

**FIFTH COORDINATION MEETING ON  
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
United Nations Secretariat  
New York, 20-21 November 2006

**ACTIVITIES CONSIDERED IN LIGHT OF THE OUTCOME OF THE HIGH-LEVEL  
DIALOGUE ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

*United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)*

## Fifth Coordination Meeting on International Migration – 20 to 21 November 2006

### ACTIVITIES CONSIDERED IN LIGHT OF THE OUTCOME OF THE HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

*United Nations Development Programme*

#### **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

UNDP is the UN's global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.

#### **Introduction**

The High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (HLD), held by the General Assembly on September 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, was an important step forward in bringing migration firmly into the policy dialogue on development and poverty reduction. The discussion at the HLD emphasized the importance of maximizing the positive benefits that migration can have on development in origin countries, while minimizing the negative impacts.

#### **Migration and Development**

UNDP works on migration because of the many impacts it can have on poor people and poor countries. Some of these impacts are easier to assess and understand than others. Remittances, for example, have a monetary value. Assuming that banking flows accurately reflect the location of the sender and receiver, it is possible to estimate the *potential* contribution of remittances to development in the origin country of the migrant. The *actual* contribution will be very context specific however, depending on many factors including household preferences, the extent of gender equality, and cultural and societal norms. Other impacts – such as loss of skilled workers, the impact of migration on families, or the effect on governance or service delivery structures in the origin country – are more difficult to assess.

Because of the context specificity, UNDP's approach is to work with countries to integrate migration into their own plans for development, and to develop public policy that maximizes the potential of migration to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). If countries request our assistance, UNDP helps place pro-poor, pro-development rights-based migration policies at the heart of national development strategies – prioritizing skills, retention, capacity development, remittances and further research. We do this by facilitating meetings of the key stakeholders, and by linking into experiences from other countries through our global network of practitioners.

To underpin national strategies and understand the multi-faceted impacts of migration we need to understand who is migrating and why. This includes their gender, level and type of skills, and whether they are likely to take resources back to their country of origin – their own skills or through investment. It will also be important to assess whether 'cultural remittances' such as attitudes or ideas are likely to play a role, without assuming these will be positive or negative.

## **Ongoing and Future Activities**

UNDP's activities in the area of migration and development relate to three main areas: national policies for managing migration; interventions to encourage temporary return migration; and use of remitted funds for development financing. The following provides a glimpse of specific UNDP country programmes and projects on migration and development, together with general activities.

### *Managing migration*

***UNDP is formulating a project in Ghana focusing on management of migration, return migration interventions, and optimal use of remittances for development financing. In El Salvador, a Human Development and Migration Programme is being planned aimed at strengthening national capabilities to promote an integrated response to migration in the country. The programme also aims to increase the understanding and ability of key institutions to analyze the flows and impacts of international migration by incorporating migration in research projects and university curriculum. In Moldova, UNDP is working with UNICEF to examine household and community level impacts of migration with the context of 'brain drain'.***

### *Return migration*

***In Albania, UNDP is engaging the Albanian diaspora to develop and implement a comprehensive programme to facilitate a contribution to Albania's socio-economic development and, specifically, to achieving nationally determined MDGs. Activities include providing support to government on building a database and website. In El Salvador, UNDP is in the process of establishing internship opportunities for young members of the diaspora (born or raised outside the country), which will place young people in immersion experiences or internships, and be linked with UNDP programmatic areas (specifically migration, human development, HIV/AIDS prevention, local development, environmental issues, gender, and violence). The initiative will particularly target students at high schools and universities in the US. UNDP's global mechanism for tapping expatriate nationals who have migrated to other countries and achieved professional success abroad -- TOKTEN (Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals) – has been used to mobilize them to undertake short-term consultancies under the aegis of the UN in their countries of origin, such as in Lebanon, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sudan, Syria, the Philippines and Palestine. UNDP intends to increase its work on the issue of the temporary movement of workers under the WTO's GATS Mode IV Services Negotiations.***

### *Remittances*

UNDP prepared a Report on Remittances in Albania in 2003. In El Salvador, UNDP has launched an initiative on developing tools for local development that offer opportunities for the participation of Salvadorians abroad, but benefit not only those families with migrants abroad. In Somalia, UNDP assisted in establishing the Somalia Financial Services Association, in order to channel remittances and create a stronger financial system. A research project with IOM is being conducted in Tajikistan to assess the scope of remittances and formulate development strategies to channel them. More generally, UNDP is working with INSTRAW to explore the linkages between gender and remittances. UNDP's Capacity Development Group is developing a more comprehensive strategy on remittances and MDGs.

UNDP is also in the process of conducting a series of consultation meetings on remittances. A meeting in Santo Domingo on migration, remittances and development for the Latin American and Caribbean region

was facilitated in July 2006. A regional consultation on African remittances is planned for January 2007. In September 2006, UNDP organized a meeting on remittances with private sector stakeholders, as a follow-up to an earlier meeting organized with the Special Unit for South-South Unit Cooperation.

### *General*

Previous National Human Development Reports have analyzed migration issues within the national context, e.g. Albania NHDR, 2000. El Salvador's National Human Development Report 2005 assesses the dynamics of migration from El Salvador, its impact on various dimensions (economic, social, political and cultural) of the lives of those who emigrate and those who remain in the country, and sets out policy recommendations. The next NHDR for Mexico will cover migration and development issues.

### **Partnership**

UNDP will continue to work actively with the full range of stakeholders on migration and development issues – national governments, bilateral and multilateral donors, other UN agencies, the IOM, the private sector and civil society. As a member of the Global Migration Group (GMG), UNDP will also continue to coordinate its activities with other UN agencies so as to avoid duplication and maximize the synergies of joint working.