

Population, migration and development in Asia,  
with special emphasis on the South Pacific:  
the impact of migration on population and the MDGs

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# Migration patterns

# Migration patterns in Asia

- **Intra regional level (within Asia)**
  - Mostly labour contract migration, reluctance to develop permanent residence schemes ('green cards')
  - Highly qualified workers benefit long-term contracts, easier family reunification.
- **Extra regional**
  - Labour contracts to Middle-East,
  - Temporary residence in EU,
  - Rim countries have permanent residence schemes, based on point systems,
  - US green cards.

# In the Pacific

- Preferential migration to NZ for former colonies: Cook, Niue, Tokelau have NZ citizenship, and Samoa has special quota.
- Special schemes: Pacific Access Category and Seasonal Employer Programme for Tuvalu, Tonga, Kiribati and Vanuatu.
- Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement between Australia and NZ for circulation of permanent residents.
- Other islanders go through the point system.

# Impact of migration laws on demography of migration

- Short-term contracts have effects on sex (men in industry, women in services...) and age.
- Limited family reunification has effect on sex and age of migrant population.
- Point systems operate selection on age.
- Pacific preferential schemes result in large 'second', 'third',... generations, and transnational migrant communities, as well as large numbers of overstayers.
- Undocumented migrants' characteristics are not well known.

# The impact of migration on population trends and structures

# Demographic impact of migration

	Emigration	Impact	Immigration	impact
Growth	Reduced	usually favorable	Increased	
Sex ratio	Usually imbalances	Unfavorable	Usually imbalances	unfavorable
Dependency	Increased	Unfavorable	Reduced	favorable

# Economic and social impact

	Emigration	Impact	Immigration	impact
Labour force	Brain drain	Unfavorable	Brain gain	favorable
	Brain circulation	Favorable	Brain circulation	favorable
Gender	Female headship	Un/favorable	Lone migrants	Un/favorable

# Impact on population growth

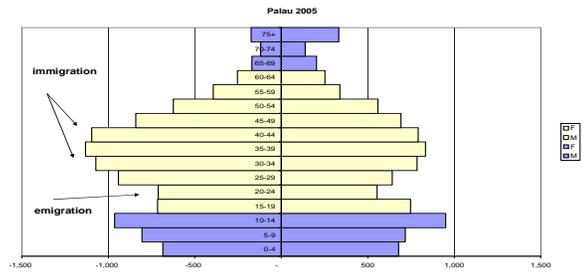
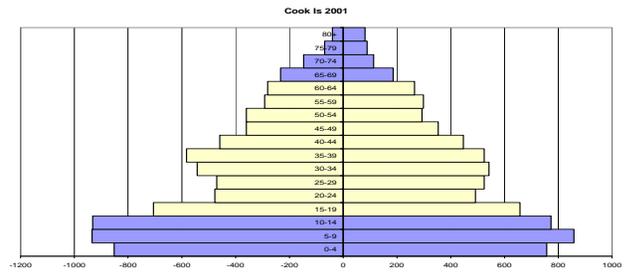
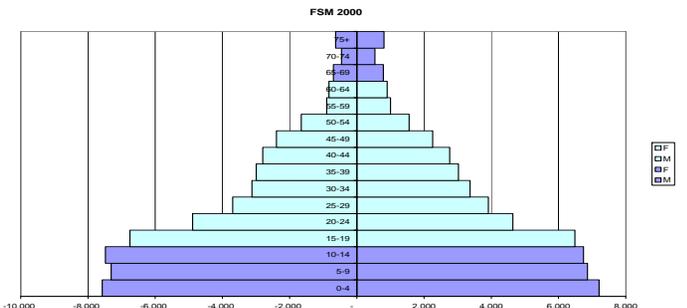
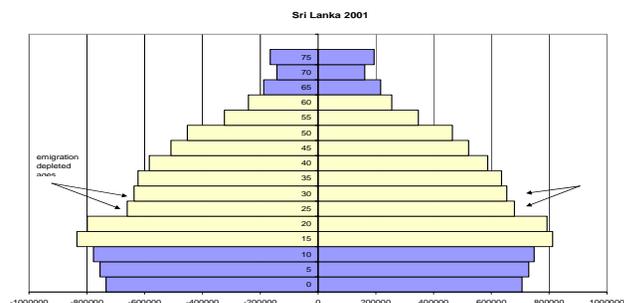
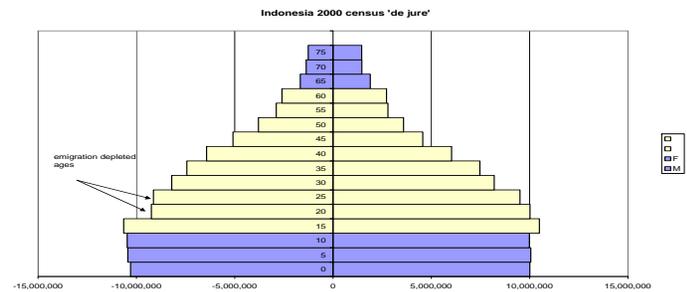
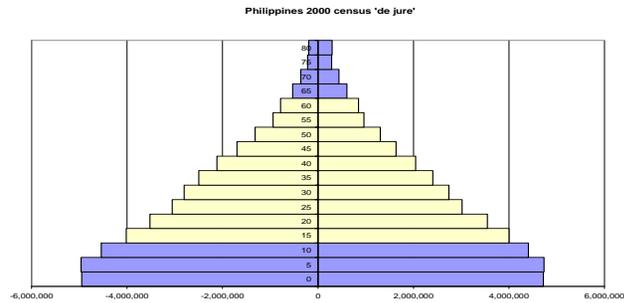
	natural growth (per cent) 2000-2005	Total growth (per cent) 2000-2005	net migration rate (per 1,000)		Natural growth (per cent)	Total growth (per cent)	Net migration rate (per 1,000)
Asia				Pacific			
Bangladesh	1.96	1.89	-0.7	Fiji	1.7	0.7	-10.0
Brunei Darussalam	2.08	2.29	2.0	FSM	2.3	0.2	-21.0
Cambodia	1.75	1.76	0.2	Kiribati	1.8	1.8	0.0
China	0.7	0.67	-0.3	RMI	2.6	0.7	-19.0
India	1.64	1.62	-0.2	Nauru	2.3	0.2	-21.0
Indonesia	1.41	1.31	-0.9	Palau	0.7	0.8	1.0
Malaysia	1.82	1.95	1.2	Cook Is	1.5	1.6	1.0
Myanmar	0.93	0.89	-0.4	Niue	1.1	-3.0	-41.0
Nepal	2.15	2.08	-0.8	Samoa	2.7	0.3	-24.0
Pakistan	1.98	1.82	-1.6	Tokelau	2.4	-0.9	-33.0
Philippines	2.3	2.08	-2.2	Tonga	2.1	0.3	-18.0
Singapore	0.52	1.49	9.6	Tuvalu	1.6	0.5	-11.0
Sri Lanka	0.9	0.43	-4.7	PNG	2.3	2.7	4.0
Thailand	0.68	0.76	0.7	Solomon Is	2.7	2.8	1.0
Viet Nam	1.5	1.45	-0.5	Vanuatu	2.2	2.8	6.0

*Sources: for Asia, UNPD World Population Prospects 2006; for the Pacific, latest intercensal data based on national census reports.*

# Impact on population growth

- Slight reduction of population growth in large Asian countries, China, India, as well as Philippines, Bangladesh, Pakistan...
- higher impact on smaller countries (Sri Lanka, Brunei, Singapore...)
- Huge impact on Pacific island countries, with most of natural growth erased by emigration (Tonga, Samoa, FSM) or even negative growth (Niue, Tokelau, Cook Is), large reduction of growth in Fiji, RMI, Tuvalu.
- Immigration in Palau (net positive migration); Fiji and Cook Is have both immigration and emigration, balance being strongly negative net migration.

# Impact on age structures



# Impact on age structures

- Depleted young adult cohorts by emigration: moderate in the Philippines, important for males in Indonesia, large in Sri Lanka for both sexes... and bottleneck shaped age-pyramids in the Pacific,
- Return migration at older ages.
- Increased adult ages in immigration countries, visible up to higher ages (at young ages combined effects of out- and in-migration): Palau (link to types of contracts in relation to age)

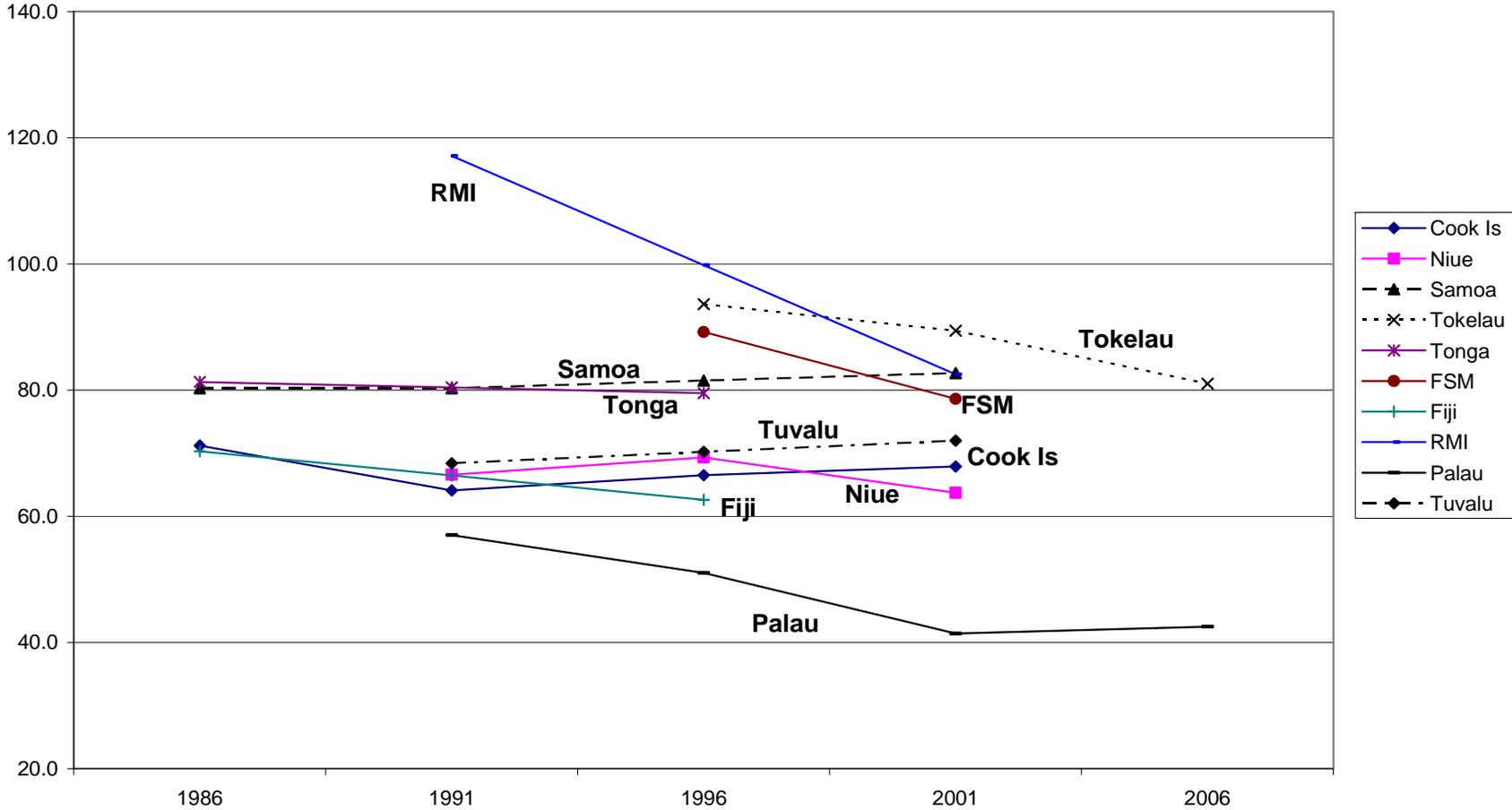
# Dependency ratios

Asia	dependency ratio	Pacific	Dependency ratio
Bangladesh	61.3	Fiji	62.6
Cambodia	66.7	FSM	78.6
China	42.9	Kiribati	68.1
India	66.7	RMI	82.5
Indonesia	54.7	Palau	42.5
Malaysia	61.3	Cook Is	67.9
Myanmar	51.5	Samoa	82.7
Pakistan	85.2	Tokelau	81.0
Philippines	63.9	Tonga	79.5
Singapore	38.9	Tuvalu	72.0
Sri Lanka	48.3	PNG	73.5
Thailand	42.9	Solomon Is	81.6
VietNam	56.3	Vanuatu	85.7

# Dependency ratios

- Dependency ratios are affected by both migration (depleted adult cohorts) and fertility (children - large base of the age-pyramid),
- It is difficult to measure the impact of migration alone on dependency – *lack of precise measure of migration, including its long-term effects.*
- The impact of fertility is still strong in the Philippines, Bangladesh, comparatively to Viet Nam and Indonesia, and actually ranking of countries according to dependency is dependent on both fertility and migration, when one is similar, the other makes the difference.
- The same occurs in the Pacific: mass emigration in Tonga and Samoa, with decades long TFR around 4, results in the same dependency ratio as for countries with recent decline and TFR close to 5. *Stable* migration and *stable* fertility result in... *stable* and high levels of dependency ratios in mass migration countries: Samoa, Tonga, Cook Is (*fluctuating following migration in the latter*)

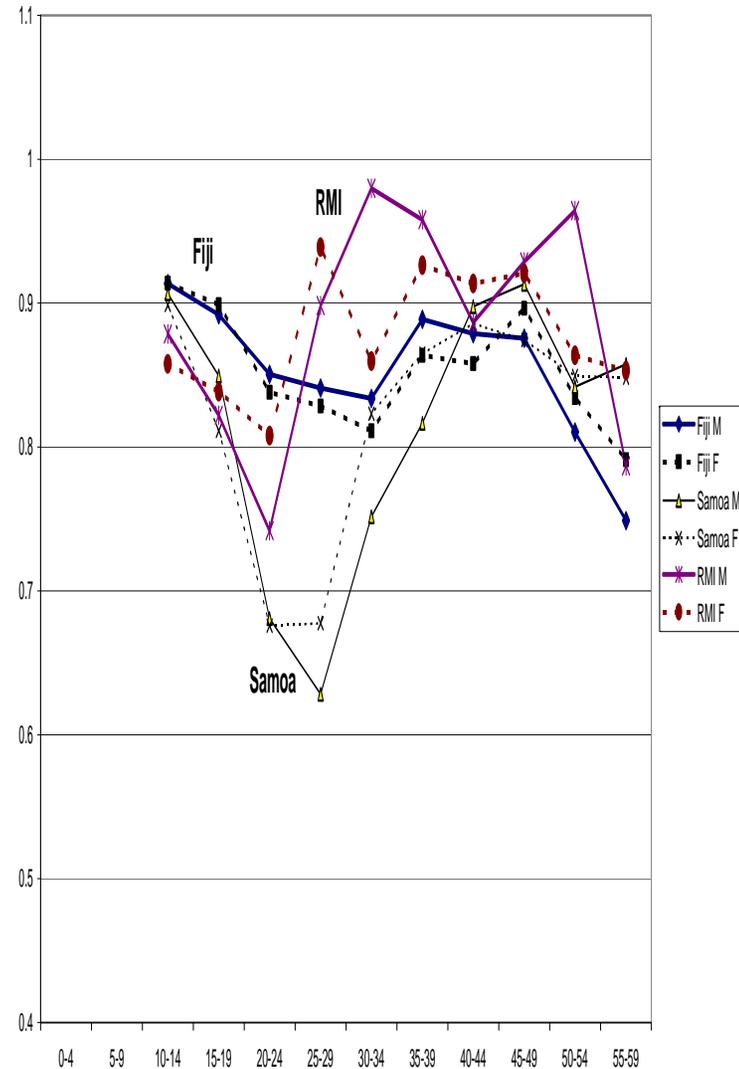
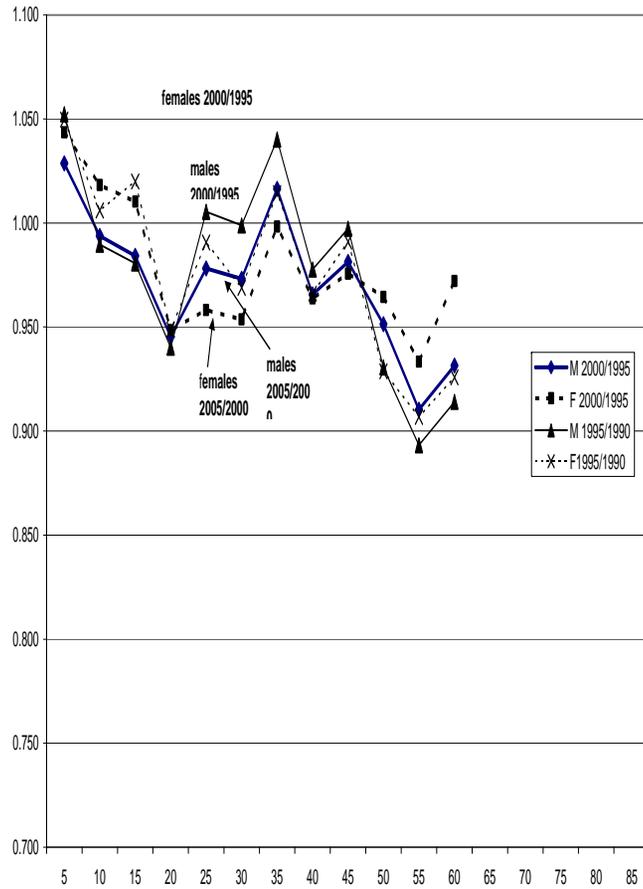
# Trends in dependency ratios in the Pacific



# Cohorts change

- Cohort change is a better way to show the impact of migration at low mortality ages (15-44), but data on age must be reliable, censuses coverage similar, and out- and in- migration combine their effects.
- Data on residence at previous census, if reliable, can be used to estimate in-migration, including return-migration, and by difference out-migration.
- On intercensal basis, it would be possible to estimate the impact of migration on dependency with rather acceptable precision.

# Cohort change



# The impact of migration on MDGs attainment

# Health and education services indicators

- Reduced growth is favorable to MDG progress – rapid growth puts additional pressure on services (*immunization, skilled attended deliveries, 1/2ary enrolment, water/sanitation...*):
  - **cope with cohorts growth,**
  - increase coverage,
  - improve quality,
- As migration reduces growth, it can have positive impact – Polynesian migration countries have nearly achieved 100% service coverage while countries without migration outlet and rapidly growing birth cohorts show little or slow improvement.

# Health and education indicators

- Quality is essential to achieve low levels of IMR, MMR, class 1 to 6 transition, 1ary to 2ary transition.
- Brain drain of certified teachers/nurses hinders improving quality of education/health services.
- IMR is stagnating - at levels between 10 per 1,000 and 20 per 1,000 in Polynesia, Palau, Fiji.
- In education, 1ary completion is low or children end 1ary after several repetitions and are 2 or more years late to enter 2ary; many drop out at class 6 or form 3.

# Gender indicators

- Imbalances in sex ratios, family breakdowns, increased female headship rates, increased female LFPR related to migration can have positive effects on gender equity indicators (*LF participation, 1ary/2ary enrolment*)
- They can also have negative effects:
  - women confined to family duties in ghettos, not speaking host country language;
  - women living with and subjected to parents/in-laws in origin countries,
  - not to speak of domestic violence, trafficking,...

# Poverty

- MDG1 is directly related to the impact of remittances on income distribution/poverty reduction. – Whenever, remittances can increase income inequalities (in the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of migration when the migration hump dominates), there is poverty reduction if poor households receive enough to be lifted above poverty lines, and it also reduces depth of poverty.
- However, remittances can raise poverty lines by increasing the cost of living/inflation.
- Remittances can also increase poverty among migrants' households in host countries.

# Migration and employment MDG indicators

- The former indicator ‘youth unemployment rate’ was directly affected by migration, because youth usually have the highest migration rates. *The new indicator (employment-to-population ratio at ages 15-64) will also be affected but to a lesser extent.*
- Migration countries are however those with the highest youth unemployment rates, because the ‘safety valve’ does not work fully and strong economy is the best to ensure full employment. Pacific migration countries have sometimes high youth unemployment rates: 30% in Tonga, 35% in FSM, 62% in RMI.

# MDGs and the dependency burden

- Migration increases dependency and depletes working ages, but workers are abroad sending more remittances than what they would earn in-country.
- Thus, the demographic bonus seems not to be an issue for mass migration countries in the Pacific.
- But do remittances reach such level and stability to make a sustainable economic system? Is the MIRAB (*MI*gration, *Re*mittances, *Aid and Bureaucracy*) sustainable?
- Still, the question is whether economic growth can be based only on low qualified migration. The Philippines and Polynesian countries have low economic growth, comparatively with countries that have more dynamic economies.

# Migration, remittances and MDG 6 and 7

- Migration results in labour shortages, including in agriculture in origin countries, and remittances lead to new life styles.
- Changes in diets and life styles in Polynesia have resulted in epidemic level NCDs (*diabetes, cardio-vascular diseases, cancers*) and they have been included in MDG 6 by several PICs.
- Cars and various appliances (*not regularly serviced*) and wastes, result in more pollution of air, sea and fresh water resources, impacting on MDG 7.

# Various uses of remittances and MDGs

- The many uses of remittances can improve various MDG indicators of migration countries.
  - personal consumption of durable goods or in-kinds remittances, like telephones, cell phones, computers and internet connection, - Pacific countries with the largest expatriate communities are also those with the highest use of internet.
  - payment of education/health of children left behind or of relatives
  - payment of health expenditures for parents
  - use of remittances for collective purposes:  
*infrastructures (wells, improved toilets, sewage, generator/solar power, school books/materials), disaster relief,*
  - social life: cultural/sports/youth associations, church..., can have social impact and effects on gender issues.

***Moreover, remittances used for investment or savings contribute to employment generation and economic growth in various ways.***

Emerging/old issues

# Brain circulation

- Brain circulation has not yet much developed, except in some sectors (IT, export industries and services) and mostly in China and India.
- Return migration of qualified workers, a last phase of migration, appears to be linked with economic growth in origin countries (Korea, Taiwan Province of China) and subject to economic crisis.
- Policies are not designed to attract investment in general and of return migrants specifically; the latter face and complain of the same administrative difficulties (corruption) as other investors.

# Social remittances

- Despite frequent moves of contract workers in Asia and large numbers of bi-residents/citizens in the Pacific, migration has not much contributed to bring changes in ideas, administrative environment and traditional society.
- There is even suspicion against return migrants who could try to alter the distribution of power in origin countries.
- In the Pacific, the female share of parliamentary seats is the lowest in the world.
- In the Pacific migrant communities in host countries organize themselves around churches and ethnic lines.
- In the Pacific, arranged marriages occur between home islands and host countries.
- In Asia, bride migration may increase due to imbalanced sex ratios at birth and help perpetuate it, while it will cause imbalances on the marriage market in origin countries.

Thank you