



International Migration

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Measuring migration's economic and social
impacts: Core indicators and methodological
considerations

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My objective

- Draw out some lessons about trying to measure the impact of international migration on development
- Take most of my thoughts from our recent project with the Global Development Network – *Development on the Move*
- Large global research project measuring migration's development impacts and developing policy responses.
- Ambitious – multi-million dollar, multi year, multi partner (all continents), multi-disciplinary (including new data gathering and analysis – data to match the statue of liberty!)
- Note: Thank you to large number of people who collaborated on this work, including Frank Laczko



Outline

1. Thinking about development – what do we mean?
2. Thinking about migration – how does it affect development?
3. Measuring migration's development impacts – our considerations
4. Measuring migration's development impacts – our approach
5. Some reflections



How does migration affect development?

Our research shows six 'channels' of impact:

3 direct channels:

- (1) emigration
- (2) immigration
- (3) return

3 indirect channels:

- (4) remittances
- (5) other diaspora activities and transfers
- (6) changing incentives

Measuring migration's development impacts: our considerations

- The analysis already set out can be applied to all projects. But what did we do?
- Development on the Move's approach was shaped by three main considerations, which then shaped our indicators and methodology. These were:

1. *Viewing development as expansion of capabilities.* This meant looking across a broad range of impacts.

2. *Wanting to be policy relevant.* This reinforced the need to look at a range of aspects of development. It also led us towards nationally representative work.

3. *Wanting to isolate impacts.* Going beyond correlation to causation meant doing a range of things, principally gathering the right kind of data and analysing it in the right kind of ways

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International Panel of Origin Research

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Measuring migration's development impacts – our approach

The impacts we are interested in include impacts



Our methodological tools included:

- Nationally representative household survey
 - Thousands of households screened
 - Targeted immigrants, recent emigrants + returnees
 - Households without migrants also included
 - 1100 – 1500 households given full interview
 - 178 questions
 - Included opinion questions
- Stakeholder interviews
- Literature and data review
- Policy audit
- Workshops



To start to understand causality we have data on households with migrants and those without. However, comparing these two groups to understand migration's impacts is complicated by two issues:

1. The possibility of reverse causality (e.g. migration not causing increased income, but increased income increasing the possibility of migrating)
2. Self-selection (comparisons between migrants and non-migrants not being valid, because migrants might be different to non migrants).



Area of impact	Impact's nature + 'level'	Data gathered
Economic	Poverty of the migrant	Questions to returned migrants and absent migrant proxy about change in living standards
	Poverty of the household	Questions about household expenditure today; about assets now and five years ago
Education	Education level of the migrant	Questions to absent migrant proxy and returned migrant about qualifications gained abroad , and to returned migrant about purpose of qualifications and other useful skills gained .
	Education level of household	Questions about expenditure on education , highest levels of qualifications gained and whether children are currently attending school



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Some reflections

- Definitely worth doing nationally representative work with quantitative data – valued by policymakers and allows you to open up new terrain
- Bespoke surveys also have their advantages – sampling strategies and questions to suit your purpose
- Isolating impacts – and understanding causality – isn't easy. It's about minimising problems, not solving them
- We should have done more with our other methods – chance to do this more effectively in follow on work