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Globalization and interdependence

International migration and development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In resolution 63/225, the General Assembly decided to hold a high-level dialogue on international migration and development during its sixty-eighth session. In resolution 65/170, the Assembly invited relevant organizations to contribute to the report of the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General was also requested to report on the effects of migration on economic and social development in countries of origin and destination (A/67/219).

The introduction to the present report provides a broad overview of progress made in addressing migration challenges since 2006, the year of the first High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. It also proposes some key issues to be taken up by the high-level dialogue to be held in 2013.

Section II summarizes global migration trends based on the latest available evidence, highlights recent migration flows and discusses the role of migration in future population change. Section III discusses multidimensional aspects of migration and development, with a specific focus on the impact of migration on global development.

Section IV presents lessons learned by the United Nations system as well as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in promoting the benefits of migration for social and economic development, providing a coherent inter-agency response to migration and applying relevant international standards and norms.

Section V proposes eight concrete measures for follow-up to the High-level Dialogue.

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I. Introduction

1. Since 2006, we have made real progress in understanding how the world's 232 million international migrants affect the development of their countries of origin and destination. We have implemented various policies that recognize their contributions and protect them from exploitation. Now it is time to act more systematically and responsibly, ensuring an age- and gender-sensitive and rights-based approach to international migration.

2. We know migration reduces poverty on an extraordinary scale. When they move, some migrants multiply their income and double the school enrolment rates of their children. The monies they send to family members back home help them attend school, pay for medical care and equip houses with water and electricity. Formal remittance flows to developing countries alone grew to $401 billion last year. Migrants play an important role in the global economy, helping meet critical needs for skills and labour. Destination countries rely on them to fill gaps in the labour market at all levels and to open up new markets.

3. In 2013, nearly every country is affected by migration. No society can consider its future without factoring in the effects of human mobility. Yet too often men and women cannot adequately pursue opportunities for decent work and a better life, the skills and credentials of migrants go unrecognized and companies and households cannot employ the workers they need.

4. Too few channels exist for legal migration. The human rights of migrants, therefore, are compromised. Millions travel, live and work outside the protection of laws. As a result, those who exploit migrants — smugglers and traffickers, unscrupulous recruiters and corrupt employers — are empowered. We must begin building an adaptable system of international migration that responds to the realities of the twenty-first century.

5. Seven years ago, at the first High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, we took the historic step of creating the Global Forum on Migration and Development. Today, the Forum has become indispensable: it attracts more than 150 States annually and fosters a common understanding of migration.

6. Once-divisive topics, such as the human rights of migrants and irregular migration, have become integrated into our discussions. Civil society, too, has contributed to and benefited from the Forum, allowing it to be a more unified and effective force for change.

7. Meanwhile, the Global Migration Group has brought together 15 United Nations entities and the International Organization for Migration to coordinate their migration-related work. Since the first High-level Dialogue, IOM has seen an expansion of its membership, activities and reach, building a stronger partnership with the United Nations entities dealing with migration. In that collaborative environment, the Global Migration Group is building evidence to understand and articulate the links between migration and development, while also promoting international human rights, refugee and labour law standards.

8. More and more, States confront a similar set of challenges; almost all, in fact, are simultaneously countries of origin, transit and destination. Increasingly they understand that overcoming those challenges requires collaboration. Consequently, views have begun to converge, creating greater potential for common action.

9. Meaningful international cooperation is already evident. Remittance fees have been nearly halved. New norms are being established: the Domestic Workers Convention will help protect some of the most vulnerable migrants. Many countries, meanwhile, are beginning to integrate migration into their development strategies.

10. In 2013, the High-level Dialogue must deliberate on an action-oriented agenda to create a safer, more transparent system of international mobility that protects migrant rights, serves shared economic interests, fosters cohesive multicultural societies, addresses public anxieties about migration and views migrants as vital members of our communities.

11. Progress must be made at all levels. A truly dynamic system of human mobility requires policymakers across all sectors of government to work collaboratively to address migration challenges.

12. Equally, migration's development impact must be harnessed. Migration has been instrumental in achieving many of the Millennium Development Goals. Now is the time for Member States to consider making migration and migrants an explicit part of the post-2015 development agenda.

13. The post-2015 agenda also could aim to eliminate discrimination against migrants, particularly with respect to wages and access to education and health care; end the scourge of human trafficking; increase the share of migrants working at the higher skill levels; and lower the proportion of migrants lacking residency rights. In addition, we must strengthen the engagement of diasporas as development partners.

14. There is no single response that will allow us to solve the problems and seize the opportunities related to migration. We need practical solutions that yield tangible results.

15. In 2012, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration and Development launched an initiative to address the plight of migrants affected by civil conflicts or natural and man-made disasters. The conflict in Libya — when hundreds of thousands of vulnerable migrants found themselves stranded in a conflict-ridden country — prompted his efforts. This is a problem for which real, practical solutions can be found. His initiative serves as a model for how we can move forward in addressing other challenges.

16. I urge Member States to come to the High-level Dialogue prepared to engage in a vigorous debate on the problems and opportunities related to migration. There is no need to agree on every aspect of migration in order to settle on priorities for collaborative action. Creative and effective solutions to common challenges can eventually become global standards.

17. We are on the threshold of a new era of international cooperation on migration. The High-level Dialogue is our chance to cross over it. The eight-point agenda at the end of the present report proposes concrete steps towards a better future both for migrants and for communities.

II. Migration trends

18. Migration continues to increase in scope, complexity and impact. Demographic transition, economic growth and the recent financial crisis are reshaping the face of migration. At the heart of this phenomenon are human beings

in search of decent work and a better or safer life. Across the globe, millions are able to move, live and work in safety and dignity. Yet others are compelled to move owing to poverty, violence and conflict, or environmental changes, and many face exploitation, abuse and other human rights violations along the way.

19. Changes in global production coupled with the globalization of labour markets continue to drive the international movement of labour. In some countries, population ageing adds to labour demands that cannot be met locally. For growing numbers of young people, migration represents the only viable strategy to find gainful employment.

20. Innovations in transportation and technology allow people to migrate with greater frequency over greater distances. With mobility becoming an affordable option for most of the world's citizens, circular migration, return migration and short-term mobility by individuals increasingly complement long-term settlement by families. The result is a more fluid, diverse and nuanced reality, where traditional categorizations and simple dichotomies are increasingly outdated.

A. The global migrant population today

21. Today, the world hosts an estimated 232 million international migrants,[1] of whom 59 per cent are living in the developed regions.[2] Of this number, 48 per cent are women. Between 2000 and 2013, the estimated number of international migrants in the global North increased by 32 million, while the migrant population in the global South grew by around 25 million.[3]

22. In 2013, international migrants account for nearly 11 per cent of the total population of developed regions — up from less than 9 per cent in 2000 — compared to less than 2 per cent in the developing regions (see map 1). From 2000 to 2013, the migrant population residing and originating in the global South (South-South migration) increased by almost 23 million persons, while the migrant population residing in the global North but originating in the global South (South-North migration) increased by more than 24 million persons.

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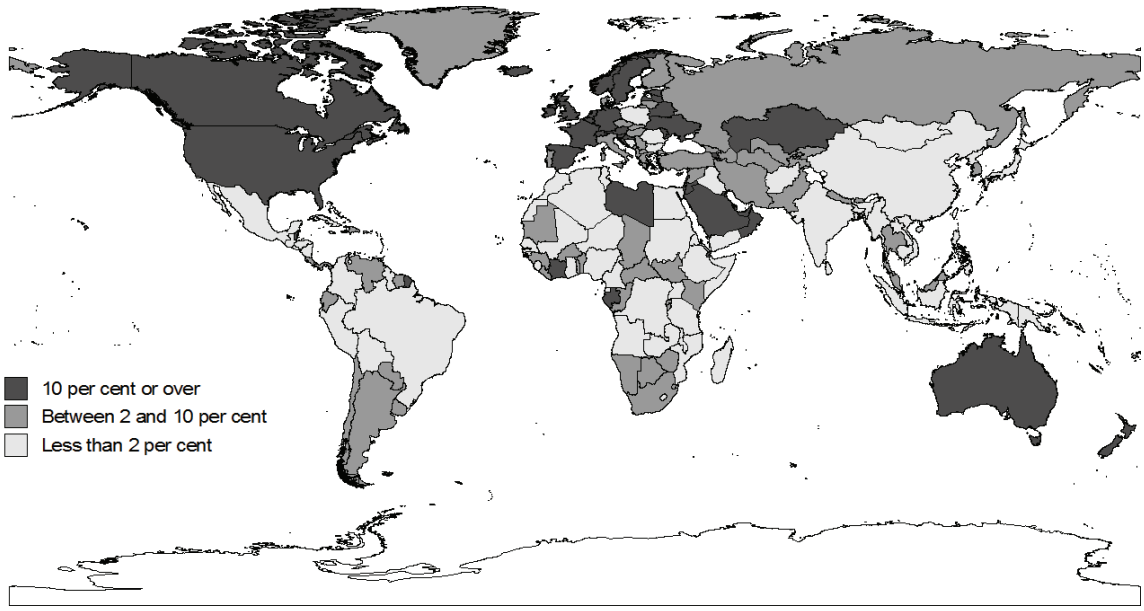
[1] "International migrants" are persons living outside their country of birth or citizenship.

[2] Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, Trends in international migrant stock: the 2013 revision (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Rev.2013) (forthcoming).

[3] The distinction between developed and developing regions is used for statistical convenience and does not reflect a judgement regarding the developmental stage of a particular country or area. The terms "global North" and "global South" are used synonymously with "developed" and "developing" regions.

Map 1
Share of international migrants in total population



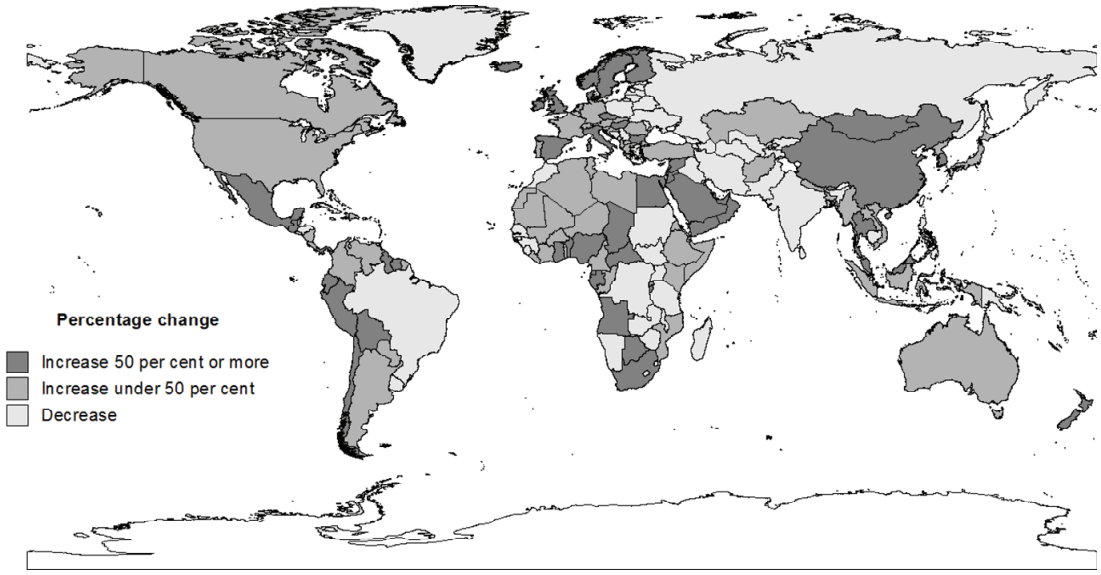
Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, Trends in international migrant stock: the 2013 revision (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Rev.2013) (forthcoming).

23. From 2000 to 2013, Asia gained some 20 million international migrants, a 41 per cent increase, adding more migrants during that period than any other major area. As a result, Asia is on track to overtake Europe as the major area hosting the largest number of international migrants in the near future.

24. Over two thirds of the growth in migrant stock that took place in Asia during the period 2000-2013 occurred in Western Asia, growing from 19 to more than 33 million due to the demand for contract workers in the oil producing countries. South-Eastern Asia, which includes rapidly growing economies such as Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, also witnessed a sharp increase in the number of international migrants from 2000 to 2013 (see map 2).

25. From 2000 to 2009, the global migrant stock increased by around 4.6 million per year, more than double the annual increase during the preceding decade (2 million). During the first decade of the twenty-first century, Asia recorded the largest increase in the number of international migrants (1.7 million per year), followed by Europe (1.3 million per year) and Northern America (1.1 million per year). Asia also experienced the largest increase as a region of origin: the global migrant stock originating from Asia increased by 2.4 million per year, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (1.0 million), Africa (0.6 million) and Europe (0.5 million).

Map 2
Change in the international migrant stock, 2000-2013



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, Trends in international migrant stock: the 2013 revision (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Rev.2013) (forthcoming).

26. From 2010 to 2013, the increase in the number of international migrants slowed to around 3.6 million per year. During that period, Europe gained the largest number (1.1 million per year), followed by Asia (1.0 million) and Northern America (0.6 million). In Africa, the migrant stock recorded an annual increase of 0.5 million despite a sharp drop in the number of refugees.

27. Globally, the proportion of female migrants has remained relatively stable, moving from 49.1 per cent in 2000 to 48.0 per cent in 2013. From 2000 to 2013, in Australia and New Zealand, Northern America, South America and Western Europe, the percentage of female migrants increased, owing in part to the longer life expectancy of women. In contrast, the share of female migrants in Africa dropped from 47.2 to 45.9 per cent, while in Asia the proportion of female migrants fell from 45.4 to 41.6 per cent during the same period, owing to the increasing demand for manual labour.

28. The number of international migrants under age 20 increased from 30.9 million in 2000 to 34.9 million in 2013. All of that increase took place in the developing countries. As a result, the global share of young migrants hosted in the developing world rose from 56 per cent in 2000 to 62 per cent in 2013. From 2000 to 2013, Asia added the largest number of young migrants — nearly 3.1 million. In contrast, Northern America saw the number of international migrants under age 20 decline by 0.6 million during the same period. In 2013, the proportion of migrants under age 20 among all migrants was highest in Africa (30 per cent) followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (24 per cent).

29. According to the *Global Education Digest* produced yearly by the Institute of Statistics of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

(UNESCO), some 3.6 million tertiary students were studying outside their country of birth in 2010, a 29 per cent increase compared to 2007. While Northern America and Europe continued to host the majority of international students in 2010, patterns of international student mobility have become more diversified, with growing shares of foreign students studying in Asia and Oceania. The rise in students studying abroad reflects the globalization of tertiary education and the mobility of the highly educated.

30. Since 2000, the number of refugees worldwide has remained relatively stable at around 15.7 million. The share of refugees hosted by developing countries, however, rose from 80 per cent 10 years ago to more than 87 per cent in 2012. The conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic gave rise to an estimated 1.5 million registered refugees as at July 2013.[4] The continued presence of large, protracted refugee situations is a stark reminder that crossing international borders is not optional but rather the only viable alternative for millions of people.

31. Environmental factors can be important drivers of migration, although currently they are normally not the sole reason for people to move. Those who cross international borders for such reasons do not enjoy the international protection afforded to refugees. Policies that address migration in the context of environmental change can help people escape situations of vulnerability and build more resilient communities. As such, migration can serve as an important adaptation strategy for communities vulnerable to the effects of climate change and environmental degradation.[5]

32. By its very nature, figures on irregular migration are difficult to obtain. In the United States of America, one of the few countries providing regularly updated information, the number of international migrants without a regular legal status is estimated at more than 11 million.[6] Other countries with 500,000 or more migrants in an irregular situation include Italy, Malaysia, Thailand and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

B. Recent migration flows to selected countries[7]

33. In 2011, the number of long-term migrants arriving in countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reached 3.8 million persons, similar to the levels of 2009 and 2010, but 13 per cent below the peak of 4.4 million in 2007. While the number of foreigners arriving in Southern Europe has dropped drastically since 2007, immigration levels in most OECD countries have seen little fluctuation, suggesting that while the economic and financial crisis has affected flows to some countries, underlying drivers such as

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[4] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "Inter-agency regional response for Syrian refugees — Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey — 27 June-3 July 2013". Available from reliefweb.int.

[5] United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Government Office for Science, *Foresight: Migration and Global Environmental Change* (London, 2011).

[6] J. Passel and D. Cohn, "Unauthorized immigrants: 11.1 million in 2011" (Washington, D.C., Pew Research Hispanic Center, 2012).

[7] Geographic coverage of this analysis is limited owing to the paucity of data on migration flows.

migration policy, migrant networks and demographic change continue to shape migration.[8]

34. The economic and financial crisis had a strong impact on the outflow of citizens from the most affected countries. From 2007 to 2011, the outflow of citizens from Greece and Spain to European and other OECD destination countries more than doubled, while the number of citizens leaving Ireland increased by 80 per cent.

35. Family reunification remains the dominant administrative category for immigrants entering OECD countries.[9] In 2011, more than 1.3 million immigrants arrived as family members, about a third of the total inflow. The second largest group of immigrants to OECD countries, almost 1 million persons or 25 per cent of the total in 2011, were those who moved under free movement regimes — principally, between countries of the European Union — and who could thus not be classified by the primary purpose of migration. About one sixth of all immigrants to OECD countries — some 680,000 persons — entered for employment purposes. Those workers were accompanied by almost 290,000 family members in 2011. In the past five years, around 300,000 persons were admitted annually to OECD countries as refugees or for other humanitarian reasons, or around 7 per cent of total arrivals.

36. The largest migration flows between developing countries are found in Asia, most notably between South and South-Eastern Asia and countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In 2010 alone, Asian countries issued about 2.2 million labour permits, up from 1.5 million in 2005. The vast majority of those workers were destined for Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. At the same time, countries in South-Eastern Asia, such as Malaysia and Thailand, have gained importance as destinations for labour migrants.

37. The main countries of origin of Asian labour migrants are the Philippines, India and Indonesia. While in the Philippines the annual number of labour permits issued increased from about 600,000 in 2000 to more than 900,000 in 2010, India and Indonesia became major sending countries only after 2004, peaking in 2008 with more than 800,000 citizens from each country leaving annually. Labour migrants from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan are predominantly male and mostly headed towards the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, whereas migrant workers from Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka are mostly female and work in a more diverse range of countries.

C. Migration and future population change

38. In developed regions, net migration plays an increasingly significant role in maintaining population growth. From 1990 to 2000, net migration surpassed natural increase as the main driver of population growth, a trend that continues today. From 2020 to 2030 onwards, the balance of births minus deaths in developed regions is projected to be negative. Net migration, though not sufficient to counter population decline, will nonetheless contribute to slowing the rate of decrease.

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[8] OECD, *International Migration Outlook 2013*.

[9] Many immigrants who initially enter under family reunification programmes join the labour market.

39. From 2000 to 2010, developing regions added some 775 million persons through natural increase, while losing 35 million persons owing to net emigration. Although developing regions will continue to experience net emigration, its impact on population size will be small for the foreseeable future.

40. In developed regions, the number of people aged 15-64 peaked in 2010 and could decline by 43 million by 2030. At the same time, the working-age population of developing regions is projected to increase by almost 1 billion from 2010 to 2030. Those demographic contrasts will remain an important driver for migration in the decades to come.

41. Net migration is projected to contribute to delaying the effects of population ageing in developed regions. Yet the dependency ratio (the dependent-age population, under age 20 or over age 65, divided by the working-age population, ages 20 to 64) is projected to increase in developed regions over the next decades despite the inflow of migrants.

III. Impact of migration on development

42. Migration affects migrants and non-migrants alike, in countries of origin, transit and destination. Some effects are felt directly at the household level, others by communities or national economies. Notwithstanding high levels of unemployment in some countries, both developing and developed countries need foreign workers with different skill sets to address critical shortages in their labour markets.

43. The contributions of migrant and diaspora communities are increasingly recognized in countries of destination and origin in the form of remittances, innovation, trade and investment, and through the transfer of technology, skills and knowledge. Developments in information and communication technology have enabled migrants to strengthen ties to their homelands.

A. Impacts on countries of destination

44. A recent OECD study found that international migrants contributed more in taxes and social contributions than they received in individual benefits. Because of their lower wages, the foreign-born contributed less in taxes than the native-born; however, they also received less in benefits.[8]

45. Immigration tends to have little effect on the wages and employment of the general population in a destination country. Nevertheless, it can reduce wages and employment opportunities for low-skilled native-born workers or earlier immigrants if new immigrants become substitutes for similarly low-skilled workers.

46. Evidence suggests that international migration narrowed wage inequality in Canada owing to the country's large proportion of highly skilled immigrants.[10]

[10] A. Aydemir and G. Borjas, "Comparative analysis of the labor market impact of international migration: Canada, Mexico and the United States", National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper No. 12327 (Washington, D.C., 2006).

From 1990 to 2006, immigration to the United States had at most a modest negative long-run effect on the real wages of the least educated native-born workers.[11]

47. Migrants from Nicaragua had a positive impact on average earnings in Costa Rica; earnings in sectors with the highest concentration of migrants, namely domestic service, construction and agriculture, increased faster than earnings in other industries.[12] Conversely, migrant workers in Malaysia had a small but measurable negative impact on real manufacturing wages.[13]

48. A common misperception is that every job taken by an immigrant is one fewer for a native-born worker. A recent study including 14 OECD destination countries and 74 origin countries for the period from 1980 to 2005 demonstrated that immigration increases employment one for one, implying no crowding-out of native-born workers.[14] Immigration tends to increase total economic output: by increasing domestic demand for goods and services, migrants create jobs. In the United States, for example, it was found that immigrants contributed 32 per cent of GDP growth in the period from 2000 to 2007.[15]

49. Migrants also contribute as entrepreneurs, starting businesses and employing others. In OECD countries, entrepreneurship was found to be slightly higher among immigrants than among native-born, albeit with marked variations by country of origin and destination, and over time. From 1998 to 2008, foreign-born self-employed owners of small or medium-sized firms created, on average, between 1.4 and 2.1 additional jobs.[16]

50. Immigrants represent an important and growing force for innovation and entrepreneurship, especially in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Since 1975, patents obtained in the United States by persons of Chinese and Indian descent increased from less than 2 per cent to 9 per cent and 6 per cent, respectively, while patents registered by inventors of European descent fell from 90 per cent to 76 per cent.[17]

B. Impacts on countries of origin

Labour markets

51. Over the past 10 years, the number of highly skilled migrants — such as graduate students, professionals, doctors, information technology experts, entrepreneurs or investors — has grown steadily, as education and skills levels have

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[11] G.I.P. Ottaviano and G. Peri, "Rethinking the effects of immigration on wages", National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper No. 12497 (Washington, D.C., 2012).

[12] T. H. Gindling, "South-South migration: the impact of Nicaraguan immigrants on earnings, inequality and poverty in Costa Rica", *World Development*, vol. 37, No. 1 (January 2004).

[13] P. Athukorala and E.S. Devadason, "The impact of foreign labor on host country wages: the experience of a Southern host, Malaysia", *World Development*, vol. 40, No. 8 (August 2012).

[14] F. Ortega and G. Peri, "The causes and effects of international labor mobility: evidence from OECD countries 1980-2005", United Nations Development Programme Human Development Research Paper 2009/06 (April 2009).

[15] R. Puentes et al., "Towards an assessment of migration, development and human rights links: conceptual framework and new strategic indicators", Peoples' Global Action on Migration, Development, and Human Rights, IV Global Forum (Mexico City, November 2010).

[16] OECD, *International Migration Outlook 2011*.

[17] W. Kerr, "U.S. high-skilled immigration, innovation, and entrepreneurship: empirical approaches and evidence", World Intellectual Property Organization conference paper (2013).

increased and the global competition for human capital has intensified. Recent evidence also shows substantial migration of talented and educated people between developing countries.

52. The negative effects of emigration of the highly skilled, the so-called "brain drain" has been well documented, with the loss of human capital affecting the provision of basic services, draining fiscal resources and reducing economic growth in some contexts. Small developing countries with relatively few professionals are particularly affected by the emigration of highly skilled workers. Emigration of teachers and health-care workers has weakened service delivery in some countries.

53. Emigration may also induce upward pressure on wages and reduce unemployment or underemployment in origin countries, especially in times of high joblessness and economic stagnation. For example, emigration of Mexicans to the United States from 1970 to 2000 may have caused an 8 per cent increase in nominal wages in Mexico.[18]

Diaspora, knowledge transfer and social remittances

54. Diaspora communities can play a role in creating markets for products manufactured in their countries of origin. For instance, entrepreneurs born in the Republic of Korea helped introduce cars and electronics built in the Republic of Korea into the United States. Similarly, a Canadian-based study found that a doubling of skilled migration from Asia coincided with a 74 per cent increase in Asian imports to Canada.[19]

55. Diaspora networks have long been conduits for the transmission of knowledge, information and know-how from destination to origin. Researchers, scientists and technology experts living abroad may lead to a "brain gain" in their home countries if the prospect of migration encourages individuals to improve their education and skills in anticipation of a potential move.[20]

56. Migrants who have become successful entrepreneurs in their destination countries play an important role in flows of foreign direct investment (FDI). Diaspora communities can be both a direct source of FDI and effective intermediaries to channel FDI towards home countries.

57. Several countries have developed policies and programmes to encourage diaspora populations to make greater financial investments in their homelands. Strategies include providing access to information regarding investment opportunities, facilitating connections with homeland business networks and investing in public infrastructure in support of FDI projects. In India, for instance, initiatives have included providing taxation privileges to expatriates using Indian

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[18] P. Mishra, "Emigration and wages in source countries: evidence from Mexico", *Journal of Development Economics*, vol. 82, No. 1 (January 2007).

[19] K. Head and J. Ries, "Immigration and trade creation: econometric evidence from Canada", *Canadian Journal of Economics*, vol. 31, No. 1 (1998); R. E. B. Lucas, "Diaspora and development: highly skilled migrants from East Asia", prepared for the World Bank (2001).

[20] See, for example: B. Xiang, "Towards sustainable 'brain circulation': what India and China can learn from each other", International Conference on Population and Development in Asia (2006); and C. Wescott, "Promoting exchanges through diasporas", Group of 20 workshop on Demographic Challenges and Migration (2005).

banks for their savings, organizing an annual conference of expatriates and the establishment of a separate ministry to formalize its interaction with the diaspora.

58. In China, a long-standing policy encourages the return of highly skilled emigrants and promotes ties between expatriates and the homeland.[21] In some developing countries, migrants who return from abroad are more likely to become entrepreneurs compared to non-migrants owing in part to human capital and savings acquired overseas.

59. Countries of origin also benefit from the ideas, attitudes and behaviours of returning migrants. Social remittances can have an impact in creating a more conducive environment for development initiatives at home. For example, the Indian diaspora has had an effect in improving efficiencies in the homeland bureaucracy and facilitating economic reforms.[21]

Remittances

60. Transnational communities can have positive developmental impacts on their homelands, especially through financial transfers. In 2012, recorded remittances to developing countries reached an all-time high of $401 billion.[22] India, China, the Philippines and Mexico, in descending order, are the largest recipients of migrant remittances; smaller countries, such as Tajikistan, Liberia, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho and the Republic of Moldova, also in descending order, receive the most as a share of gross domestic product.

61. Remittances to developing countries declined by 4.8 per cent in 2009 during the financial crisis, after growing by 16.5 and 22.9 per cent in the two previous years. They recovered quickly, however, and are expected to grow by an annual average of 8.8 per cent for the next three years, reaching $515 billion in 2015.[22]

62. While the global costs of transferring remittances decreased from 2008 to 2010, that trend has halted and reversed since then, with the global average remaining at about 9 per cent.[23] This finding suggests that the commitment to reduce the transfer costs of remittances from 10 per cent to 5 per cent over five years — the "5 by 5" objective, adopted first by the Group of Eight in 2009 and reaffirmed by the Group of 20 in 2011 — requires renewed emphasis. Factors contributing to high remittance costs in some corridors include insufficient competition, lack of transparency and regulatory obstacles.

63. Remittances augment the income of households and are often spent on basic subsistence needs, such as food, housing and clothing, and on durable goods. Remittances are also used to pay for health and education, directly improving human capital. Remittances that are spent or invested in countries of origin help generate income and employment. Remittances per se, however, are not sufficient to ensure investment and savings by remittance-receiving households: the financial environment in countries of origin must be hospitable to investment, and migrants must be able to trust the government and institutions.

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[21] D. Kapur, "Ideas and economic reforms in India: the role of international migration and the Indian diaspora", *India Review*, vol. 3, No. 4 (October 2004).

[22] World Bank, Migration and Remittances Unit, Development Prospects Group, "Migration and development brief 20". Available from worldbank.org.

[23] World Bank, "Remittance prices worldwide", No. 5 (March 2013). Available from remittanceprices.worldbank.org.

64. Remittances are private financial flows and should not be conflated with official development assistance. Given the selectivity of migration and uneven distribution of remittances, only certain communities, families or individuals may benefit.

C. Impacts on children and families

65. Children are affected by migration in various ways: as migrants themselves, by staying behind in countries of origin or by being born to migrant parents in countries of destination. An increasing number of children and adolescents are migrating in search of improved standards of living, family reunification, education and safety.

66. Although migration can be an empowering experience, young people are particularly vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse during all stages of migration. Unaccompanied and separated children are at particular risk. Children in the context of irregular migration face numerous challenges, including detention, deportation (of themselves or their parents) and lack of access to basic rights and services, such as birth registration, education, health care and housing.

67. In countries of origin, migration can be an enabler of the empowerment of girls and of gender equality — for example, by increasing girls' enrolment in school — primarily as a result of remittances sent home. Migration can also reinforce existing gender inequalities, however, if, in the absence of one or both parents, girls and boys are forced to assume responsibilities as primary caregiver or breadwinner, which may lead to children dropping out of school. Adolescents are particularly susceptible to emotional and psychosocial problems associated with parental separation.

68. In situations in which migrants lose contact with their families, the strains of family separation are not compensated by the financial gains of remittances or other benefits accruing from migration.[24] Migration also affects older persons who remain behind. By taking over childcare and household responsibilities, the elderly make it possible for younger family members to seek employment abroad.

IV. Towards a global policy agenda

69. There is a growing consensus that migration is an integral feature of global development in the twenty-first century. Efforts should focus on facilitating international mobility, protecting and fulfilling the human rights of migrants and their families and creating regular, safe and orderly migration channels that reflect the realities of the labour market. While people have the right to leave and re-enter their own country, States have the sovereign right to regulate the entry and stay of foreigners on their territories.

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[24] United Nations Children's Fund, "Impact of migration on 'children left behind' in Tajikistan". Available from unicef.org/tajikistan/resources_18660.html.

A. Highlighting contributions of migration while affirming and protecting migrant rights

Assessment

70. All persons, without discrimination, must be able to exercise their fundamental human and labour rights. In practice, however, many migrants face barriers in exercising their human rights and accessing social protection and basic services.

71. Efforts to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of migrants are hindered by gaps in the regulation and facilitation of migration. Few States have adequate policy and legislative frameworks or trained personnel to facilitate regular migration and reduce the incidence of irregular migration. In situations in which regular migration channels fail to reflect labour market needs, migrants are more likely to engage in irregular movement. Migrants in an irregular situation face a greater risk of exploitation and abuse; they also tend to lack access to basic services and are at risk of detention.

72. Advances in understanding the multiple contributions of migration to development have not kept pace with public perceptions. Indeed, the notion that migration is an aberration from the norm, rather than an essential feature of development, is still widespread. In the aftermath of the global economic and financial crisis, anti-immigrant sentiments have in some cases fuelled discrimination and violence against migrants. There is a need for greater public awareness about the human rights of migrants and the contributions of migrants through their labour, skills, knowledge, ideas and values.

Recommendations

73. Member States should reaffirm the protection of the human rights of all migrants, taking into account age, gender and family considerations as well as specific vulnerabilities. To that end, States should ratify and implement the core international human rights and labour rights instruments, particularly those dedicated to protecting migrant workers, such as the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families of 1990 and the Convention concerning Migration for Employment (Revised 1949) (Convention No. 97), the Convention concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers (Convention No. 143) and the Domestic Workers Convention (Convention No. 189) of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Law enforcement and criminal justice responses to xenophobic acts and discrimination against migrants should be strengthened. All migrants should be free from cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment and have effective access to complaint mechanisms and judicial remedies.

74. Member States should seek to improve public understanding of migrant contributions to home and host societies and address misperceptions of migration. Such efforts could be reinforced through national action plans developed in collaboration with the private sector, the media and organizations representing migrants, employers and workers.

75. Some migrant groups face specific vulnerabilities and discrimination. Member States should guarantee access by children to all rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The best interests of the child should always take priority.

Detention of migrant children constitutes a violation of child rights. Female migrants should be protected against gender-based discrimination and violence at all stages of the migration process and in the workplace. Special attention should be given to migrant needs in the area of sexual and reproductive health.

76. Migrant workers, irrespective of their status, should be protected from abuse and exploitation in formal and informal labour markets. Vital steps include enforcing child labour laws, enabling migrant workers to change their employers after arrival in the destination country, ensuring equal treatment in terms of wages and working conditions, employing a system to recognize diplomas and competencies and regulating and monitoring recruitment agencies. The portability of social security benefits for migrants should be improved through bilateral or multilateral agreements.

77. States need to address the protection challenges that affect migrants having an irregular legal status, including access to health care, education, adequate housing and essential documents, such as birth registration for their children. Regularization should be considered for undocumented migrants who are well integrated or unable to return to their countries of origin, or when family members have different legal statuses. Opportunities for regular migration should be broadened, in particular for low-skilled migrant workers. States should seek alternatives to administrative detention of irregular migrants, especially children. In addition, States and other partners should disseminate information on the use of regular migration channels.

78. Comprehensive efforts against human trafficking and migrant smuggling should be continued, and programmes to assist smuggled migrants and trafficked persons should be reinforced. Persons forcibly displaced as a result of insecurity and conflict, or at risk of torture or persecution upon return, should receive protection from refoulement. Access by refugees to temporary labour migration schemes should be explored.

B. Strengthening the evidence base[25]

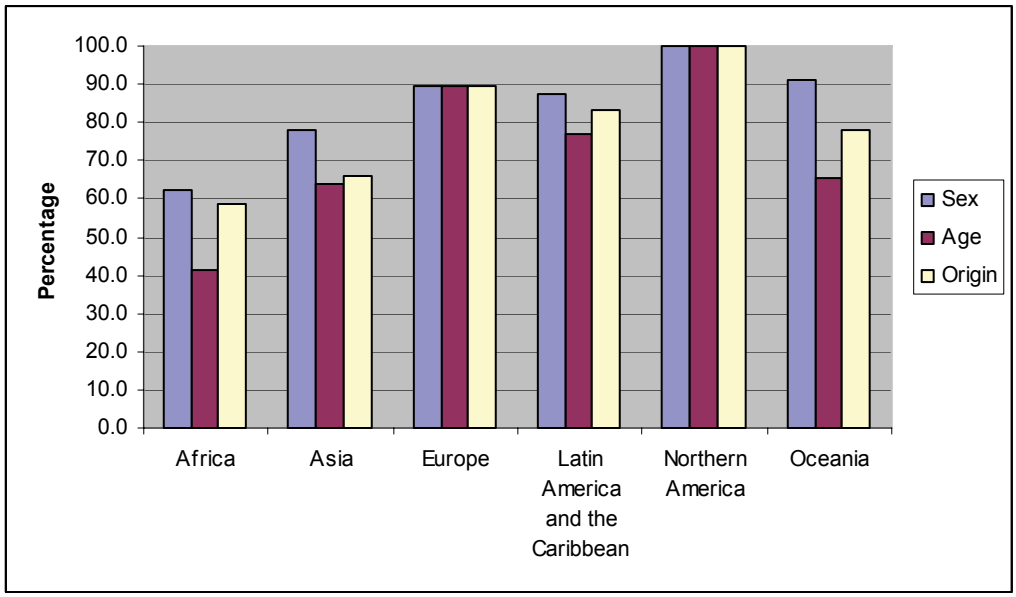
Assessment

79. In most developing countries, the population census is the primary official source for migration data, providing limited information on migrant stocks once every 10 years; however, censuses do not provide information on circular and temporary migration.

80. Since 1995, most countries (80 per cent) have reported the total number of female and male migrants residing within their borders for at least one point in time. Fewer countries (75 per cent) provide information on international migrants by country of birth or citizenship, and fewer still (around two thirds) report the age of migrants. Origin information is available for 66 per cent of countries in Asia and 59 per cent in Africa. Only 4 in 10 African countries provide information on the age of migrants (see figure 1).

[25] See resolution 2013/1 in *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2013, Supplement No. 5* (E/2013/25).

Figure 1
Percentage of countries for which core characteristics of immigrants are available



Source: United Nations (2013), *Trends in International Migrant Stock: the 2013 Revision* (forthcoming).

81. Effective policymaking requires detailed data on international migrant stocks and flows, legal status, education and skills, duration of stay and economic, social and legal integration. Information is also needed on occupational distributions, working conditions, wages, access to services and safety and health conditions. Particular challenges persist in collecting data on migrants having an irregular legal status. Human rights indicators relevant to migration are also urgently needed.

82. Better data would facilitate the assessment of labour market needs, social protection schemes, contributions of diaspora communities and the effects of migration and development initiatives. More can be done to strengthen the existing systems for data collection and analysis and to introduce new measures where required.

Recommendations

83. The High-level Dialogue to be held in 2013 should encourage sustained capacity development to generate and maintain timely and comparable migration data and improve relevant information systems. Such data should be collected in accordance with international standards of privacy and protection.

84. Population censuses should include key migration questions, such as country of birth, country of citizenship and year or period of arrival.[26] Cross-tabulations

[26] See also Center for Global Development, *Migrants Count: Five Steps toward Better Migration Data* (Washington D.C., 2009).

from the census should include variables such as age, sex and levels of education and skills.

85. Migration issues should be included, where feasible, in national labour force surveys, living standards measurement studies, multiple indicator cluster surveys and demographic and health surveys. If migration modules cannot be integrated into existing survey programmes, dedicated migration surveys may be needed.

86. Existing administrative data should be better exploited and standards for their compilation should be developed. Administrative sources useful for the study of migration include visa applications and decisions, labour permit data, asylum adjudication decisions and entry and exit systems. Those sources are particularly relevant in ascertaining the reasons for migration.

87. International cooperation, in particular the exchange of statistical information between countries of origin and destination, is essential for improving migration data. Diaspora profiles, for example, may be generated through the use of census and administrative data from major countries of destination.

C. Integrating migration into national development strategies and the post-2015 development agenda

Assessment

88. Few national development plans incorporate migration. Those that mention it tend to focus on immigration control, irregular migration and human trafficking, rather than also recognizing the benefits of migration for development. As a result, migration and development initiatives remain scattered, underfunded, lacking in national ownership and limited in scale and impact. The development potential of particular migrants groups, such as low- and semi-skilled workers, diasporas, returning migrants and refugees, is rarely recognized.

Recommendations

89. The High-level Dialogue offers an opportunity to present a convincing case about the development impacts of migration. Building on the momentum of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, migration should be integrated within the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda.

90. The inclusion of migration in national and subnational development strategies and plans, such as poverty reduction strategies and national adaptation programmes of action, should be promoted. Coherent labour migration and employment policies should allow for a more effective matching of labour supply and demand of both high- and low-skilled workers. That could include broadening opportunities for the temporary or permanent migration of low-skilled workers.

91. States should ensure mutual recognition of foreign qualifications, based on six UNESCO conventions and associated work on the recognition of qualifications. Origin and destination countries could create joint education programmes and curricula that reflect domestic and foreign labour market needs and provide information on overseas employment opportunities.

92. The regulatory framework for financial services should be improved in order to reduce remittance transfer costs, including in rural areas. Barriers to market entry, including exclusivity agreements and skewed incentive structures, should be tackled. Public-private partnerships could enhance the interoperability of remittance transfer services by banks, postal networks, telecommunications operators and microfinance institutions. New financial products, such as microinsurance, could be developed to meet the specific needs of migrants.

93. There is a need for greater cooperation between countries of origin and destination in leveraging diaspora contributions, including investment and trade. Tangible and sustained cooperation among relevant ministries, embassies, diaspora associations, development non-governmental organizations and the private sector can support diaspora groups. Diaspora communities can also play a constructive role in countries of origin through the temporary return of qualified nationals to assist in post-conflict situations and through out-of-country voting.

D. Strengthening dialogue, cooperation and coherence at all levels

Assessment

94. The General Assembly considers the issue of international migration and development and the protection of the human rights of migrants on a regular basis as part of its review of the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals. The Economic and Social Council considers such topics in its follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

95. The Global Forum on Migration and Development has promoted dialogue and cooperation on international migration in practical and action-oriented ways. It has debated sensitive issues, such as migrant rights and irregular migration, and initiated a constructive exchange of ideas with civil society. Despite the Forum's success overall, challenges remain in implementing its recommendations, ensuring its long-term sustainability and defining its relation with the United Nations.

96. The Global Migration Group has achieved greater inter-agency coordination and cooperation in the field of migration, advocated for the rights of migrants and made multiple contributions to the Global Forum on Migration and Development.

97. In 2013, the High-level Committee on Programmes of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination prepared a set of recommendations and outcomes for the High-level Dialogue. This initiative, co-led by the United Nations Population Fund and IOM, provided an inventory of lessons learned since 2006, remaining challenges and a joint vision for future action, and served as an important input to the present report.

98. Regional cooperation on migration has grown significantly in recent years. Regional economic communities have witnessed a renewed interest in implementing provisions for the free movement of labour and started to focus on the development impacts of migration. The European Union, for instance, has as one of its founding principles the free movement of its citizens and has developed standards for portability of health care and pensions. The Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) have also introduced measures to promote the free movement of their citizens.

99. Since the late 1980s, an array of informal regional consultative processes on migration has complemented regional economic integration mechanisms. While the priorities of regional consultative processes differ, ranging from controlling borders and combating migrant smuggling to facilitating labour mobility, most address migration and development issues. By building trust, enhancing understanding and exchanging information and good practices, the processes have contributed to migration policy development, practice and cooperation, and have promoted the convergence of policy perspectives in some regions.

100. Cooperation has also increased considerably at the bilateral level, mainly through labour agreements between countries of origin and destination. While such agreements provide a basis to regulate bilateral flows, reduce irregular movements and avoid excessive migration costs, provisions do not always meet international obligations, implementation remains uneven and monitoring responsibilities are sometimes unclear.

Recommendations

101. The High-level Dialogue should underline the crucial role of dialogue and cooperation on migration at the global, regional, bilateral, national and local levels, and promote the coherence of sectoral policies at the national level. Member States should use existing forums, including regional integration mechanisms and informal consultative processes, to promote multilateral cooperation. Regional and bilateral agreements should seek to protect the human rights of migrants, improve access to social protection, facilitate the recognition of diplomas and qualifications, support labour mobility and promote its development impact. Cooperation between bilateral, regional and global forums, the Global Forum on Migration and Development and the Global Migration Group should be enhanced.

102. The Global Forum on Migration and Development could engage the Global Migration Group more systematically in supporting its preparations and in implementing its recommendations. United Nations Resident Coordinators and United Nations country teams should be actively involved in mainstreaming migration into national development efforts through country-level programming, drawing on the expertise and capacities of Global Migration Group members and the broader United Nations system. The Global Migration Group also serves an important function in providing analysis and information on the international normative framework on migration, a role that could be further strengthened.

103. Civil society is a key partner to ensure implementation at the field level. States could develop a compact with the private sector and other civil society actors around selected common goals, such as reducing recruitment costs and addressing the social impacts of migration for vulnerable groups. Multi-stakeholder action is also a priority in addressing the situation of migrants affected by crises, with employers, recruiters, governments and relevant international organizations all having a role.

104. The voices of migrants should be brought to bear on major policy decisions. One option would be to create a permanent forum on migration and development, modelled on the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Such a forum would bring to the table advice and perspectives from leaders within the migrant community and raise public awareness and visibility of the issues.

E. Emerging issues

Assessment

105. The crisis in Libya in 2011 brought to light the plight of migrants stranded in dire humanitarian situations. Too often, migrants have been overlooked in humanitarian responses, as migration policies, including temporary labour migration schemes, do not make adequate provision for crisis events affecting migrant workers.

106. Environmental factors have long been known to affect migration, and vice versa, but the realities of climate change could give new meaning to that relationship. Migration could become an important mode of adaptation to the consequences of climate change.

107. Although most migration takes place regionally, including among developing countries, South-South migration has received comparatively little attention. At the same time, developing and least developed countries are often the least equipped to address migration concerns and leverage its benefits.

Recommendations

108. The High-level Dialogue should foster action on problems faced by stranded migrants, especially those caught in crises in host countries. States and humanitarian actors must ensure protection and assistance in such cases, including voluntary evacuation and reintegration as necessary. For migrants in distress at sea, improved cooperation agreements, particularly at the regional level, should be put in place to secure timely rescue, safe disembarkation and respect for human rights principles, in particular the principles of non-refoulement and of the best interests of the child.

109. As the impact on migration of climate change and environmental degradation — including both slow- and rapid-onset events — is becoming more evident, the High-level Dialogue could encourage Member States to integrate migration and migrants more systematically into disaster risk-reduction and national adaptation programmes of action, using the latest weather, climate and water information technology.

110. The High-level Dialogue should consider the impact of the rise in South-South migration for, inter alia, labour mobility and the engagement of diaspora communities.

V. Making migration work: an eight-point agenda for action

1. Protect the human rights of all migrants

111. Member States should be encouraged to ratify and implement all relevant international instruments related to international migration, including the core international human rights instruments, relevant ILO conventions, the protocols against human trafficking and migrant smuggling and the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Alternatives to the administrative detention of migrants should be explored, while the detention of migrant children should be avoided. Countries should eliminate all discrimination against migrants with regard to working

conditions and wages and with regard to fundamental economic, social and cultural rights. Migrant children should have equal access to education, and all migrants should have access to essential health services.

112. Member States should commit to protecting and promoting the human rights of migrants at all stages of the migration process, including migrants having an irregular legal status. Access to legal migration channels should be enhanced, reflecting actual and projected labour market needs while taking into account human capital requirements in countries of origin and facilitating family unity.

2. Reduce the costs of labour migration

113. There are enormous gains to be made by lowering costs related to migration, such as the transfer costs of remittances and fees paid to recruiters, especially by low-skilled migrant workers. In addition, countries can strengthen the benefits of migration by enhancing the portability of social security and other acquired rights, and by promoting the mutual recognition of diplomas, qualifications and skills.

3. Eliminate migrant exploitation, including human trafficking

114. Member States should commit to the elimination of all forms of exploitation affecting migrants, especially trafficking in persons and other forms of modern-day slavery. Areas of action include discouraging the demand that fosters human trafficking, ensuring the protection of victims, prosecuting offenders and ensuring that companies eliminate forced labour from their global supply chains.

4. Address the plight of stranded migrants

115. The plight of migrants unable to return to their country of origin as a result of humanitarian crises in their country of destination or transit has often been overlooked. Member States should strengthen their capacities to assist migrants and their families in crisis situations through better preparedness, expanded consular assistance and assisted voluntary evacuation, return and reintegration. Initiatives to create a framework for action to assist stranded migrants, bringing together Member States, international organizations, civil society and the private sector, should be supported.

5. Improve public perceptions of migrants

116. There is a need to combat discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance against migrants and their families by creating greater public awareness about the situations migrants experience and the contributions they make to countries of origin and destination. Such efforts could be promoted through a partnership of the private sector, labour unions, the media, educational institutions and migrants themselves, based on the latest available evidence and highlighting the rights and responsibilities of both migrants and non-migrants.

6. Integrate migration into the development agenda

117. Migration is a test of relevance for the development debate and of fair and effective governance, demanding coordinated action not only among States but at all levels of government. Member States should mainstream migration into national development plans, poverty reduction strategies and relevant sectoral policies and programmes. The international community should define a common set of targets and indicators to monitor the implementation of measures aimed at enhancing the benefits and addressing the challenges of international migration, for consideration in the framework of the post-2015 development agenda.

118. The preceding six action points can only be achieved by strengthening the evidence base, building national capacities and enhancing cooperation and partnerships.

7. Strengthen the migration evidence base

119. Member States should promote evidence-based policymaking and invest in data collection, research and capacity development with respect to migration and its impacts on individuals, communities and societies. The international community should create a dedicated capacity-building initiative to assist countries in improving the collection and use of migration data. The effort should include population censuses and administrative data sources as well as dedicated surveys for assessing the impacts of migration on social and economic development. The use of measurable targets and indicators for monitoring the protection of migrants and violations of their rights should be promoted.

8. Enhance migration partnerships and cooperation

120. No country can manage international migration alone. Stakeholders have developed many ideas for how governments, the private sector and civil society can build partnerships relating to mobility policies that reduce discrimination against migrants and protect their rights; lower the human, social and economic costs of migration; expand opportunities for migrants to invest their earnings more productively and share their knowledge; and enlist migrants and diaspora organizations in enhancing development in their communities of origin and destination.

121. Cooperation and dialogue on migration involving the United Nations, IOM and regional economic communities should be strengthened. The Global Forum on Migration and Development and regional consultative processes can be a useful complement to those formal intergovernmental mechanisms.