

MIGRATION AND CHILDREN: a need to fill information gaps in order to guide policy responses

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CHILDREN AFFECTED BY MIGRATION

	Independent, in search of work		smuggled	assisted	
	regular	irregular		trafficked	facilitated
Children left behind					
mother					
father					
both					
Children going with parent(s)					
Children born abroad					
Children migrating on their own					
Children affected by non family migration					

CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND – HOW MANY – AND WHERE?

Official data may grossly underestimate;

Moldova – 0-14 year olds left behind by one or both

Official	Mo Educ	Bryant methodology
96,000	68,000	150,000-270,000 (5-8%)

Bryant: changes in pop stock, (est.) female migration in reproductive ages, historic fertility rates – strong assumptions about similar fertility behaviour

Philippines: 3-6 million (10-20%) children left behind

Indonesia: 1 million (2-3%)

Thailand: ½ million (2-3%)

Moldova: Concentrated in certain rural areas, small towns

CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND ... BY MOTHER, FATHER OR BOTH

UNICEF Survey, Moldova:

Absent	Mother	Father	Both
10-14 Y	14.5%	14.9%	6.6%
15-18 Y	8.5%	16.4%	3.3%
	68,000	93,000	30,000 = ca 190,000

When mother or both parents leave: left with grandparents, aunts, older siblings, non family care givers or in institutions (CEE/CIS)

- **Philippines survey: 63 % of households w mother migrant had kin living in the household**
- **Philippines: mother serves one or more 2 year contracts**

Large scale migration since 1989...

Out-migration of families from Poland in 2002 , STOCK

	Type of family	Number of families (thousands)
TOTAL		341.6
	Married couples with dependent children up to 24 years of age	103.9
	- parents abroad (without children)	2.2
	- parents with children (but not with all of them) abroad	1.1
	Mothers with dependent children up to 24 years of age	41.9
	- mother abroad (without all children)	6.8
	Fathers with dependent children up to 24 years of age	4.5
	- father abroad (without all children)	0.9

CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND ... ARE *OFTEN* MATERIALLY BETTER OFF

- **IMF/Moldova: remittance > 60% of income among 40+% families**
- **Moldova: except in cases where both parents have left**
- **Mexico: lower infant mortality, higher birth weight**
- **Philippines: better educational outcomes**
- **Moldova: weak evidence that educational outcome worsens –but more children of migrants attending higher education**

CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND ... BUT(1)

MOLDOVA

- **Children of migrants want to leave**
 - Worsen demographic crisis and dependency ration**
 - Issue of role of parents in demanding services for their communities (PTA etc)**
- **Emotional and psychological stress, worse when mother migrates**
- **Risk behaviour; 60% of minors committing crime were in the care of grandparents or other relatives**

CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND ... BUT(2)

PHILIPPINES (related findings for Indonesia)

- Study shows children of migrants performing better on social anxiety scale and children's loneliness scale
- '94 study failed to discover diff behaviour on sex, substance abuse for children (15-19) w one or two parents at home
- Missing mom; families generally would prefer to stay intact

Accumulated national experience helps inform potential migrants

Longer term impact is hard to assess

Certain localities are particularly hard affected

EMERGING RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Managed migration (Philippines) allow more regular home visits by mothers, migrant parents**
 - and through one off fee allows access to social services for family (Thailand) if adequate incentives (affordable, non discrimination)
- **Philippines – counseling of families**
- **To assess and address an issue it needs to be measured – immigration service statistics could capture information on children left behind by registered migrants; need for qualitative surveys; school admission data**
- **Philippines – proposal to use teachers as ‘social workers’ in high migration areas**

CHILDREN BROUGHT ALONG/ BORN ABROAD

- Often pre-school children
- Albania: high skilled leave (permanently) w families
- Potentially better social and material conditions than at home but
- Facing relative poverty in the host community
(93,000 registered children < 14 from Myanmar)
- Playing or working along-side parents w/o access to care
- Conditions in host country depends on development status
 - Access to social services
 - Discrimination/social exclusion
- Issue of citizenship and access to services
- Albania: up to 100,000 born abroad '89-'01

CHILDREN MIGRATING ON THEIR OWN

Children not in school and not finding employment/
opportunities

Small numbers ? (Albania 12,000 p.a 15-25 since '00)
joining kin

Extention of youth risk taking/exploration/

Independence/calculated risks ('agency')?

Vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation
in the migration process
at destination

Moving from one jurisdiction to another, none of which may
recognize youth as independent of families

ISSUES FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

- Orders of magnitude and location
- Formal, social and other support systems at origin and destination
- Legal framework to protect the rights of the child

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Your comments will help sharpen
research efforts on children and migration

Thank you

For every child
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY

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