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**FOSTERING RESEARCH ON SOUTH-SOUTH MIGRATION AND HUMAN  
DEVELOPMENT<sup>1</sup>**

*African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Observatory on Migration*

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<sup>1</sup> The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

# THE AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC OBSERVATORY ON MIGRATION:

## FOSTERING RESEARCH ON SOUTH-SOUTH MIGRATION

### AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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## **A. INDICATORS OF THE EFFECTS OF SOUTH-SOUTH MIGRATION ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN ACP COUNTRIES**

The African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States Secretariat acknowledges that mobility contributes to improving people's capabilities and to expanding individual choices for achievement of better life standards through poverty reduction and improvement of education and health. It has recommended that policy and institutional coherence can be achieved by creating an overarching global consensus on mobility that views the phenomenon as a livelihood strategy. The main objective is to create a human mobility framework in which the benefits of South-South mobility outweigh the costs. Thus, the question is whether there is scope for significant improvements in policies and institutions to make migration processes a positive sum game for development. This would be possible by capturing the large unrealized gains and unmet needs that are easily achievable (UNDP, 2009).

Mobility can achieve its full potential for development if some prerequisites related to fundamental freedoms of humans are fulfilled, including those related to freedom of movement (Gallina, 2010). Building on these recommendations, researching the impact of South-South migration on development is becoming a core objective for the ACP Observatory on Migration. To ensure the assessment, monitoring and follow up of such impacts, the Observatory took the initiative of establishing a set of indicators building on existing research and findings on the migration and development nexus.

Human mobility has long been considered an essential strategy for improving individual wellbeing. It can be adopted to cope with changing life conditions threatening human survival, be it from nature or humans themselves. Many people also move to better their living conditions. Nowadays, unequal distribution of opportunities and wealth mixed with large demographic discrepancies are considered to be key drivers to migration. Demography, along with the migration intentions of youth, is a key component of migration potential due to its impact on labour supply within a country. Although most developing countries host growing and disproportionately youthful populations, disparities of wealth and pressure on resources could become push factors for mobility between these countries. Moreover, the skill structure (e.g. distribution by level of education) of population and the labour market needs can be determinant.

Although growing discrepancies between richer and poorer countries have contributed to an increase in migration to developed countries, most people who move do so within the borders of their own country or within the region. Three out of four migrants in the world are internal migrants and nearly 70 per cent of international migrants in sub-Saharan Africa move within the region (Ratha and Shaw, 2007; UNDP, 2009). In 2010, only one in three international migrants moved from a developing to a developed country and almost as many migrants from developing countries resided in another developing country (UN, 2010). This means that the South-South aspect of human mobility is worth researching in a dedicated research programme.

### *1. Positive Impacts*

Sound research has proven that migrant workers gain substantially from mobility in terms of income increase. Financial remittances can boost incomes of households at origin countries and can help reduce poverty. However, the impact of mobility is not limited to opportunities to improve income. Indeed, broader measures of well being such as education, health and empowerment can be scrutinized for the impact of mobility. However, impacts are either direct or indirect, simple or composite and an exhaustive list can not be established. Therefore, the focus

will be on those indicators that measure the impact on the most disadvantaged population groups, acting through a multiplication mechanism while spending less effort and costs. This can lead to politically feasible and efficient reforms on the access and treatment processes. Background research for the UNDP Human Development Report of 2009 finds that in general, migrants are more likely to improve their health and education levels than those that stay in the origin country. Moreover, human mobility often leads to transfer of considerable human and social capital and a flows of ideas and values that can impact on the cultural and political development of origin societies.

## 2. *Negative Impacts*

Migration does not always have positive impacts, at least over the short term. The potential gains described above are not guaranteed for every single migrant. At the community and national level, the evidence of the impact of mobility is also more mixed. Migration is often prompted by unexpected emergencies (such as conflict or climate-related factors), forcing people who would have otherwise stayed put to migrate under dangerous or unpredictable conditions. Migrants who move under these circumstances can end up worse off as a result of integration challenges, lack of knowledge of new social and working environments, trafficking or conflicts. This can also happen to migrants who move voluntarily, especially those who do not carefully prepare their migration project or are misinformed and have unrealistic expectations linked to migration.

The few studies available indicate that the impact from remittances in the South-South context of mobility can be expected to be smaller than from South-North movements. Financial transfers often hide the financial costs of moving and the losses in quality of life for those who are remitting large parts of their savings sometimes detrimental to their livelihood in the host countries. Migrants and their family members experience unequal access to education and health care services and treatment due to inadequate integration policies and/or their status as irregular or forced migrants. Moreover, the poorest, usually not being able to move, are subject to adverse effects of remittances such as high prices and increasing inequalities.

## 3. *Indicators: drawing on existing experiences*

At present, there is no commonly accepted list of indicators on the impacts of migration on development. The Observatory aims to build on existing leading theoretical and empirical frameworks attempting to determine the mechanisms of this nexus largely researched in the literature. The main types of indicators will be studied at the micro and macro levels using survey and census data, together with information from existing national and international databases.

As one of the Consortium members<sup>i</sup> and also a member of the *Academic Advisory Board* of the ACP Observatory, the Institute for Public Policy Research (ippr) developed an innovative approach to measure the impact of international migration on development. The research project *Development on the Move: Measuring and Optimizing the Economic and Social Impacts of Migration* carried out by ippr in partnership with the Global Development Network (GDN) created a new methodology for assessing migration's impacts. It gathered comparable data on a wide range of developmental effects of migration (both economic and social) thus presenting a new framework for mapping these impacts. Data was gathered on existing evidence on this diverse range of impacts and complemented with two additional types of new data – information collected from stakeholder interviews and nationally-representative household surveys.

The project suggested that migration can influence social and economic development across eight key dimensions: economic impacts, educational impacts, health impacts, gender impacts, wider social impacts, governance impacts, environmental sustainability and disaster relief. It described various mechanisms through which impacts can occur and surveyed the possible implications of each (Chappell and Sriskandarajah, 2007). The project also considered non-economic factors impacting development in countries of origin by using a combination of different research methods for its impact analysis, including a cross country regression analysis, a household survey roster and specific household questions.

Based on a review of existing data and information and national consultations between policymakers, researchers and civil society representatives, the topic of studying the impact of South-South migration on human development has been identified as a research priority in most of the 12 pilot countries of the ACP Observatory. Based on the demand by governments, academia and civil society, impact studies will be carried out under the lead of ippr, starting in Tanzania and Cameroon, followed by a comparative study of Papua New Guinea and Trinidad and Tobago, and then later the Democratic Republic of Congo and Haiti.

According to the objectives of the ACP Observatory, a significant focus of these studies will be to build research capacity in the targeted countries. This will be done primarily through the commissioning of the study to be led by in-country teams, and supported by mentors, core staff and expert advisers within a 'twinning approach'. These efforts will be particularly valuable because migration issues have often not been a focus in the ACP countries and, consequently, there is much to be gained from working to build research capacity in this area

For this purpose, the existing ippr impacts inventory will be used and developed further as the basis for the list of indicators to be included as a statistical annex for the studies to be conducted. Additional indicators can focus on human rights, forced migration, trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants and additional impacts of diaspora engagement (Newland, 2010; Puentes et al., 2010). Some concrete examples can include the following:

- Economic indicators such as the impact on capital markets, on sectors such as tourism and trade;
- Social impact indicators with regard to the effects on children, the elderly and other family members staying behind, but also social effects on migrants and their family members in the host country;
- Governance indicators, e.g. the number of civil society associations and non-governmental organizations active in the country and directed and/or funded by immigrants or emigrants; number, nature and costs of actions undertaken for the benefits of the community;
- Advocacy in countries of origin and destination by diasporas, diaspora volunteering impacting on medical care, teaching, training and relief work;
- The influence of diaspora philanthropists on reconstruction in the aftermath of conflicts or natural disasters (Newland, 2010; Puentes et al., 2010).

## **B. PLANNED CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES OF THE ACP OBSERVATORY ON MIGRATION**

The ACP Observatory on Migration is mandated with addressing the capacity building needs of ACP Member States and Regional bodies in relation to data management, collection, storage and analysis to harmonize data management practices and data sharing in ACP countries and provide the necessary information for evidence-based policies. The capacity building activities are planned around the need for improved data management, thematic priorities defined by national consultation process and the sustainability of the ACP Observatory's networks.

The ACP Observatory Capacity Building workshops are organized as follows:

### 2011-Data Collection

- Training Workshop I: ACP Migration data collection (thematic focus on Diaspora and Remittances), data collection, storage and analysis software;
- Training Workshop II: Labour Migration, Cross Border Migration, Irregular Migration (Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons), Gender and Human Rights;
- Training Workshop III: Migration and Environment, Displacement, Internal Migration (Urbanization), Migration and Health.

The above workshops are inter-regional workshops intended to train resource persons for national follow-ups along the lines defined as thematic priorities by the ACP Observatory pilot countries.

### 2012-Data Analysis-Policy Development

- Training Workshop IV: Inter-regional workshop in data analysis for policy development;
- Training Workshops V to XIX: National follow-up policy development workshops.

National workshops in 2012 will be based on the data collected and the research conducted by the ACP Observatory in pilot countries. This will allow for targeted, impact-oriented workshops.

### 2013- Project Cycle Management

Training workshops in 2013 will focus on making research networks sustainable through project management trainings. The networks will be working closely with the ACP Observatory during the course of the project, this experience will be cemented through training events which will teach them project development, donor relations, calls for proposals, etc. all with the aim of making the ACP Observatory on Migration a lasting institution.

The Training workshops are the opportunity for creating synergies with expert agencies in the United Nations system, universities, civil society organizations and migration experts by and large with an interest in ACP-specific migration management trainings. Synergies are an opportunity to diversify the knowledge base available to training recipients in the ACP Observatory pilot countries. It is also an opportunity to revisit previously developed training modules and materials in a South-South light.

Agencies and institutions will also be promoted through the ACP Observatory on Migration's website through an online compendium of training manuals, toolkits, guidebooks and other training material pertaining to migration and to development issued by various agencies and representing the various aspects related to migration management and its capacity building needs.

### **C. PLANNED RESEARCH ON SOUTH-SOUTH MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACP OBSERVATORY ON MIGRATION**

A review of existing data and research by the ACP Observatory on Migration has been synthesized into national and regional migration and development overviews as well as a Compendium of existing studies. These tools have been made available online for broad consultation and dissemination.<sup>ii</sup> Based on these identified migration and development information gaps, national level consultations among policymakers, researchers and civil society representatives have taken place in the 12 pilot countries.<sup>iii</sup> These country meetings have allowed deriving priorities for research on South-South migration and development in the 12 ACP pilot countries and six regions.<sup>iv</sup> Based on these priority needs, a Plan of Action for the studies to be commissioned by the ACP Observatory until early 2013 has been developed.

The broad research topics include the following:

- The impact of South-South migration on human development;
- Enhancing South-South remittances;
- Diaspora mapping;
- South-South labour migration;
- The impact of internal migration on development;
- Forced migration as a consequence of natural disasters;
- Irregular migration in ACP countries, including trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants;
- The environment, climate change and migration in ACP countries; and
- Cross-cutting issues, such as health, gender, human rights and other topics.

Starting in spring 2011, two studies per pilot country and one per region will be commissioned per year according to the respective priorities and in the order mentioned above. Based on the expertise and interest by one of the Consortium members of the ACP Observatory, one of these partners will guide and coordinate each study in a 'twinning approach' with academics and civil society organizations based in ACP countries. The researcher or research teams undertaking the investigations will be identified through Calls for Proposals.

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#### NOTES

<sup>i</sup> For a list of all Consortium partners, see [http://213.246.207.152/acp/sites/default/files/Consortium\\_leaflet.pdf](http://213.246.207.152/acp/sites/default/files/Consortium_leaflet.pdf).

<sup>ii</sup> See <http://www.acpmigration-obs.org/>.

<sup>iii</sup> Angola, Cameroun, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Senegal, Tanzania, Timor-Leste and Trinidad and Tobago.

<sup>iv</sup> Southern Africa, Central Africa, West Africa, East Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

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