

Migration and Development: Research and Policies

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Capacities to Enhance the Benefits
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Structure of presentation

- Key messages
- Migration and development- knowledge gaps
- Research capacity in developing countries
- From research to policy
- Role of international agencies
- Elements of good practice

Key messages

- Migration and development linkages – still a large agenda for research
- Research capacity in developing countries: limited and fragmented.
- We should avoid one-sided research partnerships, particularly North-South.
- Better impact of support is mostly at national and subregional levels.
- South-South cooperation holds promise & should be promoted.
- International agencies should coordinate and cooperate to avoid duplication and overlap.

Call for research on migration and development

Number of recent international initiatives call for more and better research on this issue.

- ILO Resolution on Migrant Workers, 2004 and the Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration
 - Development of a global knowledge base
- International Agenda for Migration Management (IAMM): Berne Initiative
- Global Commission on International Migration
- Report of the UN Secretary-General for High level dialogue
- World Bank, Global Economic Prospects 2006.

« We are only beginning to learn how to make migration work more consistently for development. Each of us holds a piece of the migration puzzle, but none has the whole picture. It is time to start putting it together. »

Source: UN Secretary-General's report on International migration and development for the UN High Level Dialogue

Gaps in knowledge

- Linkages between migration and poverty alleviation
- Remittances: utilisation and development impact
- Skilled migration: numbers, profiles, gender issues, and treatment
- Return migration and circulation – numbers, profiles, reintegration patterns, contributions
- Transnational communities- locations, composition, networks, forms of contribution.
- Link between treatment of migrant workers and benefits from migration

Migration research in developing countries: institutions

- Scattered over public and private sector
 - A few specialised research institutes
 - Population/demographic research institutes
 - General socioeconomic research institutes
 - Government agencies: Labour studies institutes or special migration agencies/cells
 - NGO research
 - Individual researchers
- Limited regional or subregional networks

Problems in developing country research

- Governments and policy makers accord low priority to migration research.
- Resource constraints: staff, research facilities, etc. Overloading of good researchers.
- Dependence: some research driven by funders and donors.
- Some partnerships yield limited benefits. Expensive expatriate researchers and main benefits to foreign collaborators.
- Lack of sustainability in TC projects.
- Poor dissemination of results and lack of local debates: elitism
- Limited generation of new knowledge; ‘recycling’
- Doctoring of results to suit policy makers
- Limited use of results for policy

Examples of good practice

- ILO - pioneering research on development impact of migration and role of remittances in Asia: late 80s and early 90s.
- Bangladesh- Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit: active programme of research, training and networking (SamRen) on migration
- Scalabrini Migration Centre, Manila: publishes the only specialised migration journal in region- Asia Pacific migration Journal and Asian migration news (electronic news); Pionering study on *Unauthorised migration in Southeast Asia*
- Binod Khadria; Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi—study on *Migration of knowledge workers: Second generation effects of India's brain drain: a major contribution to the debate on the diaspora.*
- ILO/IOM/Ministry of Labour Thailand migration policy development project: three major research centres in Thailand cooperated to conduct industry case studies to document role of migrants.
- Asian Research Centre for Migration (Bangkok) – inter-country project on Thai workers abroad
- NGO research for advocacy and empowerment: Asian Migrant Centre (Hong Kong) and Migrant Forum Asia (MFA) - flagship publication- Asian Migration Yearbook.

Migration Research Networks

- National networks
 - Philippine migration research network
- Regional networks
 - Asia Pacific Migration Research Network, Australia.
 - Migrant Forum for Asia (Manila): NGO coordinating body.
- Subregional
 - Southern Africa Migration Programme (SAMP)
 - South Asia Migration Resource Network (SAMRen) – Dhaka, Bangladesh- focal point RMMRU.
 - Japan Institute of Labour Policy and Training (JILPT) Migration and the Labour Market in Asia Network (Tokyo) – Southeast and East Asia,.

Criteria for effective North-South research partnerships

- Mutual trust and shared decision making
- National ownership
- Emphasis on getting research findings into policy and practice
- Development of national research capacity.
 - (based on Costello & Alimuddin, BMJ, 2000)
- Swiss Commission for Research Partnership with Developing Countries, 1998: Detailed guidelines and checklist.

ILO initiatives in promoting policy research

- Technical cooperation programmes:
 - Asian Regional programme on International Labour Migration, 1986-93 covering 14 countries
 - Informal Network on Foreign Labour in Central and Eastern Europe-1996/2000
 - Migration and development in Africa: West Africa, East Africa and Magreb – EU-supported- 2004/06.
 - ILO-IOM- UNHCR research on displaced Afghan population: contributions to Afghan development involving a network of local researchers and institutes based on field research
 - West Africa: Migration and development 2003/04
- Major research areas.
 - Labour market impact of migration; Remittances; Statistics; Migration policies; Migration and development; Free movement and regional integration; contribution of refugees to host economies
- Mechanisms
 - Use of local researchers; involvement of social partners and civil society; national & subregional meetings to disseminate results locally; inter-agency collaboration.; networking

ILO: lessons learnt

- There is a trade off between delivery and quality in short duration projects
- Difficulty in identifying good researchers: risk of 'cut-and-paste' research outputs.
- Difficulties in quality control due to centralised backstopping from Geneva
- Meetings: workshops and training seminars
 - Limited control over quality of participation; Participants rarely share or disseminate information on return.
- Political and personnel changes in countries have made some research less relevant
- Local ownership, reliance on local researchers and institutes crucial to ensure sustainability and cost effectiveness.
- Time-bound TC projects cannot sustain networks: local or partner commitment crucial

From research to policy

- Inadequate utilisation of research for policy a common problem, especially in migration field.
 - How to judge direct impact and indirect impacts; time frame
- Direct use of research by policy makers limited.
 - No linear relation between research and policy.
 - Lack of interest by policy makers and/or researchers
 - Migration policy largely multidisciplinary & complex.
 - Policy makers need quick results & make quick decisions.
- Political context and public opinion quite important in policy making:
 - research can influence policy through influencing public opinion.

Ensuring stronger links between policy and research

- Basing research on assessment of information needs of policy makers; regular dialogue
- When research is directly commissioned by policy makers.
- Good rapport and trust between policy makers and researchers
- Quick response to official requests
- Research should be problem-oriented and phased over time with interim outputs
- Appropriate modes of dissemination
 - Involve stakeholders for lobbying and advocacy
 - Different formats to suit target audience: policy makers, media
 - Innovative/friendly formats and packaging to influence public opinion and thereby policy

Good practice criteria for migration research centres

- Broad-based & multidisciplinary
- Demonstrated quality and relevance of research
- Effective dissemination of results locally
- Combine research with training & networking and exchange arrangements.
- Externalities: training of trainers.
- Autonomy and independence and transparency in research activity
- Research agendas based on national priorities.

Role of international agencies/donors

- Minimise inter-agency duplication and promote synergy in assisting developing countries.
- Support national & subregional research networks which can have more impact and sustainability.
- Support workshops and conferences in source countries involving all stakeholders whenever possible.
- Promote circulation and exchanges of developing country researchers within developing countries & with North.
- Support to develop centres of excellence on selected issues.
- Promote true partnerships, South- South & North-South.
- Ensure sustainability by support to institutional building, training and capacity building.
- Work with Governments to give priority to and commit more resources to migration research.

Role of international agencies -2

- Improve global knowledge base and share it with developing countries
- Facilitate linkages between countries of origin and destination
- Support primary data generation in source countries
- Mobilise resources to promote migration research in developing countries
- Produce training manuals, standards, and codes of practice in cooperation: e.g.
 - ILO Multilateral framework on labour migration
 - OSCE/IOM/ILO Handbook on Labour Migration