

**TENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

United Nations Secretariat

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**CONTRIBUTION OF THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT TO THE TENTH COORDINATION
MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION¹**

Commonwealth Secretariat

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

Introduction

1. International migration is intimately linked to development and poverty reduction and, as a consequence, is a key activity area for advocacy and research by the Commonwealth Secretariat. Irregular migration undermines national policy making, but when well managed, migration can be a boon for a country's prosperity and resilience. Commonwealth Heads of Government, at their 2011 summit in Perth, Australia, recognised the need to maximise benefits of migration, both economic and social.

2. In 2010, Commonwealth countries accounted for 35 per cent of the US\$325 billion flow in global remittances from migrants. South Asian member states such as India, Pakistan and Bangladesh experienced net immigration between 2005 and 2010, whereas other states, mainly the UK, Canada, Australia and South Africa, saw net emigration. (See Annex 1).

3. The Commonwealth Secretariat has been at the forefront of helping small states, which are especially vulnerable to the negative impacts of migration, to be heard in international policy making fora. Comprising 60 per cent of the Commonwealth's members, small states tend to be highly orientated toward just a few sectors and industries can often be low skilled. As a consequence, many skilled and educated individuals decide to leave to pursue opportunities abroad.

4. On the whole, small states have been net source countries. Next to larger states they record a much higher percentage of their population as migrants. For example, in 2000 – 2005, India recorded 1.4 million immigrants, amounting to around 0.13 per cent of its total population. On the other hand, Tonga had 10,000 immigrants for the same period, or 10 per cent of its population. This contributed to a net decline in Tonga's population from 100,000 in 2000 to 99,000 in 2005. The Pacific country lost a further 8.1 per cent of its population, or 8,000 people, in 2005. Countries such as Guyana, Fiji Grenada, Samoa, Tonga, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines lost over 10 per cent of their populations to migration over the period 2000- 2005.

5. World Bank estimates show that a large proportion of immigrants from small states are tertiary-educated. For the year 2000, statistics show that 89.0 per cent of Guyana's migrants possessed this level of education. Following suit were Grenada's migrants of whom 85.1 per cent were tertiary educated, then Jamaica (85.1 per cent), Trinidad and Tobago (79.3 per cent), Samoa (76.4 per cent), Tonga (75.2 per cent), Antigua and Barbuda (66.8 per cent), Belize (65.5 per cent) and Dominica (64.2 per cent).

Objectives of Commonwealth's activities

6. The Commonwealth's work on international migration aims at:

1. **Advocacy for ethical international recruitment** – More emphasis to be placed on ensuring that nurses and teachers are ethically recruited from poor countries.
2. **Improving data collection on issues affecting migration** – Despite the best efforts of economists and others working in this area, data on

migration and remittances are mere estimates given the lack of systems to accurately collect data.

3. **Advocacy to address worker migration from critical sectors** – The departure of key workers can have adverse impacts on a country's economy, particularly the health and education sectors in developing small states, and seriously impede the delivery of these services.

International recruitment

New initiatives

7. Migration of teachers provides a benefit to states with a shortage of education professionals, but it can put some countries' school systems at risk of 'brain drain'. Protecting teachers' interests when they move abroad and are faced with unfamiliar systems is also an on-going issue. The Commonwealth Secretariat is developing a new tool to complement the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol in assisting countries to manage the international recruitment of teachers. This flexible tool will be called the **Model Memorandum of Understanding for the Recruitment of Migrant Teachers** and will assist bodies to negotiate the number and type of teachers to be recruited, as well as the mechanisms by which the recruitment will be managed. It will be freely adaptable by the parties and the Secretariat will be able to assist where required. The Model MoU will provide an example of good practice in setting out the terms under which teachers should be recruited from one country to work in another, providing a vehicle for agreeing principles for the ethical recruitment of teachers. This will ensure that both source and destination countries gain, and that teachers' rights are protected.

8. Qualified, experienced teachers tend to be significantly under-represented in forced migrant populations. Often they are replaced by members of the displaced community given minimal training, but this can have an adverse effect on education quality, access and inclusiveness. The reasons teachers leave the profession include gaps in the policy and legislative frameworks managing migration. The Commonwealth Secretariat has commissioned a research study examining the connections between the challenges forced migrant teachers face, the protection of their rights, and the contribution they can make towards emergency education provision. Recommendations for policy makers aimed at protecting the role and status of teachers forced to migrate will be provided. These will be unveiled at the Teachers' Forum at the **18th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers in Mauritius** in August 2012. The recommendations will then form the basis of technical assistance to be offered to countries to integrate preparedness for cross-border emergencies into education sector planning cycles. This will result in forced migrant teachers being more swiftly and efficiently incorporated into the teaching force. Well designed refugee policies can contribute both to increasing access to education for at-risk children and the quality of education children receive, even in emergencies.

On-going projects

9. In September 2004, Commonwealth Education Ministers adopted the **Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol**. It aims to balance the rights of teachers to migrate internationally, on a temporary or permanent basis, against the

need to prevent the exploitation of the scarce human resources of poor countries. The protocol also seeks to safeguard the rights of recruited teachers and the conditions relating to their service. Although it does not hold any legal authority, all member countries are encouraged to develop such regulations and legislation necessary to meet the protocol. Recruiting source countries are assigned a number of rights and recruited teachers have the right to full information about their work. In turn teachers are expected to show transparency in their dealings with current and prospective employers and give adequate notice of resignation or requests to leave. The protocol has formed the basis for agreements between Commonwealth countries, such as the exchange of teachers between Rwanda and Kenya, and non-Commonwealth states, for instance informing policy in Barbados in response to requests for teachers from the USA.

Past projects

10. The **Commonwealth Code of Practice for the International Recruitment of Health Workers** was adopted by Commonwealth Health Ministers in May 2003. Like the teachers protocol, it is not a legal document, however it provides guidelines for the international recruitment of health workers in a manner that takes into account the potential impact of such recruitment on services in the source country. The code is intended to discourage the targeted recruitment of health workers from countries which are themselves experiencing shortages. It also safeguards the rights of recruited health workers and the conditions relating to their work in the destination country. The code applies the principles of transparency, fairness and mutuality of benefits and calls on governments recruiting from other Commonwealth countries to reciprocate through the transfer of technology, skills, and technical and financial assistance, as well as training programmes and arrangements to facilitate return migration.

Policy development on migration

New initiatives

11. The Commonwealth Secretariat has embarked on a number of **policy studies aimed at assisting small states to factor in migration issues** into economic development planning and also to obtain vital data so as to influence policy making. The country studies that are a part of this project examine the effects of migration on small states such as Jamaica and Tonga, with a view to analysing the factors that have shaped the challenges in these countries and the policy options available to mitigate them. The role diaspora can play, including through promoting use of their skills, tourism and diaspora bonds are also examined in detail. Temporary labour migration has had an important impact on many small states, particularly countries such as Vanuatu, Tonga and Samoa that benefit from a recognised seasonal employer programme implemented by New Zealand, for instance. An experts meeting to discuss the findings of these studies will be held at the end of March 2012 in Jamaica. This meeting is expected to result in a framework that enables countries to better account for both the positive and negative effects of migration in economic planning.

Past projects

12. In collaboration with the World Bank, the Commonwealth Secretariat has hosted a series of **regional workshops focussing on remittances**. These helped

identify the major constraints that hamper remittance opportunities, while disseminating international experiences and best practice. The workshops allowed policy makers and international experts to analyse problems confronting remittances, share innovative solutions and build capacity – including on policy formulation and the design and carrying out of remittance surveys.

13. The Commonwealth Secretariat hosted a meeting in May 2007 to agree on **strategies to facilitate the Global Forum on Migration and Development**, scheduled for Belgium later in the year, assessing existing policies and challenges confronting partners. The meeting covered key issues including the implications of migration on small states given their comparatively limited human resources and narrow industries. It recommended policy actions including the need to recognise the rights of migrants, the need to provide for the international comparability and recognition of qualifications, and to encourage the development of appropriate multilateral approaches.

14. The Commonwealth Secretariat hosted a meeting of experts in 2004 and completed a number of **policy studies on how mode four (movement of natural persons) of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) can be implemented** between developing countries and developed countries. The papers from these studies have been published in the volume “*Trade, Migration and Labour Mobility*” by Cameron-May on behalf of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

15. Initial support was provided by the Secretariat to the **Ramphal Commission on Migration and Development** for the first meeting of the Commission. This included financial resources and an through the convening power of the Secretariat allow the work of the commission can reach Commonwealth member states.

16. The Commonwealth Secretariat was responsible for **developing a comprehensive Plan of Action for member states on human trafficking**. This work included supporting capacity building for criminal justice practitioners and the development of human trafficking legislation. It also involved awareness raising and addressing factors that make people vulnerable to being trafficked. Support on victims assistance and protection to address their psychological, physical and economic situation has also been provided.

Commonwealth - Trends in Migration and Remittances

Country	Workers' Remittances (US\$Mn)				Net migration ('000)	
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2000-05	2005-2010
Antigua and Barbuda	24	26	24	25		
Australia	3,826	4,713	4,579	4,840	132.3	224.9
Bahamas	-	-	-	-	1.3	1.3
Bangladesh	6,562	8,941	10,521	10,852	298.7	581.6
Barbados	141	101	113	123	-	-
Belize	75	78	80	80	...	...
Botswana	105	114	88	100	4.3	4.3
Brunei	-	-	-	-	0.7	0.7
Cameroon	167	167	192	195	...	...
Canada	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cyprus	172	279	153	146	12.4	8.8
Dominica	26	26	25	26		
Fiji Islands	160	123	154	183	12.4	5.8
Gambia	56	65	80	116	2.7	2.7
Ghana	117	126	114	136	2.3	10.3
Grenada	55	55	53	55	1.0	1.0
Guyana	283	278	278	308	6.6	8.0
India	37,217	49,977	49,468	54,035	384.6	600.0
Jamaica	2,144	2,181	1,912	2,011	15.2	20.0
Kenya	1,588	1,692	1,686	1,777	5.0	37.9
Kiribati	-	-	-	-	...	...
Lesotho	625	596	623	746	5.4	4.0
Malawi	-	-	-	-	4.0	4.0
Malaysia	1,556	1,329	1,131	1,301	79.3	16.9
Maldives	3	3	4	4	0.0	0.0
Malta	50	54	51	48	1.7	1.0
Mauritius	215	215	211	226	-	-
Mozambique	99	116	111	132	4.0	4.0
Namibia	16	14	14	15	1.6	0.3
New Zealand	654	641	628	843	27.3	13.0
Nigeria	9,221	9,980	9,585	10,045	34.0	60.0
Pakistan	5,998	7,039	8,717	9,690	350.0	400.0
Papua New Guinea	8	15	12	15	-	-
Rwanda	51	68	93	92	...	...
Samoa	120	135	131	143	3.6	3.1
Seychelles	11	8	12	11	...	...
Sierra Leone	42	28	47	58	100.0	12.0
Singapore	-	-	-	-	46.5	144.4
Sol Islands	2	2	2	3	-	-
South Africa	834	823	902	1,119	140.0	140.0
Sri Lanka	2,527	2,947	3,363	4,155	20.0	50.0
St Kitts & Nevis	40	44	43	44	...	...
St Lucia	31	31	30	31	0.1	0.2
St Vincent & the Grenadines	33	31	30	31	1.0	1.0
Swaziland	100	90	93	109	9.2	1.2
Tanzania	14	19	23	25	69.0	60.0
Tonga	101	94	72	85	1.6	1.6
Trinidad and Tobago	109	95	109	120	4.0	3.9
Tuvalu	-	-	-	-	...	...
Uganda	452	724	778	915	1.0	27.0
United Kingdom	7,883	7,862	7,252	7,532	193.7	204.0
Vanuatu	6	6	6	6	-	-
Zambia	59	68	41	44	16.3	17.0
TOTAL	83,580	102,018	103,638	112,592		

Notes: Migrant remittances refer to workers remittances and compensation received (US\$m).

Net migration refers to number of immigrants minus number of emigrants. It is expressed as thousands.

Sources: World Development indicators database, available at <http://databank.worldbank.org/dpps>; UN, World Population Prospects Database <http://data.un.org>