. Gender equality is seen not only a goal in its own right, but an essential ingredient for achieving all the other MDGs. Applying a gender perspective across the whole range of MDGs is crucial for the achievement of all the MDGs.

The link between gender equality and migration is twofold: on the one hand migration can contribute to the empowerment of women, and thereby help promote gender equality (International Organization for Migration, 2002a). On the other hand, particular migration situations can pose a challenge to achieving gender equality.

About half of the world's migrants today are women; in 2000, about 49 per cent of the world's migrants were women, up from 46.6 per cent in 1960 (Zlotnik, 2003). Although women have migrated in large numbers for the past fifty years, this fact has only recently caught the attention of scholars and policy makers. At the same time, women are assuming an increasingly significant role within the migration process.

Instead of moving to follow their husbands or families as "dependants", more and more women migrate independently or as heads of families themselves (International Organization for Migration, 2003). While this type of migration can help to empower women with greater independence and autonomy and help eliminate gender disparities by increasing the proportion of women in paid employment situations, one of the targets identified in Goal 3.

It is not only the money earned but also heightened self-esteem associated with employment, education and knowledge that can make female migrants more powerful in their host and home community. As stated in a recent report for the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, "Migration of women within and from developing countries affects the development process itself for those countries (Martin, 2004)." The survival and coping skills they develop during the migration process can and should be tapped as potential sources of cha

women migrants in the host country. In addition, as women and foreigners, migrant women often face double discrimination in the labour market, and their access to employment, social and health programmes can be more limited. Legally, many migrant women are vulnerable if their legal residence is dependent upon a relationship with a citizen or a "primary migrant" (Martin, 2004).

3. *Health*[15]

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Target 7: To have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Target 8: To have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

Inter-linkages between Goal 6 and migration

Three out of the eight MDGs aim to improve global health in order to reduce poverty.[16] Goal 6 aims to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. Migration is linked to the attainment of Goal 6 in two ways:

First, during their journey as well as upon arrival in their countries of destinations, migrants are particularly vulnerable to health risks, and their situation has to be taken specifically into account by public health programmes (International Organization for Migration, 2002b). This is especially important since migration can contribute to the spread of infectious and other communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Failure to address the health of migrants during the various phases of migration will hinder successful integration and can hamper effective reconstruction in the case of post-conflict or post-emergency situations (International Organization for Migration, 2003).

Second, the emigration of health workers from developing countries has become a major impediment to the functioning of the healthcare systems of some countries. This issue needs to be addressed jointly by countries of origin and countries of destination.
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governments, non-governmental or inter-governmental organizations. With such large migration flows taking place between developing countries, this can be particularly significant.

Individual and public health in countries of origin

The emigration of health professionals from developing countries can impact on the public health situation and seriously impede the delivery of health services and the standard of education. Developing countries that invest in education and professional training in the health care sector may be indirectly supporting the health sector of developed countries if their newly trained health professionals are employed abroad in countries providing higher pay and better working conditions.

One way to help address these challenges is through mobilizing diasporas to temporarily return to countries of origin to work and take up training assignments in the health sector as well as in other professional sectors.

Countering brain drain of health workers by mobilizing diaspora resources for temporary return is one important means for re-building the health infrastructure and the availability of human resources for health in developing countries. International organizations, such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Health Organization (WHO) or the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)[17] are concentrating their research and operational activities in this area. Projects in developing countries can involve temporary labour assignments of members of diasporas for training and education purposes.

4. *Sustainable development*

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

Targets within this goal include:

Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources.

Target 10: To halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Indicators to achieve this target are:
   a)   the proportion of the population with access to an improved water source, urban and rural
   b)   the proportion of the population with access to improved sanitation, urban and rural.

Target 11: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers. An indicators of progress towards this target is:
   a.)   the proportion of households with access to secure tenure (owned or rented).

Inter-linkages between migration and Goal 7

Ensuring environmental sustainability becomes especially challenging in the context of internally displaced persons and refugees as well as in the case of migration to urban areas.

2002). Camps are set up to accommodate refugees and internally displaced persons with their direct safety being the most important concern. Considerations about the impact of the camps on local ecosystems certainly are of less immediate importance. However, the depletion and deterioration of the areas in which camps are located is a critical problem in the medium to longer term. The high demand for wood in order to build shelters and to cook food, for example, can leave local populations with immense ecological challenges after the completion of humanitarian operations.

In addition, to build an infrastructure that can support a certain quantity of persons with access to safe water and sanitation is a challenge in itself. But safe water is a prerequisite to prevent the outbreak and spread of epidemics and diseases.[18]

On the other hand, environmental degradation can also be the cause, rather than the effect, of the migration of a large number of people, for example in the case of environmental catastrophes, land degradation and drought. But not all movement in this regard is unplanned. Large-scale resettlement schemes can also result in huge numbers of the population being uprooted.

Slum dwellers

The second linkage between Goal 7 and migration is the target to reduce the number of city slum dwellers.

Migration, both internal and international, to urban centres is not a new phenomenon, but the

Migration will continue to be a major source for urban growth, especially in developing countries. Migration to urban areas does not inevitably have to be a destructive force, nor does it necessarily lead to the formation or growth of dangerous and unhealthy slum areas. The term "slum" covers a variety of different scenarios including so-called informal settlements. Some studies suggest that some forms of informal settlements can be seen as signs of a vital and to a certain extent "successful" and thriving city. Slum areas are sometimes viewed as areas in transition, which ease the integration process of migrants (Mumtaz, 2001).

5. *Global partnerships*

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development

Target 12: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system.

Target 18: In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications.

Inter-linkages between Goal 8 and migration

The opening up of trading and financial systems has an impact on migration in two major areas.

First, the issue of transfer costs for remittances and the establishment of legal channels for the transfer of these financial flows need urgently to be considered in the development of a non-discriminatory and predictable financing system (target 12). Transfer costs for migrants' remittances amount to up to 20 per cent of the transferred money (Newland, 2003).[20]

Second, in the international trading system, there has been substantial liberalization of trade in goods, capital and some services. But liberalization of the movement of persons, to provide services pursuant to Mode 4 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services, has not kept pace. For many developing countries the liberalization of trade such as under Mode 4 movement, is seen as an important contribution to the economies of their countries and the employment opportunities of their nationals. Some studies suggest that increased movement of service providers also increases the flow of foreign direct investment. This is the case in India, where the government has facilitated investing and trading in the country of origin for members of the Indian diaspora.[21]

Furthermore, Target 18 concerns close co-operation with the private sector to make available benefits of new technologies. This can be done through networks that facilitate market access in both low- and high-income countries. Diasporas are often found to be important agents linking private and public sector in host and home countries. Their networks can be "the basis of business partnerships, trade, and flows of investment" (House of Commons International Development Committee, 2004).

Often, members of diasporas have accumulated the necessary knowledge to establish and manage their own enterprises and are conversant with the culture and business of both their countries of origin and of destination. Thus they can contribute to private sector development in their home countries by either establishing their own business, or through investments, the provision of training or the transfer of knowledge to countries of origin. Due to their contacts with potential business partners in destination countries, they can establish a link between companies and facilitate trade.

The potential for development through global diaspora networks and transnationalism is only starting to be understood. In close co-operation the private sector, as well as sending and receiving countries, can achieve a global partnership that has the potential to successfully work towards achieving the MDGs.

At the regional level consultative processes on migration are considering migration and development in their discussions as a necessary element in international migration management. In the Americas the issue of remittances has been included in the programmes of action of the South American Conference on Migration (Lima Declaration). Participants in the Regional Conference on Migration in North America (Puebla Process) are equally considering issues pertaining to migration and development.

In Africa, the Migration Dialogue for Western Africa and the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa seek to tap the potential of respective diasporas to contribute to development processes in the countries of origin. The 2001 programme of action of the New Partnership for Africa's Development maps out strategies "utilizing the know-how and skills of Africans in the diaspora for the development of Africa." It envisions promoting networking and collaboration between experts in the country of origin and those in the diaspora.

Asian countries have included the issue of remittances in the programme of action of the Manila Process.

In the context of the Western Mediterranean Cooperation Process ("5+5 Dialogue"), one of the topics discussed by the Ministers of the ten participating countries, in October 2003 in Rabat, was migration and co-development including the necessity to facilitate the involvement of migrants in the economic development of their region of origin (investment aid, know-how transfer aid, migrants' reintegration support)".

C. Conclusion

The inter-linkages between migration and the MDGs are complex and the impact of migration on development can be both positive and negative. Most of the linkages identified above have the potential to challenge and to support the achievement of the MDGs at the same time. These complexities need to be taken into account when formulating strategies to further the achievement of the MDGs.

Notes

[1] PRSPs are prepared through a participatory process involving domestic stakeholders as well as external development partners, including the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Updated every three years with annual progress reports, PRSPs describe the country's macroeconomic, structural and social policies and programmes over a three-year or longer horizon to promote broad-based growth and reduce poverty, as well as associated external financing needs and major sources of financing.

[2] Country Strategy Papers describe the European Union's assistance strategy for a specific country.

[3] CCAs are the common instrument of the United Nations system to analyse the national development situation and identify key development issues. The UNDAF is based on the CCA and is the common strategic framework for the operational activities of the United Nations system at the country level.

[4] United Nations, Fifty-sixth session, Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit: Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, Report of the Secretary-General (06 September, 2001), http://www.un.org/documents/ga/docs/56/a56326.pdf, accessed on 15 November 2004.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Millennium Project Task Force 5 Working Group on Access to Essential Medicines, Interim Report of Task Force 5 Working Group on Access to Essential Medicines (February 2004), http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/tf5ateminterim.pdf, accessed on 15 November 2004.

[7] Millennium Project Task Force 8 on Improving the Lives of the Slum Dwellers, Interim Report of the Task Force 8 on Improving the Lives of Slum Dwellers (February 2004). http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/tf8interim.pdf, accessed on 15 November 2004.

[8] Report "*Trade and Development*" of the Task Force on Trade, January 2005, is available as a *provisional draft* at http://unmp.forumone.com/eng_task_force/TradeEbook.pdf.

[9] Report "*Prescription for healthy development: increasing access to medicines*" of the Task Force on HIV/AIDS, Malaria, TB and Access To Essential Medicines, Working Group on Access to Essential Medicines, 2005, available at http://unmp.forumone.com/eng_task_force/essentialmedicines/TF5-medicines-Complete.pdf.

[10] The country reports are prepared to regularly monitor and report on the progress made in achieving the MDGs. For a list of country reports prepared to date see http://www.undp.org/mdg/countryreports.html, accessed on 15 November 2004.

[11] Ibid.

[12] For an in depth discussion of these relationships, see: Skeldon (2002).

[13] For more information see http://www.ficci.com/ficci/index.htm, accessed on 16 November 2004.

[14] "Gender" is commonly used to describe the roles and responsibilities of women and men that are determined iTJc.9oɪ̩J-dr

International Migration International and internal migration and their inter-linkages",
http://www.migrationdrc.org/projects/theme2/sub-theme5.html, accessed on 15 November 2004.

[20] See also this paper's section on remittances under Goal 1, Poverty Reduction and Migration.

[21] See also this paper's section on diasporas and Foreign Direct Investment under Goal 1, Poverty Reduction and Migration.

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