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## **International migration and national development in sub-Saharan Africa : viewpoints and policy initiatives in the countries of origin**

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# International migration and national development in sub-Saharan Africa

# Afrika-Studiecentrum Series

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International migration and national  
development in sub-Saharan Africa:  
Viewpoints and policy initiatives in the  
countries of origin

*Editors:*

Aderanti Adepaju  
Ton van Naerssen  
Annelies Zoomers



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## Abbreviations and acronyms

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific
ALCA	<i>Área de Libre Comercio de las Américas</i> (Free Trade Area of the Americas)
AMA	Accelerated Micro-enterprise Advancement Project
AU	African Union
BHS	<i>Banque de l'habitat du Sénégal</i> <sup>1</sup>
BIT	<i>Bureau International du Travail</i> (see ILO)
BREDA	<i>Bureau régional pour l'Éducation en Afrique</i> (UNESCO-BREDA)
CA	Cotonou Agreement
CBK	Central Bank of Kenya
CCOFW	Consultative Council on Overseas Filipino Workers
CEAO	<i>Communauté de Économique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest</i> (ECOWAS)
CEGECI	<i>Centre de Gestion des Cités</i> (Cities' Management Centre)
CFO	Commission for Filipinos Overseas
CONAPO	<i>Conseil National de la Population</i>
CONASUR	<i>Comité National de Secours d'Urgence et de Réhabilitation</i> (National Committee for Emergency Assistance and Rehabilitation)
CSBE	<i>Conseil Supérieur des Burkinabé à l'Étranger</i> (High Council of Burkinabé Abroad)
CSSE	<i>Conseil Supérieur des Sénégalais de l'Extérieur</i> <sup>2</sup>
DAWN	Development Action for Women Network
DES	<i>Direction des Sénégalais de l'Extérieur</i> <sup>3</sup>
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DOH	Department of Health
EAC	East African Community
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa (UN)
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECMI	Episcopal Commission for Migrants and Itinerant People
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States (CEAO)
EGDI	Expert Group on Development Issues (Sweden)
EMP	Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
ERCOF	Economic Resource Center for Overseas Filipinos

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<sup>1</sup> Senegalese Housing Bank

<sup>2</sup> High Council for Senegalese [Nationals] Living Abroad

<sup>3</sup> Directorate for Senegalese [Nationals] Living Abroad

EU	European Union
FAIR	Framework for Assessing the Impact of Remittances
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (UN)
FDI	Foreign direct investment
FRELIMO	<i>Frente de Libertação de Moçambique</i> (Mozambique Liberation Front)
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GCIM	Global Commission on International Migration
GDI	Gender-related Development Index
GDN	Global Development Network
GDP	Gross domestic product
GJLOS	Governance, Justice, Law and Order Sector
GNP	Gross national product
HCIDC	House of Commons International Development Committee (UK)
HDI	Human Development Index
HTAs	Home-town associations
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
ICBT	Informal cross-border trade/trading
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDP	Internally displaced person
IFAFE	<i>Initiatives des femmes africaines de France et d'Europe</i>
IFIs	International financial institutions
IJO	International Jobs Office
ILO	International Labour Organisation (OIT/BIT)
IMA	Institute for Mexicans Abroad (IME)
IME	<i>Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior</i> (IMA)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGC	<i>Instituto Nacional de Gestão de Calamidades</i> (Natural Disaster Management Institute)
INSTRAW	United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
IOM	International Organization for Migration (OIM)
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
IPO	Initial Public Offer
IRCA	Immigration Reform and Control Act
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks (UN)
KAIF	Kenyans Abroad Investment Fund
KCA	Kenyan Community Abroad
LFS	Labor Force Survey
MBN	Minimum Basic Needs
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
Mercosur	<i>Mercado Común del Sur</i> (Southern Common Market)

MIDA	<i>Migrations pour le Développement en Afrique</i>
MIDA	Migration for Development in Africa
MIDSA	Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa
MTOs	Money transfer organisations
MWB	Migration without borders
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NAPTIP	National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons and Other Related Matters
NEEDS	Nation Economic Empowerment Development Strategy
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NHS	National Health Service (UK)
NIDO	Nigerians in the Diaspora Organization
NNPC	Nigerian National Planning Commission
NNVS	Nigeria National Volunteer Services
NOMRA	Network of Migration Research in Africa
NSO	National Statistical Office
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFWs	overseas Filipino workers
OIM	<i>Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations (IOM)</i>
OIT	<i>Organisation Internationale du Travail (ILO)</i>
OMS	<i>Organisation Mondiale de la Santé (WHO)</i>
OWWA	Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
PDIP	<i>Projet Diaspora Investor au Pays</i>
PDOS	Pre-departure orientation seminars
POEA	Philippine Overseas Employment Administration
PRSP	Poverty reduction strategy paper
RECs	Regional economic communities
RENAMO	<i>Resistência Nacional de Moçambique (Mozambique National Resistance)</i>
RQAN	Return of Qualified African Nationals
RSD	Refugee Status Determination
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community <sup>4</sup>
SAMP	Southern African Migration Project
SAP	Structural adjustment programme
SARPN	Southern African Regional Poverty Network

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<sup>4</sup> Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SOPEMI	<i>Système d'Observation Permanente sur les Migrations</i>
STIs	Sexually transmitted infections
TEBA	The Employment Bureau of Africa
TOKTEN	Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals
UEMOA	<i>Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine</i> (WAEMU)
UERD	<i>Unité d'Enseignement et de Recherche en Démographie</i>
UK	United Kingdom (of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNILCO	Union of Local Initiatives for Co-development (Senegal)
US/USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA)
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization (OMS)
WOTCLEF	Nigerian Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation
WTO	World Trade Organization

## Acknowledgements

This book is the output of the research project ‘International Migration and National Development in sub-Saharan Africa’, which aims at gaining a better understanding of the link between international migration and national development, as seen from the perspective of countries of origin in the South. In doing so it aims also to counterbalance the northern bias in the current practice of policy making.

The project, financed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, was carried out under the auspices of the Migration and Development Research Group at Radboud University, Nijmegen, working in close collaboration with the Human Resources Development Centre at Lagos, Nigeria.

The project consisted of a number of research activities, including desk research, field missions to Nigeria, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Rwanda and Kenya; and an international experts’ meeting that was attended by a selected group of invited experts from sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and Latin America and Europe. It also attracted diaspora and migrant community associations as well as the participation of government officials from the Netherlands.

The project was carried out in collaboration with a number of institutions (including the African Studies Centre in Leiden, the Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation in Amsterdam, and the Netherlands Inter-disciplinary Demographic Institute, as well as Utrecht University and Oxford University), and was implemented with the active participation of various policy makers. We are grateful for the very constructive collaboration which developed during the course of the project and the positive exchange of views, which helped to bridge the gap between policy-making and academic research.

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International migration is a complex and dynamic process, leading to political, cultural and socio-economic change, and resulting in the global rearrangement of strengths and weaknesses. Migration for development is a multidimensional policy field that cannot be dealt with in isolation. Collaboration not only between the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, but also with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Economic Affairs, as well as cooperation at the international level (for example with EU officials) and linking up with civil society, is a necessary ingredient for the formulation of appropriate migration policies.

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The editors  
April 2007



# International migration and national development: An introduction to policies in sub-Saharan Africa

Annelies Zoomers, Aderanti Adepoju  
& Ton van Naerssen

## Introduction

This book focuses on achieving a better understanding of the implications of international migration for national development. It is written from the perspective of the sending countries in the South and with an emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa. Its purpose is two-fold: to explore current perceptions in the countries of origin of the links between international migration and national development, and also to examine current trends in policy making, aimed at minimising the negative effects of migration, while optimising the development impact. What are the dominant view and policy initiatives in the different countries of sub-Saharan Africa? How do these relate to migration policies in other regions of the world? And how can migration help as a strategy for poverty alleviation?<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This research project focuses in particular on international labour migration – the movement of non-nationals or foreigners across national borders for purposes other than travel or short-



For a long time, policy makers paid little attention to migration. In development cooperation attention was paid mainly to the encouragement of local development and, where attention was paid to migration, it was generally viewed as an opposite pole to development: outmigration was regarded as an expression of poverty, and development projects were intended to contribute to the reduction of outmigration. Moreover, international migration was considered as brain drain, to the detriment of development in the South.

This situation has recently changed (Farrant *et al.*, 2006; GCIM, 2005; IOM, 2001; United Nations, 2006; World Bank, 2006). There are various reasons why international migration is now high on the agenda. On the one hand, it is a consequence of increasing problems within the multicultural societies in the receiving areas, combined with a fear of 'invasion'. For instance, on 1 September 2006 the website of the Dutch Algemeen Persbureau (APB, General Press Agency), carried the report:

There seems to be no end to the explosion of migrants from Africa. In the past two days over 800 migrants have arrived in the Canary Isles. 9,000 have already been intercepted in 2006. In August their number was higher than in the whole of 2005. There is an increasing impression that migrants are streaming in from all sides and that there is a growing need to check migration flows.

Whereas the emphasis was initially placed on restrictive (and anti-migrant) policies, there now appears to be a shift towards selective policies (including experimenting with circular migration). Because of the increasing ageing of the population in the receiving countries, there is a growing realisation that a call on migrant labour will have to be made in the not too distant future.

Another, more positive, reason why more attention has recently been paid to migration is the growing conviction that international migration cannot be seen in isolation from development, and that, with the right policies, migration can make an important contribution to development (Zoomers 2006).

With regard to the question of whether international migration can or cannot contribute to sustainable development and to combating poverty, there are at present two opposing views (de Haas, 2003, 2005; Tamas & Palme, 2006). According to the optimists, international migration offers good possibilities. They point in the first place to the remittances which are seen as a new or additional source of finance for development. According to estimates of the World Bank (2006), these remittances amounted to no less than 167,000 million

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term residence. Little attention will be paid to other groups, such as refugees, internationally displaced persons and/or asylum seekers, although it is difficult in practice to make a completely clear division.

dollars in 2006, which is more than the total amount of official development aid for the same period. Remittances are estimated to benefit some 500 million people, or 8 per cent of the world population. Through remittances, migration has a direct effect on the reduction of poverty: an increase of 10 per cent in a country's share of international migrants leads to a 2 per cent decline in 'one dollar a day' poverty (Adams & Page, 2003; Ratha, 2003; Sander & Maimbo, 2003). In addition to the financial remittances, a positive value is also attributed to social transfers (the flow of information and ideas): countries of origin are said to benefit from brain gain, not to mention the positive effects of the return of newly-skilled migrants. Migration is also viewed as a positive factor, because it leads to a balance in the supply and demand dynamics in the labour market, and because international labour migration is expected to contribute to the elimination of inequality and lead to a better distribution of the advantages of globalisation (van Naerssen *et al.*, 2007). Migration is seen as impacting positively upon all stakeholders – evidenced by the fact that sending countries and the migrants themselves benefit, because migrants find jobs, develop their skills, earn money and remit part of it to their countries of origin, while destination countries benefit from the skills and labour they receive from migrants (Adepoju, 2006; Lucas, 2005).

Alongside the optimists, there is a group of pessimists who particularly emphasise a number of negative aspects and threatening dangers. They point to the fact that international migration can lead to conflicts in the host countries, and also stress particularly the negative consequences for the areas of origin, especially the loss of labour and intellect. They point out that it is generally the best and the brightest, the young, able-bodied people who leave first. Where migrants do decide to return to their home country, they say, this is mainly a reflection of failure. Return migrants are likely to be the old, sick and unsuccessful, and skills brought back are unlikely to be of much help in countries of origin. The poorest, with the worst training, and the disabled, without networks, therefore remain behind and those who fail are the first to return. This has unavoidable negative effects in the sending region. To the extent that these are compensated by money transfers, a high measure of dependency is created. In addition conflicts can easily occur between migrants and non-migrants, and undesirable patterns of regional inequality arise since migrants tend to originate from particular areas within countries.<sup>2</sup>

Although there are these opposing views, a growing consensus is now emerging that, although international migration does not automatically lead to

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<sup>2</sup> See for example the chapters on Morocco, Indonesia and India in van Naerssen, Spaan & Zoomers (forthcoming 2007).

favourable effects, it can contribute to development and poverty reduction, provided an appropriate and consistent policy is pursued (UNFPA, 2004). International organisations (UN, IOM, ILO etc.) and national governments of numerous countries are now actively involved in maximising the link between international migration and national development. There are many different initiatives aimed at streamlining international migration and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and governments of sending and receiving countries are increasingly involved in streamlining their attempts to manage migration in the optimum directions.

However, much of what is happening today is taking place on the initiative of the receiving countries in the North, and is possibly dominated by their wish to control or restrict migration, and to protect their borders. Little is known about how governments in the sending countries perceive migration, whether they see international migration as a positive or negative force in their attempt to achieve national development, and about what kind of policy initiatives are currently being taken to optimise development impact while restricting negative consequences.

### The state of the art

In order to achieve a better understanding of the perception of migration and current policy initiatives in countries of origin, we invited a selected group of experts from sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and Latin America and Europe to participate in an expert meeting, held in Nijmegen, Netherlands, in August 2006. The meeting was attended not only by academic researchers, but also by government officials and representatives of diaspora and migrant community associations. During the meeting we dealt with a wide variety of questions, including the views of sending countries with respect to the rapid outmigration of skilled and unskilled labour; the perception of sending countries about the impact of remittances; the advantages and disadvantages of temporary and/or circular migration in comparison to those of 'permanent' migration; perceptions about return migration and how this is linked to national development; and the implications of international migration for national development and poverty reduction strategies. In this section we present an overview of the debates at the meeting.

The participants at the meeting agreed that migration is multidimensional and cannot be reduced to simple causalities. The root causes of migration are complex and can be traced to poverty, lack of employment opportunities, especially for the youths, and a feeling of dismal economic and political prospects. The failure of many states in the South to foster democracy, transparency and popular participation has intensified poverty and emigration pressure. At the

same time, globalisation, improvement in means of communication, and some Northern-initiated policies (trade, agricultural subsidies, structural adjustment programmes) have inadvertently forced people to consider migration as an option – in order to survive.

The bulk of migration is taking place within the South, such as labour migration from many African countries to neighbouring states. This South-South migration is also taking place among the world's demographic giants, as can now be seen in the emerging Latin America-Asia and Asia-Africa connections. More attention needs to be paid to this hitherto little-acknowledged dimension.

Migration policy in sub-Saharan Africa appears to be a relatively new field. Despite the fact that migration is an old topic, and that much research has been done during the last decades, it is not a consolidated policy field – not even in the case of experienced 'diasporic states' such as the Philippines, Mexico, China and India, the Caribbean to the UK, or Turkey to Germany.

To the extent that African countries deal with migration, the agenda is very diverse and is unfolding only gradually. While some countries are preoccupied with issues of human trafficking, others are exploring how to make a more productive use of remittances and of the contributions the diaspora can and do make to home-country developments. Yet others are focusing on the problems related to transit migration, or are concerned with questions such as how to deal with the human rights of citizens abroad, including aspects of reintegration of their nationals forced to return. There are clearly also important differences in the way countries deal with problems of 'brain drain or brain gain': some countries are actively involved in considering how to retain people, or how to bring them back, whereas others are actively trying to locate and lure their experts into strategic positions, in order to generate development benefits at home.

An interesting topic is how governments could mobilise diasporas, and what roles diaspora organisations can and do play in development. Much emphasis tends to be given to how to increase the flow of remittances (for example by reducing the transaction costs) and to encouraging collective remittances for development purposes. Attention should, however, also turn to 'attracting foreign investment' – as is happening in China – and on how to create employment (with special attention to the youth) in order to make policy regarding mobilising diaspora's remittances more development-relevant.

In devising policies and programmes, it is also important that diaspora organisations – as well as local governments, donors and NGOs – do not lose sight of the interests of local migrant entrepreneurs. Remittances might compete with local interests and even cause employment losses; thus it is important to create an enabling environment for investments in general, not only for migrants. There is also the risk that migration might generate forms of inequalities

(regional, local, religious, gendered) which would have the unintended consequence of failing to contribute to social development.

Donors see migrant and diaspora organisations as potential agencies for a more active role in development cooperation, based on the belief that migrants are well-informed about their home countries and are therefore considered 'capable' of contributing to development processes through projects in their areas of origin. Looking at migrants' organisations from the perspective of the country of origin, however, shows all kinds of complications: not only in the Philippines but also in China, India and other countries with a huge diaspora, such projects are coming in from many directions and diverse sources. It is not clear then how these projects should be incorporated into national development strategies, or how they should become part of poverty alleviation strategy papers (PRSPs) and processes of decentralisation, or how to guarantee that they will reflect local priorities.

The flow of remittances to sub-Saharan Africa is very low (in comparison with to Asia and to Latin America), and only a relatively small group of countries – the group with considerable diaspora – is able to benefit from them. To the extent that remittances are sent home, this will often be at the benefit of a few core regions, with a bias in favour of some groups. How should governments of sending countries then use these remittances for stimulating national development? And what are the implications for countries not connected to remittance flows? There is much debate about how to reduce transaction costs, but what about reducing the costs of migration, such as the transportation of migrants and the huge costs of communicating by telephone that many poor migrant families find themselves confronted with.

Migration is a dynamic process, and it is important to better understand causalities and new trends. In destination countries, emphasis has been on strengthening the capacity for border control – a strategy to control international migration more effectively, to restrict the number of irregular migrants. There is an increasing surveillance of migrants – including those who arrive for family reasons or for legitimate work – due to the fear of their overstaying, and undocumented migrants are increasingly criminalised. Some of the Southern destination countries (Nigeria, South Africa, Botswana, and Senegal) are developing 'Northern' agendas and responses (restrictive policies, xenophobia, etc.).

As a direct response to more restrictive policies in the destination countries, migration routes are becoming diversified, complicated and more dangerous. Migrants are forced to hire smugglers and traffickers, or other brokers, in order to cross borders, and are spending longer periods of time 'in transit' – yet little attention is given to the problems of transit in policy debates. Migration to the North (for example to the Netherlands) should not too readily be considered as a

‘final destination’, but should realistically be seen as a ‘conduit’ or ‘transit’, as migrants move further (for example in the direction of the UK or even the USA).

Current images (migrants on boats arriving at the coast of Spain, and so on) create a ‘fear of invasion’ in the North. They do not provide people in the South with realistic information about the risks of migration or how to avoid them, nor do they provide people from the North with an adequate recognition of the (potential) benefits that may accrue from migrants. More attention needs to be given to the importance of images and information – including the role of the media – in managing migration. There is also an urgent need to incorporate migration into educational curricula, to help promote a better understanding of the roles migrants can play in the development of countries of origin and destination, and also to create space for migration researchers to become more actively involved in policymaking.

### Policy issues

Migration needs to be tackled as a global issue. It is no longer logical to make distinction between countries as being sending, receiving or transit, since many countries have to deal with all these three dimensions at the same time. Its dynamics and interconnectivity can best be appreciated when migration is perceived as a system, rather than focusing only on specific flows such as South-North migration.

Among the major policy issues are the following:

*Circular migration:* Circular migration is being flagged as a win-win situation provided that sufficient attention is given to how to prevent brain drain and stimulate brain gain. The circular migration debate is presented as a strategy for coping with urgent labour needs in the destination countries of the North. The possibilities of also using circular migration as a solution to the urgent labour needs in the South should be systematically explored. In that context, the free circulation of workers in sub-regions should be promoted, while at the same time recognising and working to combat the limitations of existing guest-worker models of circular migration in the North.

*Remittances:* Remittances are private transfers to families to alleviate poverty, and governments of receiving countries should endeavour to provide an enabling environment to facilitate their productive use. To strengthen the development impact of remittances, the costs of migration (recruitment fees and documentation), the cost of remitting, and the costs of loans should be reduced, while also creating a more facilitating investment environment, by reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks in business registration and multiple tax regimes.

*Migration of skilled professionals and ethical recruitment:* Emigration of skilled professionals hampers the attainment of MDGs, especially in the health sectors of poor countries. The direct recruitment of professionals undertaken by countries of destination through unfair competition should be discouraged. At present the North decides how many workers to recruit, and from where, and often unilaterally selects the best workers in the international market.

The countries of destination should be promoting a shared responsibility with the countries of origin concerning local needs in terms of professionals (education and training, and research infrastructure) and in the spirit of co-responsibility, should be helping foster local development of the countries of origin, to reduce poverty and create domestic employment.

The ‘compensation’ for the brain drain may take the form of supporting projects involving professionals going back to sending countries for short periods to work in public structures, special programmes, education, and so on. There is also a clear need to promote bilateral (and/or regional) agreements for the mutual recognition of titles and accreditation.

*Diaspora:* The countries of origin should invest more in strengthening linkages with their diaspora communities, involving and promoting all migrant associations overseas, and offering cooperation and assistance to well-established NGOs managing the diaspora philanthropy locally and trans-nationally. They should also be avoiding unnecessary taxes and bureaucratic delays. Best practices should be documented and officially recognised. They should also provide infrastructural facilities and concrete opportunities for overseas nationals to invest in their home country, and should promote the active involvement of local communities, to strengthen the self-development potential. Countries of origin should develop and implement reintegration programmes for returnees, to foster the possibilities of investment and entrepreneurship. The countries of destination could help to facilitate such processes, for instance by supporting diaspora-development linkages through co-development programmes.<sup>3</sup>

*Governance of migration:* Countries of origin and destination should promote migration governance, including providing data, monitoring, assistance and protection of migrants. Migration policies are international by definition and should be discussed at regional, bi-regional and multilateral levels in order to establish common standards of protection, and promote policy coherence in migration management. Countries should take responsibility for preventing rights violations such as trafficking and xenophobia, and more attention should be paid also to the impact of images – such as the streets of European cities being ‘paved with gold’ – and the media. An institutional framework for

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<sup>3</sup> See for example Abad *et al.* 2005 (in Spanish).

dialogue, consultation and cooperation among all stakeholders in migration matters should be promoted at local (national), sub-regional, regional, inter-regional and global levels.

### Organisation of the book

The chapters of this volume are either selected from the presentations given during the expert meeting referred to above (Mozambique, Botswana, Senegal, the Philippines, Mexico, China), or are based on one of the field missions (Burkina Faso, Kenya, Nigeria) that were part of the larger research project on international migration and national development.<sup>4</sup> The focus for the chapters is the development of a coherent international migration policy that can contribute to the fight against poverty, and encouraging policy makers to pay more attention to migration.

This introductory chapter presents a general overview of the issues as these appear currently in the international migration debate in the context of sub-Saharan Africa. It gives a summary of the conclusions that were the result of an expert meeting on the same subject, and presents an overview of the other chapters in this volume.

In Chapter 2, Adepoju explores how migration can help sub-Saharan Africa to contribute to development. While stressing that migration poses real policy difficulties, it is his conviction that migration has immense potential for migrants, and for countries of origin and of destination, and that, if well managed, migration can be a win-win-win situation for all constituents. He presents a broad overview of how sub-Saharan African governments address the issues of migration policy and management – currently a very heterogeneous situation which in many cases has not yet resulted in any coherent policies. The future benefits – and the development impact of migration – will very much depend on the willingness and ability of governments to facilitate ‘free labour mobility’, and collaboration in sub-regional economic organisations. Such benefits will also depend on factors such as agreements for combating irregular labour migration and trafficking, the ethical recruitment of skilled professionals, policies for encouraging the return and retention of skilled migrants, the role of the diaspora in the development of countries of origin, and the role of migrant remittances and incentive regimes in promoting productive domestic investment (as well as their potential for addressing emigration pressure at places of origin). He also stresses that much will depend also on the wider migration context,

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<sup>4</sup> See ‘Acknowledgements’ in this volume.



showing that the real challenge will be to develop an international framework to manage migration comprehensively.

Adepoju continues, saying that migration policies should take into account – rather than ignore – the logic of the labour market and limits to regulation (IEMed, 2004). Improving the economic situation in immigrants' countries of origin is crucial both to retain skilled nationals still in the country and to stimulate the return of those needed for development at home. This calls for cooperation between rich countries and labour-exporting poor countries, to help sub-Saharan African governments enhance economic growth, generate employment, and reduce poverty amongst their populations – with the potential effect of actually curtailing emigration to rich countries. The chapter concludes by stressing the need for mutually beneficial trade regimes, South-South and South-North collaboration in the capacity-building of officials, research and improved migration-related data systems, and other examples of bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements.

Similar conclusions, but less optimistic, and stressing the need for a more active role for African governments are drawn by Oucho in Chapter 3 where he focuses on the 'quartet of migration issues': brain drain/brain gain, the diaspora, remittances and return. He stresses that 'there is more rhetoric and action' in the current situation, and that among the issues that need to be taken up by African governments is the lack of bilateral agreements between the countries of origin and the countries of destination – to make sure that migration will contribute to development in Africa. Other issues are fiscal changes necessary in African countries to stimulate the inflow of remittances (which nowadays benefits only a few African countries, namely those with well-established links with destination countries in the North); problems related to brain drain (where the brain-gain becomes brain waste in countries of destination, it can in no way become a gain to the African countries); restrictions on attracting back human capital (converting brain drain into brain gain) to stimulate development in the continent; the lack of Africa-based research to generate information for formulating policy in countries of heavy emigration; the lack of informed policy and programmes emanating from the policies in most African countries; the failure of African countries to engage the Washington Consensus, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other international organisations in meaningful roles for the quartet in their development agenda; and the inability of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) to move beyond rhetoric to sponsoring tangible activities to ensure a positive contribution regarding the African brain drain and gain.

While making a distinction between different types of diasporas, Oucho highlights four important strands of utilisation of the African diaspora in development. These are partnership of countries in the Mediterranean region,

French initiatives in the field of co-development in a number of ex-colonies, the Cotonou Agreement – a framework initiated by the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries – and a number of IOM<sup>5</sup> initiatives aimed at strengthening the development potential of migrants' associations (including MIDA and TOKTEN). According to Oucho, information about international migration is so patchy and uncoordinated that it does not influence development in Africa. At the same time, he stresses that in order for African countries to benefit from migration, priority should be given to exploring a number of challenges: African countries should focus on anticipating (new) possibilities for circular migration (while considering the introduction of a 'brain tax' to be paid by countries of destination); factoring African emigration into WTO trade talks, including Mode 4 of the Doha Round; paying more attention to virtual return (instead of physical return), as long as skilled migrants have no compelling reasons to return; critically reviewing how remittances can contribute to national development (which will not occur automatically); and experimenting with policies (e.g. dual citizenship) in order to stimulate diaspora migrants to invest in the development of their countries of origin, while taking care that migration is incorporated in PRSPs and mainstream policies. The author concludes that the onus is on African countries to prescribe viable solutions for the region – rather than depending on the countries of the North and international organisations, and the aggressive encroachment of the emerging Asian economic powerhouses.

*South-South migration: Burkina Faso, Mozambique and Botswana*

The following chapters deal with migration perceptions and policy initiatives in specific countries, showing the huge diversity in the current situation – which is not always visible from the destination countries (since they usually have a view 'tunnelled' by South-North migration). We focus first on countries whose migrants do not normally arrive in the northern countries, because the dominant migration flow is directed at southern destinations. Examples are Burkina Faso (Chapter 4) and Mozambique (Chapter 5). These two countries also have in common the fact that they are among the poorest countries of sub-Saharan Africa and that international migration is directed mainly at neighbouring countries (rather than towards northern destinations). Burkina Faso and Mozambique are both characterised by a considerable diaspora, but the majority of these live in the neighbouring countries and the stream of remittances is relatively small in comparison to the flows coming from northern destinations. Their governments

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<sup>5</sup> The International Organization for Migration.

are involved in dealing with poverty and domestic matters rather than focusing on issues appearing on the international migration agenda.

In Chapter 4, Broekhuis clearly illustrates the gap that exists between the international migration agenda and 'local' matters of concern in the field of migration. Topics of special interest in Burkina Faso include rural exodus and urbanisation; the living conditions of returnees and repatriates; internal migration and access to land; remittances; international migration and the spread of diseases, and conventions and migration legislation in the West African region. Long-distance mobility and migration have a lengthy history in West Africa, and migration has a positive connotation in all circles of society. Migration is seen as a free choice – remittances being presented as an important factor for improving living conditions.

At the moment, the Burkina Faso government is mainly involved in dealing with internal and South-South migration. Migration to neighbouring countries is still a more important issue in the migration debate than migration to Europe (France, Italy) and the United States. The country has to deal with substantial internal migration streams, resulting in agrarian colonisation and urbanisation, which both require particular policy attention. The most important migration issue in recent years has been the forced return of Burkinabé migrants from Côte d'Ivoire and its consequences for the country as a whole and for the returnees in particular.

The re-entry of returnees has fuelled a national discussion about access to land, and reintegration, while at the West African level the debate centred around the regulation of informal migration and how to secure the migrants' rights. At the same time, however, the Burkina Faso government hopes the country can profit more from international migration to northern countries and points to the example of India as an exporter of highly qualified labour. According to officials, the ageing populations in Europe offer possibilities for Africans on the European labour market, and temporary South-North migration can favour fundamental productive investments and knowledge transfer. The risk of a brain drain is recognised, but this has not yet been translated into policy measures. In fact, the attitude of the government is ambivalent in this matter. Adequate knowledge of the future needs of labour markets in the North was not apparent during the discussions the author had while on an academic mission to the country. The authorities seem to be inadequately informed regarding the ageing of northern populations, and a possible resulting growth in demand for labour in Europe. The government's efforts in the field of mobilising the Burkinabé diaspora are still in their infancy. With the aid of the IOM, the first phase of a project in this area is near completion, so that an overview of qualified Burkinabé who live abroad and are willing to utilise their skills and knowledge in Burkina Faso will be available.

A similar situation is found in Mozambique (Chapter 5). Raimundo describes how, from this country too, internal migration and South-South migration are the dominant migration flows (there is not much migration to Europe or other northern destinations). International migration from Mozambique consists of a massive regional exodus to southern African countries, especially South Africa, but also to Zimbabwe, Swaziland and Malawi, and here too migration is not a new phenomenon. People have always moved in times of need, and in different directions (which formed part of different natural regions). In the case of Mozambique, population movement was especially high during the period of armed conflict (1976–1992). With migration flows contributing to urbanisation, and an orientation towards southern destinations, Mozambique is increasingly playing a role as receiving country (not only from Nigeria, and the African Great Lakes region, but also from China, Pakistan and Lebanon). People from China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Lebanon and Ethiopia are increasingly using Mozambique as a gateway to South Africa. The Mozambique government has not yet succeeded in developing policies for attracting back – or benefiting from – people in diaspora, nor has it developed a policy for controlling transit migration. A strong limitation to implementing suitable migration policies is the lack of data.

Finally, the case of Botswana (Chapter 6) shows how South-South migration can be ‘reversed’ while contributing to economic development ‘at home’. Searching for a way to diversify and supplement their incomes, Botswana people had, for a long period of time, migrated to South Africa to be employed in the mines. This was usually done on a part-time basis (circular migration). Gwebu shows how international migration towards South Africa had positive development impacts when the Botswana was poor – migration was central to contributing to state revenues through the payment of taxes, and customs and excise on remitted goods. However, there was a down-turn in emigration rates once the country’s economic fortune changed with the discovery and exploitation of diamonds. Preceded by a period of large-scale migration to South Africa, Botswana succeeded in becoming an ideal economic development model – with a buoyant economy, honest bureaucracy, democracy and political stability – which went hand in hand with a ‘reversal of migration’.

Botswana has started to become an immigration area, attracting people from abroad, while experiencing rapid economic growth. At the same time however, along with an improvement of the socio-economic wellbeing of the population, there is a growing inclination among the better off to move in a northern direction (the UK and the US). This kind of international South-North migration is perceived as a risk for Botswana’s development potential, given the detrimental effects of brain drain (having especially negative implications for the medical sector). According to Gwebu, priority should be given in migration policy needs

to interventions aimed at promoting circular migration as a means to stop brain drain. In addition, also in the light of the declining labour recruitment to mines, Botswana needs to pursue and intensify its efforts to create more local employment opportunities, in order to cater for the returning migrants and to retain any potential ones.

*South-North migration and diasporic states: Senegal, Nigeria and Kenya*

There is also another category of countries, however, with considerable South-North migration and 'diasporic states' with considerable migrant populations overseas. Their national governments are actively searching for ways of optimising the benefits of international migration. Many of these countries play important roles as destination areas for South-South migration within their regions. Examples are Senegal (Chapter 7) and Nigeria (Chapter 8), and also Kenya (Chapter 9) and Botswana (Chapter 6). Many of these countries are actively involved as a partner in all kinds of agreements and partnerships that are currently underway.

According to Wabgou in Chapter 7, Senegal is one of the countries to have addressed the migration of its people as a foreign and public policy issue, and to have started dealing with these migration flows as a global reality in Africa, Europe and America. Through a number of bilateral agreements, the government has begun taking steps to promote migration policies, and to improve cooperation in migration management, as well as in the facilitation of movement across borders in Africa. It has become increasingly obvious to policy makers that migrations from Senegal, both to other African countries and to the industrial countries and the mega-cities of the North, are related to global processes which go beyond modern nation-states, which are based on concepts and borders. In Senegal, prioritised themes related to international migration include migration and development, irregular migration as a result of more restrictive policies in the destination countries, brain drain and brain gain, and problems related to transit migration. In their attempt to implement migration policies, the government has focused on the need for administrations at local, provincial and national levels to improve the domestic investment environment, to help promote the productive use of remittances, to lower customs duty, taxes and fees on specific imported products and services, and to improve information-sharing, data building and access and management on migration.

Wabgou shows that some important issues have not yet been included in these agendas, in spite of government actions in these fields, and that there is still much to do. This includes boosting productive activities through remittances; training and giving support to immigrants who wish to return; involving immigrants and the Senegalese elite in projects of cooperation; and creating favourable conditions of life and work for potential migrant populations and

returned migrants – this last involving education and job creation strategies in rural and urban areas, as a local alternative to international migration.

Also in Nigeria, Africa's demographic giant, the government is well underway in developing migration policies while trying to benefit from the diaspora overseas (Chapter 8). On the basis of a field mission, de Haas describes how Nigeria witnessed a 'reverse migration transition, transforming itself from a net immigration to a net emigration country'. Nigerians have increasingly emigrated to countries such as Ghana, Cameroon, and particularly the wealthy economies of Gabon, Botswana and South Africa (Adepoju, 2004), in addition to northern destinations such as Europe, the US and the Gulf states. At the same time, however, Nigeria has also remained a migration destination: Most non-ECOWAS foreigners have to obtain a visa to enter Nigeria, and Nigeria plays an important role as destination area within the region (just as Senegal, Ivory Coast etc. also do). According to de Haas, Nigeria has pursued a largely *laissez faire* policy, and it has actively intervened only in the case of trafficking.

It is relatively recently that Nigeria has become actively involved in developing policies in other sub-fields of migration. Since European countries started to put pressure on Nigeria to collaborate in the re-admission of irregular migrants, the Nigerian state seems to have embarked upon more active emigration policies through negotiating immigrant quotas in countries of the North, in exchange for collaboration with re-admission. Nigeria is actively involved in exploring how to get its diaspora involved in national development, and how to keep immigration under control. Current policy efforts illustrate the types of bottlenecks that African governments have to deal with while trying to strengthen the link between migration and development. These involve using the diaspora in national development. Security and trust, as well as an environment conducive to development and investment, are important conditions for being successful in involving diasporas in home development. Problems of trafficking and illegality can be solved only with close collaboration between the sending and receiving countries (recognising that protection of the rights of foreign immigrants in Nigeria should improve – just as the situation of Nigerians emigrants overseas should).

In Kenya – a leading refugee hosting state throughout the 20th century – the government is increasingly active in controlling migration and trying to optimise its development benefit while minimising its negative implications (Chapter 9). Rutten and Muli describe how Kenya developed into a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children trafficked for forced labour and sexual exploitation. Destinations are the Middle East, other African nations, Western Europe, and North America for domestic servitude, enslavement in massage parlours and brothels, and manual labour. Current policy initiatives focus on dealing with the refugee and trafficking issues, but

increasing attention is also being given to how to control immigration (transit migration); and how to strengthen the role of the diaspora in national development. The introduction of an International Jobs Office and new mechanisms to transfer remittances from the Kenyan diaspora back home should be mentioned in this respect.

*The 'experienced' migration states: The Philippines, Mexico and China*

There are only a few countries in the world that have considerable experience in 'managing migration' and knowledge of how to use diasporas as a motor for development. Using the lessons learnt in these countries could help sub-Saharan Africa in successfully optimising positive results while minimising negative implications. Examples of 'experienced' migration states are the Philippines, Mexico and China, and it is in this final part of the book that we make a comparative analysis of sub-Saharan Africa with Asia and Latin America, trying to find out what lessons can be learned.

The Philippines (Chapter 10) is an example of an 'experienced' migration state, having celebrated in 2006 a century of international labour migration. Baggio shows how, during the past thirty-five years in particular, millions of Filipinos have left the country to seek greener pastures overseas, dispersed from the United States to Saudi Arabia, the EU, and many other destination areas. In the course of time, the Filipino state, and also civil society, has developed various mechanisms for maximising the benefits of international migration (in particular the economic impact of remittances) while also minimising its cost. Among the fields that seem crucial for increasing the development impact of international migration, is the need to build a strong and vibrant domestic economy: exporting labour cannot substitute for a long-term plan to reduce unemployment through the generation of domestic jobs. Governments have critical roles to play in creating a sound economic and political environment so that the remittances and skills of overseas workers can be properly used. In addition there is much concern about how to protect Filipino workers overseas (how to monitor these people's movements and conditions of work, and how to protect migrant's rights), and how to deal with social problems (partly related to the preponderance of female migrants). Attention is given to other matters such as how to facilitate (re-)integration after return, and how to streamline and coordinate the efforts of the thousands of Filipino migrants' organisations all over the world, to contribute to 'national' development.

In Chapter 11, Marchand focuses on the case of Mexico, which also has a long migration history and where governments and civil society have become very much involved in policies and programmes aimed at improving the development impact of international migration. During the past century, large numbers of people have left Mexico, but here the diaspora is not dispersed, but

concentrated in the United States. In comparison to the Philippines, the diaspora is more settled (less mobile and less temporary), which means that Mexican-Americans are in relatively better circumstances for organising themselves as an important political role-player, with the potential to influence the political agendas of both the US and Mexico. Together, Mexico and the US are therefore increasingly developing into a transnational space, and policies and social action aimed at maximising the benefits and minimising the negative impact are increasingly driven from two sides (the US and Mexico – diaspora and those ‘left behind’).

In the past decade many efforts were made by the US to ‘close the border’ with Mexico, and all kinds of measures were taken to keep migrants out. These measures were not very effective: what the increased controls accomplished was not so much reducing the flows of Mexican migrants into the US, but rather ensuring that once migrants had crossed the border they would stay in the US for extended periods of time, because circular migration had become increasingly costly and too risky. In Mexico, migrants are nowadays considered ‘heroes’ and the Mexican state is giving much priority to establishing close relations with Mexicans in the US. Current attempts to co-finance development projects on the basis of remittances and governments funds show how difficult it is for civil society and the state to collaborate (due to a lack of trust) to make the development projects economically feasible.

The chapter on China (Chapter 12) shows how people have been involved in international migration for centuries, and how overseas Chinese have played an important role as bridges between China and the outside world. Leung shows how, since China adopted its reform and opening-up policy in the late 1970s, overseas Chinese and foreigners of Chinese origin have played an indispensable role in China’s efforts to cooperate and have exchanges with foreign countries. This has involved introducing large amounts of overseas funds, entering the international market, and selling home-made goods to all parts of the world. Here the attention has not been so much on ‘remittances’ (as was the case in the Philippines and Mexico); much more importance is given to the ‘entrepreneurial’ interest of people overseas in making investments in their ‘home country’. The Chinese case is a good illustration of how diasporas can play a role, not only as a source of direct investment, but also as a marketing channel for selling products manufactured in the home country. Cultural factors (language etc., and also cultural policies) seem to have helped as a marker for excluding foreign investors and keeping business opportunities reserved for the Chinese diaspora. The Chinese state has played an important role in stimulating resourceful overseas Chinese to invest and/or to return, and in exploiting what is seen as ‘brain power stored overseas’.



Compared to the policies in the three forgoing cases of countries with substantial diasporas overseas, policies to optimise the impact of international migration on development ‘at home’ in sub-Saharan Africa are indeed in their infant stages. As the contributions in this volume show, African governments and civil society actors need to develop clear views on the role and impact of international migration. Some countries have no policy at all; others differ in addressing such diverse aspects as brain-drain, trafficking, control of migration and – what we consider a key issue – improving the domestic investment climate. Bilateral and multilateral agreements are important tools in dealing with these issues.

In Chapter 13, Zoomers and Adepoju give a general overview of different types of migration in relation to the potential of countries, making distinctions between countries with South-North migration, countries with South-South migration, and diasporic states. This classification makes clear that, where migration is concerned, it is no longer sufficient to divide the world into origin- and destination-regions, connecting them with arrows to indicate migrant and capital flows. There is a wide variety of ways in which countries are incorporated into the migration system, and this has direct consequences for the possibilities of profiting from migration. Diasporic states and countries with directed South-North migration generally find themselves in a relatively favourable position, while countries with South-South migration appear to be increasingly faced with fresh restrictions.

Zoomers and Adepoju indicate the heterogeneity and dynamics of migration routes, showing a number of recent trends indicating that the world has ‘shrunk’. Compared with in the past, people are now much better able to bridge great distances in a short time and to maintain intensive contact with their areas of origin, and important changes have taken place in the composition of migration flows as a result. At the same time, in reaction to restrictive policies of the North, changes have occurred in the manner of travel, and new transition zones and migration hubs have arisen between places of origin and destination. There seems to have been a rapid increase in human trafficking and illegality, and migrant’s lives seem to have become more vulnerable. Zoomers and Adepoju conclude by giving an overview of issues that are central to today’s migration agenda, analysing this from the perspective of the various sending countries.

The book is concluded by Chapter 14 (Zoomers and Adepoju), which gives a summary overview of current policy initiatives. Although attempts have been made by policymakers to maximise the positive impact of international migration or to restrict its negative implications, most sending countries in sub-Saharan Africa do not yet have well-established policies in this regard. It is a new policy field and there is a wide variety of topics which very much depend

on the particular position of countries. The authors show that there is some overlap between the ‘migration and development’ agendas of northern and of southern countries – increasing the flow of remittances, combating human trafficking, improving border controls, stimulating brain gain, etc. – but this is very much dependent on the country under consideration, and within the South there are considerable conflicts of interests between countries. At the same time, however, it is shown that consistent migration policies could contribute to combating poverty. The book is concluded with a number of concrete policy recommendations.

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# Perspectives on international migration and national development in sub-Saharan Africa

Aderanti Adepoju

## Introduction

In the twenty-first century, sub-Saharan Africa has come to a crossroads economically, politically and demographically. It is a region of contradictions: rich in resources, its peoples are becoming poorer by the day. Efforts by several countries to restructure their economies and open their markets to share in the global economy have been disappointing. Recurrent internal instability and conflicts have spurred disruptive population displacements. Wars and civil unrest generate migrants and refugees as political destabilisation severely erodes the meagre developmental progress of the post-independence decade (Adepoju, 2001). Sub-Saharan Africa is thus a region of diverse migration circuits – as origin, destination and transit for labour migrants, undocumented migrants and refugees, and of brain circulation for professionals. These migrations take place predominantly within the region.

In this region, completely grounded in poverty, emigration pressure is compounded by demographic dynamics, unstable politics, endemic ethno-religious conflicts, persistent economic decline and environmental deterioration. From an apparently bright future during the era of independence and into the early

1970s, through the deteriorating economic and political conditions of the late 1970s and '80s, to the perception in the 1990s of a dismal future (see below), many Africans now see migration as their last hope for improving their living standards (Adepoju, 2006b).

Sub-Saharan Africa has experienced all types of migration configurations – from, within and outside the region. Distinctive forms of migration characterise the various sub-regions: labour emigration from western and central Africa to developed countries and the Gulf States; refugee flows within eastern Africa; labour migration from eastern and many southern African countries to South Africa; and clandestine migration in West and East Africa. All these are changing dynamically.

The migration configuration is extremely complex. Traditional patterns of migration are feminising, migration destinations are diversifying, and migration of entrepreneurs is replacing labour migration. In addition, brain circulation within, is slowly supplanting brain drain from, the region. Trafficking in human beings, the changing map of refugee flows and the role of regional economic organisations in fostering free flow of labour, complete the circuit (Adepoju, 2004a).

The countries of sub-Saharan Africa face daunting challenges arising from complex and dynamic migratory trends – including the emigration of skilled and unskilled persons, both male and female – that compromise the possibility of attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). There are at the same time opportunities with regard to huge migrants' remittance flows and the diaspora's role in national development.

This chapter presents a broad overview of perspectives, best practices and lessons learnt with respect to migration and development policy coherence – or the lack of it; migration management through bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements; the role of migrant remittances and incentive regimes in promoting its productive domestic investment; diaspora transnational activities; and co-development programmes and their potential for addressing emigration pressure at the origin. The focus is on specific examples of how sub-Saharan African governments address the issues of migration policy and management (promoting managed migration through bilateral and multilateral agreements and preventing irregular labour migration); migration and development (co-development programmes, promoting the ethical recruitment of highly skilled persons, initiatives to attract back and retain qualified nationals, measures to reduce the cost of remittance transfers); and sub-regional economic integration for intra-regional labour mobility. The paper concludes by stressing the need for mutually beneficial trade regimes, South-South and South-North collaboration in capacity-building of officials, research and improved migration-related data systems.

### The setting for migration

The dominant migration in sub-Saharan Africa is rural-to-rural and for many it has also served as an alternative to rural-urban migration. In addition, the distinction between internal and international migration is blurred by the close cultural affinity between homogeneous peoples on opposite sides of national borders – situations in which migrants regard intra-regional migration as an extension of internal movement. The limited prospects of, and options for, internal migration in the face of deepening poverty and socio-economic insecurity have transformed some of the migration that would otherwise have taken place only internally into replacement migrations within urban areas, sequentially emerging as emigration across borders to more prosperous countries (Adepoju, 2006a).

The region's fragile ecosystems are also forcing populations to migrate to coastal regions. Many marginalised farm labourers, pressured to abandon work and life in the rural areas, migrate to the cities, or even to neighbouring countries, simply in order to survive. Unstable and lowly-paid local jobs help explain why migration persists in the region in the face of worsening urban unemployment.

Political instability resulting from conflicts is a strong determinant of migration in the region. The political landscape in the region is unstable, unpredictable and volatile. Dictatorial regimes often target, harass and intimidate students, intellectuals and union leaders, spurring the emigration of professionals and others. The loss of state capacities and the breakdown of states, rooted in the precarious democratisation process, the vacillating effects of structural adjustment programmes, and human insecurity have also prompted a variety of migratory movements, including refugee migration (Adekanye, 1998).

Sub-Saharan Africa has been a theatre of internecine warfare for the past three decades. From 1969 to 1990, seventeen of the world's recorded forty-three civil wars which caused major refugee populations were in Africa, including 'high intensity' civil wars in Angola, Liberia and Mozambique. In Sudan, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, and Burundi, ethnic tensions played visibly important roles in such conflicts. Disagreements between ethnic groups with respect to access to political power and resources have resulted in a variety of responses, including emigration, internal displacements and exile. The turbulent and unstable political situation has aggravated rapidly deteriorating socio-economic conditions. Repressive totalitarian regimes which divert scarce resources from development activities to military expenditures, coupled with inconsistent policies, have scared investors and stifled development (Adekanye, 1998). In Angola, Mozambique, Liberia and Sierra Leone, basic infrastructure

in schools, hospitals and homes were devastated by war, and family members scattered far and wide.

Macro-economic adjustment measures, widespread poverty and human deprivation, the deteriorating quality of life of the population and an excruciating external debt have also constrained development efforts in the region. Until the debt burden of twenty-five of the twenty-nine most heavily-indebted poor countries was eased by the end of 2005, the capacity to mobilise resources for socio-economic development, and to generate employment for the youth, was severely constrained by debt-servicing that swallowed nearly two-thirds of export earnings.

The gloomy picture painted above is far from static. In the last five years there have been remarkable developments in the economic and political arenas. The bright signals are nevertheless mixed. Many countries – Liberia, Sierra Leone, Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo – are more stable, although Côte d'Ivoire, Somalia, and Sudan's Dafur are currently embroiled in crisis. Many others – Ghana, Zambia, Angola, Gabon, Nigeria, and South Africa – attained growth rates of 6 per cent or more in recent years, thanks, in some cases, to the high prices of minerals in the world market, as well as to increased aid. Yet many people remain poor, living on less than a dollar a day – a situation that has remained static since the 1990s – while other regions have advanced by leaps and bounds (UN, 2006b).

Many who work are in the informal sector with low earnings. Investments in the booming oilfields and mines create few jobs, unlike in farming, services and factories. Even South Africa, the region's economic giant, suffers from an unemployment rate of over 25 per cent. The problem lies with boom-and-bust cycles. Unlike in other world regions, no progress had been made towards reducing extreme poverty by half by late 2005, in line with MDG targets. Rather there has been a deterioration or reversal in many countries and if prevailing trends continue, the target of reducing hunger by half may not be attained by 2015, except perhaps in Ghana and Mauritius (*The Economist*, June 24, 2006: 48).

In this already the world's poorest region, the perception of a dismal domestic economic future has triggered an outflow of emigrants, both male and female. Poverty, crises, worsening economic, political and social conditions and widespread unemployment have contributed to the sustained exodus of both skilled and unskilled persons in regular and irregular situations on a scale not experienced before, to various countries within and outside the region. Women – single and married – are also migrating independently in search of secure jobs in rich countries, as a survival strategy to augment dwindling family income and are redefining traditional gender roles within families and societies.

### Is there, or can there be, a coherent migration policy?

Migration is currently at the centre of a debate, and of disagreement, between rich and poor countries. Governments and citizens in rich or relatively rich countries are worried about irregular migrants, the overstaying of temporary admissions, the abuse of asylum systems, and especially the tangle of repatriating unsuccessful applicants.

Poor countries argue that rich countries need, but do not welcome, immigrant workers who do the unglamorous, low-paying manual jobs which indigenous people are increasingly reluctant to take up. Low-skilled immigrant workers, and many others who have 'deskilled themselves' as a survival strategy, help sustain jobs, not only those that are dirty, dangerous and poorly-paid, but also in other areas. Indeed without these immigrants some services could not function.

Immigrants are often accused of depressing the wages for locals, but this accusation is not as simple as it sounds. In reality, migrants bring with them their energy, fresh ideas and entrepreneurship. Similarly, the argument that immigrants constitute a drain on social services – on education and health in particular – seems to be exaggerated and is not always borne out by the facts (Adepoju, 2003; Heran, 2004). Many irregular immigrants, employed in several sectors of the economy, are exploited and vulnerable, and are often compelled to accept jobs irrespective of risk, physical demands, low and irregular wages, and long or unsociable working hours.

Migration and development policies might have a better chance of succeeding if both sides of the migratory space – circumstances in the country of origin and of that of destination – were taken into account. Indeed a critical ingredient in the formulation of a coherent migration-friendly policy is an understanding of the dynamics and underlying factors of migration both at the sub-Saharan African countries of origin, and at the destinations – mainly rich countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Motives for migration are often misinterpreted, and the contributions migrants make to development are trivialised, resulting in persistent suspicion between migrants and their host societies. In general, migrants are a selected population compared to the non-migrant populations of their societies of origin: they are healthier, better-educated, more enterprising, with sufficient funds to defray the costs of travel, while their settlement can be softened by diaspora and other similar networks. But the positive aspects of migrants as agents of development are rarely acknowledged.

It is now being realised that, although migration poses real policy difficulties, it has immense potential for countries of both destination and origin, as well as for the migrants themselves. The real challenge is how to develop an



international framework to manage migration through comprehensive policies. With increased globalisation, rich countries promote and supply an easier flow of capital, goods and services, while at the same time restricting the movement of labour supplied by poor countries. Rich countries nevertheless need migrants – to meet labour shortages in highly skilled areas, especially information technology and health services sectors, to cope with the long-term trend of ageing populations, and (as has already been said) to fill unskilled jobs that locals do not want to take on. Faced with rising domestic unemployment among ‘underutilised’ workers, rich countries are increasingly more selective, opting mainly for migrants with skills (UN, 2005; Farrant *et al.*, 2006). These increasing restrictions on regular migration merely result in a rise in irregular migration.

Many poor sub-Saharan African countries regard emigration as a way of reducing domestic unemployment, the more so in that it also boosts revenue into the country through migrants’ remittances. Nevertheless, these countries are worried about the detrimental effects of the loss of skilled workers, especially doctors and nurses, on achievement of the MDGs. They are equally aware that excruciating poverty, unemployment, low wages for workers, conflicts and persecution prompt people to leave their home countries to become refugees, asylum seekers and labour migrants. They lament the fact that, even after pursuing World Bank and IMF structural adjustment programmes, few jobs have been created and, in the decade 1994–2004, for example, the number of workers living on less than a dollar a day increased by 28 million in sub-Saharan Africa (ECA, 2005).

Agriculture is sub-Saharan Africa’s main employer, but incomes and productivity levels are low, and the few jobs being created are in the informal economy. The situation is made worse by the region’s disadvantaged position in international trade, where rich countries protect their farm sectors through subsidies, guaranteeing their farmers prices higher than on world markets, thus making it difficult for poor African farmers to compete. African trade ministers argue that the high tariffs and technical barriers to trade cost sub-Saharan African countries about US\$20 billion yearly in lost exports.

The agricultural protectionist policies of the European Union (EU) and the USA – especially farm subsidies on cotton in the USA – which artificially spur the level of local production and depress world prices, impoverish millions of Africans. The USA spends more subsidising 25,000 cotton farmers than it does on its entire aid budget for Africa, and paid US\$4 billion in subsidies on a crop worth US\$3 billion, even though the World Trade Organization (WTO) ruled that the subsidies were illegal. The immediate impact was a loss of US\$301 million by African exporters, with Burkina Faso, Mali and Benin each losing about 2 per cent of their GDP growth. Peasant farmers, especially cotton

producers, in these three countries are abandoning rural areas and migrating to urban unemployment, thus becoming potential emigrants. The new WTO rules, which took effect in January 2005, ended the quota system that had provided a ready market for textiles from poor African countries, and has already cost sub-Saharan Africa an additional 250,000 jobs, leaving more than a million family members in many countries (Lesotho, South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana, Mauritius, Zambia, Madagascar, Tanzania, Malawi, Namibia, Kenya) without stable incomes (UN, 2006b).

The clamour by African leaders to achieve mutually beneficial trade relations with richer countries is tied to deepening poverty. This growing poverty frustrates economic reform and efforts to improve living conditions, stimulate economic growth, and generate employment opportunities. It is in this context that African countries have, through ongoing negotiations at the WTO, been pressing industrial nations to drop barriers to the free movement of labour (UN, 2006b). They maintain that freer migration would be a quick means of increasing their benefits from globalisation. The challenge is to develop policies that are acceptable to both poor and rich countries, and also spur global economic growth.

The African Union's Strategic Framework for a Policy on Migration (AUC, 2004), the draft African common position on migration and development (AU, 2006) and the Road Map for Action on Labour Migration and Development (ILO, 2006) serve as the basis for a comprehensive discourse of migration dynamics and an appropriate platform for mainstreaming migration into development activities at national, sub-regional and regional levels in sub-Saharan Africa. The African Union's (AU) Strategic Framework covers key areas relating to labour migration (national labour migration policies, regional cooperation and harmonisation of policies, regional economic integration); border management; irregular migration; human rights of migrants; internal migration; migration data collection and data exchange; migration and development (brain drain, remittance transfers and Africans in the diaspora), and inter-state cooperation and partnerships. The Road Map is the outcome of the Africa-Europe inter-regional dialogue on labour migration for integration and development, and maps out ways in which labour migration contributes to development and regional integration. The common African position on migration and development is designed to ensure that Africa's concerns are properly reflected at the Africa/Europe dialogue and other international fora. These concerns would be such as those regarding the adverse consequences of the loss of its skilled manpower on the region's development agenda.

### Sub-regional economic organisations and intra-regional labour mobility

The 1980 Lagos Plan of Action, and its Final Act framework for establishing sub-regional cooperation unions are more relevant now than they would have been two decades ago. As envisaged, these will serve as building blocks in a functionalist and gradualist approach towards a continent-wide economic integration that would facilitate intra-regional labour mobility, and promote self-reliant development in the region. This is so because the proposed African Economic Community (to be established by 2025) commits nations to taking the measures needed for the gradual attainment of the free movement of people, and for ensuring migrants full enjoyment of their residence and settlement rights. These goals were reinforced by the adoption in 2001 of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) charter and the establishment a year later of the African Union. However, except for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) rated the performance of these unions as 'low' – based on progress made in regional integration, including the free movement of persons (UN, 2004).

The ECOWAS Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons and the Right of Residence and Establishment, of May 29<sup>th</sup> 1979, remains a benchmark in sub-Saharan Africa as it sets out standards for liberalising the intra-community mobility of labour. The rights of entry, residence and establishment were to be progressively established within fifteen years from the date at which the protocol came into force (i.e. by 1994), but this has not been achieved. The meeting of heads of state and government, held in Abuja at the end of March 2000, aimed at creating a borderless sub-region, and abolished mandatory residence permits. The granting of the maximum 90-day period of stay to ECOWAS citizens by immigration officials at entry points took effect from April 2000. The ECOWAS passport is to serve as a symbol of unity and will progressively replace national passports over a transitional period of ten years. Lately, in June, 2006, ECOWAS was transformed into a commission, and vowed to tackle the problem of youth unemployment and stem emigration in clandestine situations to rich countries.

Economic unions in sub-Saharan Africa tend to be dominated by the economies of a single country, and movements of people have been directed to a limited number of countries within these unions – Botswana and South Africa in southern Africa, Gabon in central Africa, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria in West Africa. The prosperity of these countries was built by migrant labour – cocoa and coffee plantations in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, mines and agriculture in South Africa, forestry and oil fields of Gabon. Resource-rich but labour-short countries – such as Botswana, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire – rely heavily on immi-

grant labour: about 28 per cent of Côte d'Ivoire's population are foreign born and one quarter of the workers in Gabon are foreigners, from countries both inside and outside Africa.

Nationals of Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria – the economic and demographic giants in West Africa – feared that the Free Movement of Persons Protocol would open the doors wide to a barrage of immigrants from the sub-region. A similar fear, entertained by South Africa, Botswana and, ironically, Zimbabwe, led to the watering down of the original 1997 protocol to one entitled 'The Facilitation of Free Movement of Persons in SADC', which was recently signed after countries serially advanced selfish reasons for delaying the signing of the 1997 protocol. The initial six-month visa-free entry period was reduced to three months, and states reserved the right to enter into bilateral agreements with other states in respect of conditions of entry of immigrants (Oucho & Crush, 2001). Zambia, too, refused to sign, fearing an influx of migrants from the DRC (which was admitted to SADC in 1998).

### Agreements for combating irregular labour migration and trafficking

Over the past decade, several initiatives have emerged which aim at fostering improved migration management through cooperation, capacity-building and dialogue. For instance, in 2002, as part of the Berne Initiative, Portugal signed a series of bilateral and multilateral agreements on immigration with some of its former colonies – Angola, Cape Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe – to facilitate the entry of immigrants in regular situations and also to help prevent irregular migration. Belgium and the DRC also initiated a common plan of action against clandestine migrants; both countries' experts conducted working sessions in Kinshasa and Brussels, contributing enormously to a reduction of the phenomenon. The Immigrant Voluntary Return Programme from Spain that took off in September 2003 focused on immigrants at risk: those with integration problems, and the victims of trafficking. Beneficiaries are entitled to training for when they are to return home, are given a free plane ticket and seed money at their destination to help them reintegrate 'at home'. Other bilateral agreements with Nigeria (2001), Ghana, Guinea Bissau and Mauritius (2003) have focused on the management of migratory flows through the repatriation of irregular immigrants in humane conditions, and their readmission at home (see Adepoju, 2004b).

Human rights advocates and NGOs have brought into the limelight the unwholesome human trafficking in the region. They have also pressurised national governments on related matters, for instance domesticating the international laws on the rights of the child, and other victims of trafficking. The

ECOWAS Political Declaration and Action Plan against human trafficking (2001) commits West African governments to ratify and fully implement relevant international instruments for strengthening laws against human trafficking, as well as those protecting trafficked victims, especially women and children, preventing and prosecuting traffickers, and protecting the rights of victims. The common Platform of Action, adopted by officials from West and Central African countries in Libreville in 2002 strengthened cooperation among governments in fighting trafficking and established transit and reception centres for repatriated children. As a follow-up, Benin, Mali, Gabon and Nigeria have established inter-ministerial committees to address the issue of child trafficking (Adepoju, 2005a).

### Emigration of professionals

At independence, sub-Saharan African countries invested heavily in education to train nationals to fill the gaps created by departing colonialists, education being regarded as the main vehicle for rapid development. Within a generation, these countries were able to produce professionals (recently including IT specialists), building on the foundation of science and maths courses. However, education has expanded faster than the absorptive capacity of these countries' economies. The small private sector and the bloated public sector have absorbed few graduates, resulting in graduate unemployment. Many students sponsored to do post-graduate studies in technology, science and engineering abroad have stayed away at the end of their studies. Emigration of highly qualified professionals from Uganda, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Nigeria and Zambia to South Africa and to outside Africa in the 1970s intensified in the '80s and '90s, with qualified persons moving to Europe, North America and the oil-rich Middle East (Adepoju, 2005b).

The global migration market allows developed countries to select – unilaterally and freely – who should be admitted, what skills combinations and income profiles they should have, when they should be admitted, and for how long. All this without reference to the countries of origin that have invested human capital in the form of these migrants.

Highly skilled emigrants, though a small proportion of those emigrating, cost their countries in a variety of ways. Sustained emigration of professionals poses a critical problem of replacement of the skilled émigrés. An immediate impact is the lack of capacity to undertake cutting-edge research. In addition, it creates in tertiary institutions a huge vacuum of experienced leaders for the development and training of manpower for a variety of activities, as well as the loss involved in the training of younger cohorts. In many countries of the region, students are now being churned out without the requisite rigour in learning.

In particular, the large exodus of doctors and other health workers has impacted negatively on the training of new doctors and on the quality of health services delivery, in Nigeria (whose top medical specialists work in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, as well as thousands in the USA), South Africa (where people are unwilling to serve in rural areas, and white doctors, fearful of the rise in domestic crime, and attracted by higher incomes, have emigrated to Canada, Australia, the USA and the UK), and Zimbabwe (where about 60 per cent of doctors have moved to Botswana and South Africa as their country's economy has collapsed) (Adepoju, 2003).

Official statistics indicate that 16,000 highly-skilled South Africans emigrated between 1994 and 2001, but the real numbers may be larger as some emigrants have retained their names on local professional registers (OECD, 2005). Other sources indicate that between 70 and 100 doctors emigrate from South Africa every year, and about 10 per cent of hospital doctors in Canada are South Africans (*The Economist*, 13 August 2005). The number of South African nurses in the UK's National Health Service (NHS) rose sharply, from 599 in 1988/99 to 1460 in 1999/2000, then to 2114 in 2001/2002. This has been occurring even as the local healthcare situation, especially in respect of HIV/Aids infection, is worsening, and the previously declining rate of under-5 mortality has reversed in many parts of the region. It is believed that about half of the South Africans living in rich countries – technicians, engineers, doctors and so on – have tertiary-level degrees. The acute shortage of doctors has forced the South African government to recruit foreign doctors, especially from Zimbabwe and Cuba, the latter to work in the under-served rural areas where newly qualified doctors have since 1999 had to participate in community services (Adepoju, 2005b). This example can be multiplied.

Poor countries thus pay the price of producing human capital for use by richer countries while their own development goals are severely constrained by the outflow of scarce skilled manpower (UN, 2006a). Rich countries are acting independently, by luring specialists from Africa and other poor regions through schemes such as the USA's Professional, Technical and Kindred programme, the UK's Highly Skilled Professional Recruitment, and recently, France's three year 'talent' work permit for highly skilled professionals, Germany's Green Card scheme and so on (*The Economist*, 6 May 2006: 29). African leaders argue that the importation of skilled manpower from poorer into rich countries is but a short-term solution to the problem of acute skills shortage; in the long-term the solution lies in improving training and educational opportunities in the North.

### Ethical recruitment of skilled professionals

The Code of Practice for the international recruitment of health workers, adopted by Commonwealth health ministers in 2003, provides governments with a framework within which international recruitment of health workers should take place. Intended to discourage the targeted recruitment of health workers from countries which are experiencing shortages, and to safeguard the rights of recruits and the conditions relating to their profession in recruiting countries, the Code emphasises that recruitment of health care workers should be transparent. It encourages fairness and recommends that recruiters should not seek to recruit health care workers who have any outstanding obligation to their own countries, and must furthermore provide full and accurate information to potential recruits. The Code also states that governments recruiting from Commonwealth countries should consider ways of facilitating the return of those recruited, and establish training programmes to enable those who return to do so with increased skills. Other elements of the Code include: ensuring that recruits fully understand their contracts; that specific requirements should be made known to recruits; and that Commonwealth countries should explore and pursue additional strategies for retaining trained personnel (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2003).

In effect, the Code affirms the principles of transparency, fairness and mutuality of benefit when rich countries are recruiting health workers. It frowns on the 'poaching' of poor countries' scarce health professionals – and other professionals – who are also in short supply in their home countries, especially since sustained recruitment of such personnel threatens the viability of crucial health programmes. Indeed, 'haemorrhaging of health professionals from African countries is easily the single most serious human resource problem facing the health sector today' (Scott *et al*, 2004: 174). The loss of trained professionals has, for instance, severely limited the ability of health workers to combat the HIV/Aids epidemic or achieve any substantial progress in malaria eradication, and attainment of the MDGs. Yet the leaders of sub-Saharan African countries seem helpless, caught between the right of individual professionals – doctors and nurses – to choose to migrate in the face of overwhelming push-pull factors, and the critical local need for such personnel. Moreover the feasibility of the Code depends on rich countries adhering to a voluntary agreement; at the moment Africa spends over US\$4 billion a year on the salaries of foreign development assistance experts tied to aid – instead of utilising the skills of local experts.

It took criticism of the UK by someone of the stature of Nelson Mandela (in 1997) for the aggressive and unethical recruitment of nurses for that country's Department of Health (DOH) to issue guidelines to all NHS employers in

November 1999 urging them to refrain from actively recruiting in third world countries, especially in South Africa and the Caribbean. This led to some decline in the number of nurses registered from these countries, although NHS trusts were not prevented from accepting unsolicited applicants from overseas. In addition, the guidelines did not apply to the private sector or to recruitment agencies, but in September 2001 a more detailed code of practice was issued which included guidance on working with recruitment agencies and reiterating that NHS trusts should not recruit in developing countries (identified only in early 2003) unless the DOH had a formal agreement with a particular country (Buchan & Dovlo, 2004).

The problem with ethical codes, though, lies with their enforcement. The DOH Code of Practice and associated developments are in fact intended to make international recruitment more effective. The bilateral meeting of health ministers within the context of the South Africa-United Kingdom Bilateral Forum reflects a recognition of the challenges facing sub-Saharan Africa in respect of the emigration of health professionals from South Africa.

Examples of bilateral or multilateral efforts to promote guidelines for the ethical recruitment of migrant workers, and to explore mutually beneficial approaches to ensure an adequate supply of educated and skilled health personnel, are rare in sub-Saharan Africa. The South Africa-UK Memorandum of Understanding on the Reciprocal Educational Exchange of Healthcare Concepts and Personnel of October 2003 promotes the recognition of qualifications of South African health professionals and enables them to work for a specified period in organisations providing NHS services in the UK. They then return with newly-acquired skills and experience. In return, over eighty UK health professionals are working in South Africa's underserved rural areas (Adepoju, 2004b).

### Role of the diaspora in the development of countries of origin

Migration in sub-Saharan Africa is a linked emigration-diaspora-return continuum. Sub-Saharan transnational communities rarely sever ties with home, and regard their sojourn away as temporary, the ultimate aim being to return home eventually, even if only on retirement. This is manifested in the investment portfolios of these migrants. The people of the diaspora are active in political advocacy – especially in Nigeria and Ghana – and in charity and cultural exchange. Their associations help new arrivals adapt and insert themselves into labour markets, and they mobilise members' capital for community development projects 'at home'.

Ghanaians who live abroad have become sources of financial flows and technology transfer, and also serve as a bridge into the country for international



ideas, investment and capital. Members of the Ghanaian diaspora in the UK are also actively involved in modernising the democratic process, for example gaining concession for its members to vote in national elections.

Nigerian diaspora organisations have been established and a skill audit is being conducted in Europe, the Americas and other African countries with large concentrations of Nigerians. An annual summit of the Nigeria diaspora is held in Abuja to transfer expertise in technology, in agro-business, IT and so on. In Nigeria as well as in Ghana, a group of professionals have returned home to participate in the new political dispensation and are serving in key political offices in commerce and industry.

Diaspora organisations are increasingly investing in projects in their home countries. An example is the MIDA-Ghana project for strengthening the Ghanaian health sector: migrants from Ghana in the Netherlands (in collaboration with the Ghanaian and Netherlands embassies) have developed strategies to involve Ghanaian health professionals in the Netherlands and the UK in supporting the implementation of health-sector reform in Ghana. In another initiative, a group of Nigerian doctors in the USA is engaged in setting up state-of-the-art hospitals in selected locations in Nigeria to cater for the health needs of nationals who would otherwise have to seek treatment abroad at exorbitant cost.

In 2002, several organisations active in home development activities in France merged into a national platform – the *Forum des Organisations de Solidarité Internationale Issues des Migrations* – to provide members with relevant information and training, and to facilitate dialogue and co-operation with organisations abroad, as well as with civil society, and local and national authorities. Migrants' associations encourage Beninise doctors resident in France – there are more Beninise doctors practicing in France than in Benin – to engage in voluntary work in Benin for one month each year. This is an initiative worth promoting, and even extending to other professions. Such practice would also be beneficial to countries like Malawi where more of its doctors are practising in Manchester, UK than in their own country, and Ghana where about 60 per cent of its doctors have emigrated to practise in rich countries (Adepoju, 2006c).

Building networks between diaspora scientists and their colleagues at home enables these professionals to contribute to the development of home countries without residential relocation, but the stiff immigration policies of rich countries deny many scientists the flexibility of relocation. Given favourable working conditions, many skilled professionals in the diaspora would prefer to return home to contribute to the development of their countries.

### Policies for encouraging the return and retention of skilled migrants

Leaders in Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana and Uganda are exploring strategies to attract nationals back, to contribute to local development. They have held meetings with their nationals in the diaspora, encouraging them with offers of incentives to return. But leaders must also address the ‘push’ factors that spurred the brain drain in the first place, and provide returnees with places to work in environments conducive to productivity, and with due reward for their efforts.

Migrants may have acquired skills and capital that can be productively invested back home but these skills may not match available job opportunities. In this context, we need more evidence-based research on lessons learnt from the Return and Reintegration of Qualified Nationals in Africa document, produced by the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2004), that facilitated the return, retention and reintegration of about 2000 professionals for country-of-origin development.

A number of initiatives have been launched to attract skilled professionals back to Africa and to utilise their expertise through networks. These initiatives include the Digital Diaspora Network Africa launched in mid-2002, the South African Network of Skills, the Research and Development Forum for Science-led Development in Africa, and the African Foundation for Research and Development. Their main focuses are: to reverse the loss of highly-skilled professionals in short supply in the region; to target expatriate graduates in medicine, education and engineering (South Africa); to identify Africans in the diaspora interested in returning home to offer their skills for country-of-origin development; and to relocate professionals from countries experiencing crisis to other countries where they can be productively engaged. Such initiatives should be supported by those rich countries that are currently haemorrhaging the region of its skilled professionals, and by development partners. Such appeals, already launched by South Africa to Canada and the UK, should be heeded globally.

Many African emigrants hope to return home at the nearest opportunity – providing that the conditions there are acceptable. Informed by this scenario, some foreign international corporations in Europe have launched programmes to recruit Africans in the diaspora to work in their firms in Africa. The Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals project aims to persuade Malians established abroad to return, at least temporarily, and thus contribute to national development. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has paid for 133 Malians to return as consultants to teach and do research in local universities.

The Homecoming Revolution, an online initiative, encourages and assists South Africans living abroad to return home, backed up by financial and business services from the country’s First National Bank. The Ghana Home-

coming Summit (2001) focused on enhancing dialogue and exploring opportunities for productive relations and for identifying ways of tapping into the acquired capacities of Ghanaians living abroad, for the creation of national wealth. In 2002 the Ghana Dual Citizenship Regulation Act allowed Ghanaians to keep their Ghanaian citizenship after obtaining the citizenship of another country. The Non-Resident Ghanaians Secretariat, set up in May 2003, promotes links with Ghanaians abroad and encourages them to return. The Representation of the People Amendment Bill extends voting rights to Ghanaians domiciled overseas.

Senegal and Mali have taken steps to facilitate the emigration and return of nationals resident abroad and to promote remittance-sending by these emigrants. In Senegal, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad was set re-structured in 1993 to enhance the welfare of nationals abroad, including their repatriation and rehabilitation. Emigrants are thus encouraged to be actively involved in the socio-economic development of Senegal. Mali created a ministerial-level post to conduct public relations visits to help receiving countries appreciate the peculiar situation prompting the emigration of Malians. It also informs potential Malian emigrants regarding job and residence requirements in receiving countries. Consular positions have been expanded in the major receiving countries to deal with the return of nationals, and emigrants are encouraged to send money home regularly. Such information on rules and regulations guiding entry, residence and employment abroad is useful to potential emigrants in sending countries such as Lesotho, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, Zaire, Ghana, and so on.

Overall, a major challenge facing sub-Saharan Africa is how to retain, effectively utilise, and attract back the rare skills of its nationals, which are required for national development. Initiatives aimed at identifying and attracting back skilled professionals – engineers, medical doctors, professors, scientists, information technologists and the like – and utilising their expertise for national development should be encouraged and supported by development partners and rich countries. Political leaders courting nationals to return home must also address the internal factors that prompted the brain drain. Remittances may help offset its negative effects, but they do not compensate for losing the contributions that these skilled emigrants could have made through training and the transfer of expertise to younger cohorts at home.

### Migrants' remittances for productive investment

Migrants' remittances are a major source of income in many sub-Saharan African countries, especially Burkina Faso, Ghana, Eritrea, Lesotho, Mali, Senegal, Somalia, Burkina Faso and Cape Verde. Remittances have been rising

steeply and now parallel export earnings and official development assistance (ODA) (Ghosh, 2006; Azam and Gubert, 2005). They help sustain and enhance the livelihoods of poor resident members; they pay, in particular, for basic health care services; they pay education fees for siblings; they are used for investing in real estate, and for enhancing agricultural production through improved irrigation schemes and other agricultural inputs – as in Mali and Senegal – and they are used for improving basic infrastructural facilities through hometown associations. In addition, alleviating poverty among poor households has multiplier effects within local communities and within the economy of the country as a whole.

Migrants also foster ‘social’ remittances by way of ideas and social capital. These can affect attitudes towards human rights, women’s rights, the value given to girls’ education and to women’s employment.

The discourse in sub-Saharan Africa is now about how to make remittances work productively for poor recipients, communities and countries. For a long time, certain economists have held that remittances are being used for conspicuous consumption, and that they fuel inflation and aggravate inequalities. These notions should, in the African context, be viewed in terms of the following considerations: migration in the region is essentially a household decision-process and, increasingly, a survival strategy. Emigration of poor people has sometimes been funded through cooperative assistance or outright loans, and remittances are designed initially to repay such loans.

In poor communities that lack the basic services normally provided by government, the pressing needs are for better housing, for funds to pay for school fees, textbooks and uniforms, and for access to basic health services – all of which migrants’ remittances supplement or pay for. Migrants work hard to earn their money and should be free to spend it to fulfil their most pressing needs and those of their families. The investment portfolio of international migrants conforms to those of internal migrants and non-migrants, except that for the former the volume of investable funds is substantial. Many migrants harbour the ambition of ultimately returning home and investing in trading, or in refurbished or new buildings (the construction industry in the region is labour intensive, generating jobs and incomes for masons and family members).

Let us take Senegal as an example: the estimated 2.5 million emigrants sent about US\$618 million home in 2004: a third of the national budget, excluding informal transactions. The government acknowledges the role of these migrants’ investment in the building of schools and hospitals. Another example is Ghana, where the Central Bank of Ghana estimated that US\$1.2 billion in remittances flowed into the country in 2004 – and the total may be much higher if money remitted through informal channels is added to the amount. Such remittances are critical to the economy because they are the second most important source

of foreign exchange after exports, and also have an important distributive effect because they reach poorer rural areas and women (Mutume, 2005; Bump, 2006).

The governments in Ghana, Senegal, Mali and Kenya promote migrants' remittances for investment, and use their embassies to disseminate information on domestic investment opportunities to their nationals abroad. The rapid upsurge in the remittances of Ghanaians in the diaspora since 2003 is, in part, a response to their government's favourable (tax and related) incentive-based policy environment. These funds were invested in real estate or used to set up micro-enterprises and build clinics and schools. When the Ugandan government implemented measures permitting residents to open foreign currency accounts locally, private transfers to the country increased from US\$80 million in 1991 to US\$415 million in 1996. In October 2002, deposits in foreign exchange accounts made up about 28 per cent of all deposits in the country (Sander and Maimbo, 2003). France's annual aid to Mali of US\$50 million is about the same as the amount remitted by Malians resident in France – to support health clinics, build schools, repair roads, and invest in small business enterprises in their home communities.

Many migrants use mainly informal channels to remit money. High transaction costs and the risk of apprehension and deportation discourage them from using official channels. To send money home, irregular migrants – vulnerable, exploitable, and insecure – opt for informal, trust-based human courier systems, and networks of traders. This process avoids exchange rate fluctuations and overcomes the bottleneck of poor accessibility to remote rural areas where recipients live. Indeed, Senegalese emigrants use the indigenous, trust-based traditional human courier system, called the Kara International Exchange, as well as a network of traders, visiting relations and associates, to send money home.

All stakeholders – governments, financial institutions, regulatory agencies, hometown associations, migrant communities, researchers and development institutions – should work in concert in exploring opportunities and minimising obstacles for sending remittances, and in particular in lobbying for low-cost transfer services and less stringent regulations, in order to increase the micro-meso-macro level productive use of this source of financial aid. In a welcome development, some banks in France are now offering a special transfer scheme to Senegal, Mali and Côte d'Ivoire, with significantly lower fees than private money courier services, but this does not overcome the problems of possible deportation faced by irregular immigrants to that country.

Policy research is needed on how best to make remittances work productively for poor recipients (individuals, households and communities), as leverage for poverty reduction, without increasing dependence, and how to reduce

the reliance of rural dwellers (the majority of sub-Saharan Africans) on remittances. It is in this context that we need to be aware, and investigate systematically, the behaviour of second- and third-generation immigrants, who are less likely to send remittances or to retire 'home'.

While development partners, international financial institutions – especially the World Bank and the IMF – researchers, and policy makers are showcasing the huge remittance flows, which are essentially private transfers (Ghosh, 2006; Sorensen, 2004; Azam & Gubert, 2005), we should not be tempted, as seems to be the discourse in some quarters, to identify remittances with development funding, or to see them as a substitute for such aid. In reality, few countries have unfettered access to such remittances. The exception is Lesotho, which entered into a bilateral agreement with South Africa in the 1970s to ensure that its nationals working in South African mines remitted 60 percent of their earnings through the bank in a compulsory 'deferred payment scheme' (Adepoju, 2003).

We should also not forget that emigrants suffer isolation, endure unsociable working hours, and are alienated from their partners and their children. This last often results in marital and family disruptions, especially in the case of female independent migrants. Many migrants, males as well as females, endure job dissatisfaction as a result of under-usage of their skills, and face long-term prospects of skills loss which can result in problems of reinsertion into domestic job markets when they return home when they are older.

Our enthusiasm about remittances, their volume, and usefulness, should therefore not distract us from the need to refocus attention on the various levels of trauma that migrants face at destination – at personal, family and community levels.

### Co-development schemes

The Cooperative Efforts to Manage Emigration initiative, a project set up between France and some of its former colonies, focuses on how countries of origin, transit, and destination can work together to coordinate migration movements and reduce emigration pressures. As President Jacques Chirac told the France-Africa Summit in Mali in December, 2005, 'Together, Africans and Europeans, we have a duty to dismantle the illegal immigration networks, behind which hides an appalling and mafia-like traffic ... Together, we must encourage co-development and enable Africans to enjoy decent conditions for living and working in their own countries.' (UN, 2006b: 16).

Mali, Comoros and Senegal have been targeted by France for 'co-development', to link migration and development policies. A Mali-France Consultation on Migration was established in December 2000 as a bilateral discussion at

ministerial level, to foster closer cooperation between migrants' source and destination countries. Under the terms of this agreement, representatives of the two countries meet yearly to deal with issues relating to the integration of Malians who want to remain in France, with co-management of migration flows to allow migrants to circulate between their home countries and abroad, and with cooperative development in core emigration localities in Mali. The programme targets aid in core emigration regions, helps build infrastructure, stimulates job creation, supports education, health care and infrastructure development and income generation. Malians abroad are mobilised for their country's economic development through small enterprises. The programme has also helped some migrants to return voluntarily and become self-supporting – the cost of repatriation is being used to encourage voluntary return in a more humane manner while also providing livelihood for returnees, who are mostly unskilled workers. A year into the programme, only about five hundred such immigrants had agreed to return voluntarily to Mali in exchange for US\$3600 each, to start businesses in agriculture, hairdressing, importing used auto parts, sewing traditional clothes, and so on. Two years on, 80 per cent of the participants were still in business (Magoni, 2004). This example, though limited in both coverage, scope and number of participants, could be expanded and replicated elsewhere.

### Institutional capacity for managing migration

In most sub-Saharan African countries, the institutional capacity required to manage migratory flows and for effective policy formulation and implementation is weak, and needs to be strengthened through the training and retraining of key officials. Capacity-building of officials – customs, immigration, police and security – to allow them to deal efficiently with the managed movement of persons and the rights and obligations of migrants, is most crucial and urgent and should be a continuing process.

The training of officials in host and origin countries, the exchange of information, and the functioning of networks should be institutionalised to replace on-going ad hoc arrangements. The role of personnel presently acting as border control and security officials has to be transformed (partly) into that of migration management. Training should include ways of identifying people in need of international protection, and respect for the rights of migrants and refugees, in accordance with international norms and conventions. In this respect, the Network of Migration Research in Africa (NOMRA) can play a leading role in the capacity-building of researchers and officials.

Greater institutional strengthening will require human and financial resource input. Cooperation between the North and sub-Saharan African governments is

crucial in combating irregular migration and trafficking in persons, the more so because strict immigration policies in developed countries actually fuel markets for trafficking and smuggling and irregular migrations. In the same vein, cooperative research and information-sharing between countries of origin, transit and destination, and increased operational contact between law enforcement authorities to share information on smuggling routes and methods of interdiction should be encouraged (Adepoju, 2005a).

### Where do we go from here?

Globalisation and ‘liberation’ contain severe contradictions, and have, for a variety of reasons, not benefited sub-Saharan Africa, since it has not been optimally incorporated into the global economy. Tariff regimes have been lowered, and free trade promoted, but with no corresponding inflow of foreign direct investment to stimulate job creation and with little or no impact on labour migration (UN, 2006a, 2006b). Globalisation implies free movement of capital and information, yet the movement of persons is still curtailed.

Migration is increasingly becoming part of the global process – aided by communication and information flows – and can no longer be handled solely within a regional set-up. International migration will become more important in the future as prospects for internal and intra-regional migration are increasingly limited – indeed are shrinking – as a result of generalised poverty, unemployment, inadequate land tenure, and socioeconomic insecurity. This strongly indicates a need for the development of a comprehensive framework and a co-ordinated implementation of policies and programmes, to help stimulate domestic employment and prevent large-scale migration.

Their long-standing debt burden has dramatically reduced the capacity of sub-Saharan African governments to mobilise resources for development. African leaders strongly believe that the international community has a responsibility to help promote sustainable development and strategies that could alleviate poverty in the region and hence forestall pressures for emigration.

Although migration in sub-Saharan Africa is mainly South-South, the collapse of some traditional receiving countries implies additional pressure in the near future on Europe’s borders by desperate job seekers. Countries that were once immigrant-receiving (Ghana, Côte d’Ivoire) have metamorphosed into migrant-sending countries. Since the late eighties, traditional labour-importing countries (such as Côte d’Ivoire) and attractive destinations for migrants (Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia, Zimbabwe) have experienced endemic political and economic crises, which also spur out-migration of their nationals. That pressure is building up but could be eased by putting in place mechanisms that would allow for more regular immigration as a means of improving both



the lives of immigrants themselves, and, through their remittances, the lives of those left behind. This is also compatible with intervention programmes aiming to reduce the emigration pressures at the source regions.

Determined to force their way into Europe, irregular migrants are expending tremendous resources, both physical and financial. Sub-Saharan African governments should tap into these resources and support these youths in self-employment rather than allowing them to perish in the desert or the sea, as many do, in a desperate search for the illusory Golden Fleece. Governments, in partnership with the private sector and civil society, must put poverty issues at the top of the political agenda and mobilise and strengthen self-help capacities and individual initiatives at local level.

Disadvantageous terms of trade for sub-Saharan Africa's primary products and the deteriorating agricultural sector provoke different patterns of migration: traditionally directed to the cities, but increasingly to other countries. Agricultural subsidies in the USA and Europe have had a negative effect on the income of over ten million farmers and their families in Benin, Kenya, Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Togo and Ghana, forcing most of these people to migrate to the cities, in a desperate bid for survival. Having mutually beneficial trade relations with rich countries is a key strategy for improving living conditions, stimulating economic growth, and generating employment opportunities.

Sub-Saharan African governments want migrant-receiving OECD countries to explore avenues for regular temporary migration – as a means of reducing the option for irregular migration by desperate youths. They should also investigate the consequences and costs of policing irregular migration. These governments need to channel development assistance into job-creation projects, in order to make investments in social capital pay off. Policies for alleviating poverty and creating employment for the teeming unemployed youth should be the cornerstone of the region's development agenda, aligned with mechanisms for a stable macro-economic environment favourable to growth, to generate employment opportunities and foster enterprise and self-sustaining livelihoods in the region.

The report of the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM, 2005) introduced three important elements into the migration discourse, namely development, demography, democracy – the 3Ds. African leaders lament the fact that their efforts to restructure their economies, liberalise trade and open up their markets have been disappointing, as these efforts have not been rewarded in terms of better access to world market, nor in the form of increased foreign direct investment. Many sub-Saharan African countries are on course in their efforts to democratise the political space, but nationals are impatient because the dividends of democracy seem still to be out of reach.

In most of sub-Saharan Africa, rapid population growth intensifies poverty and hence emigration pressure. The human and financial resource capacities of

sub-Saharan African countries need to be reinforced to manage their demographic dynamics, generate employment and moderate migratory pressures. All too often we concentrate on economic and political aspects and policies, ignoring the crucial demographic dimension. Sub-Saharan Africa's rapidly growing population places tremendous strains on the development process, and creates conditions for migration through its linkages with unemployment and potential labour force growth.

Economic integration offers a long-term prospect for stimulating intra-regional labour mobility. Recent efforts to create a borderless ECOWAS should be replicated by other sub-regional economic groupings. These economic units should be revamped to play a larger role in the management of intra-regional labour migration, and to provide viable local and regional alternatives to migration to Europe. National laws should be harmonised through regional and sub-regional treaties to address the rights of residence and establishment of migrants, and other obligations of the host countries.

Dialogue and cooperation between the North and sub-Saharan Africa is generally weak. An integrated and comprehensive approach to migration management policy development and implementation should involve all partners engaged in the migration policy arena – the government sector, the private sector, civil society, trades unions, employers' organisations, migrants' associations, and the media – to promote close collaboration between and among these divergent constituencies, which often have conflicting interests. Greater dialogue, and a more consultative approach could help balance the interests of sending and receiving countries and of migrants themselves.

Sub-Saharan Africa leaders insist that rich countries have a moral responsibility to assist programmes for the orderly return and reintegration of migrants, especially of skilled professionals whose expertise has been productively utilised in those rich countries, although the initial human capital investment was borne by their home countries. These leaders are bemused by fresh attempts by the UK, France, and Germany – among others – to institute special schemes for recruiting professionals from poor countries, including sub-Saharan Africa. Instead of such schemes, rich governments and international organisations should be helping these poor countries participate effectively in, and benefit appropriately from, world trade and global markets.

### Improving data

Information on migration within, from and to sub-Saharan Africa remains patchy and needs to be upgraded. Migration data management is crucial to the formulation of relevant and comprehensive migration policies and programmes. Of special significance is the potential role of migration observatories in

providing governments and other stakeholders with reliable and harmonised migration-related information. Such observatories, when established, could be linked to the Euro-Mediterranean Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration and ultimately to the European Migration Network. Their aim would be to provide a comprehensive picture of the origin-transit-destination migration system. The collection of up-to-date information on migration across borders will have to be factored into the data-gathering procedures, by supplementing conventional censuses with special collaborative border survey data collection, timely analysis, wide dissemination and intelligent use.

## Conclusion

Migration from and within sub-Saharan Africa features diverse configurations, although it is essentially a continuum of internal, intra-regional and international circulation. As migration grows in volume, most countries support a whole range of simultaneously occurring types of migration, serving at a single time as origin, transit and destination for labour migrants, migrants in regular and irregular situations, brain drain from the region, and brain circulation of professionals within it.

The sub-Saharan region is burdened with poverty, unemployment and socio-economic insecurity, which have drawn more and more people into circular migration or into temporary migration to a variety of destinations. Some of the migration that would otherwise take place internally is now likely to emerge as sequential intra-regional and international migration – after replacement migration to urban areas. Consequently, the migration configuration in the region has become extremely complex. Emigration of skilled health and other professionals, huge remittances flows, and the diaspora's role in country-of-origin development, coupled with trafficking in human beings, irregular migration and a changing map of refugee flows, are the key migratory configurations that must reorient policy directions in the coming decades.

A major development issue in sub-Saharan Africa is the productive employment of the millions of educated youths who scramble for work, and the region is likely to be one of the largest sources of potential emigration in the future. The capacity of sub-Saharan African governments to generate viable employment for its youths is weakened further by the limited size of internal markets, and especially by the disadvantages imposed on these countries by the new era of globalisation. Poverty alleviation and employment generation for the teeming unemployed youth should be the cornerstone of the region's development agenda, and governments should institute incentive-based tax regimes to attract migrants' remittances and ensure their productive, employment-generating investment. They should channel development assistance into poverty

alleviation and job creation projects, to make constructive use of investments in social capital.

Political leaders are increasingly interested in promoting migrant remittances for investment purposes, and are using their embassies to disseminate information on domestic investment opportunities to their nationals abroad. But migrant remittances do not compensate for the potential contribution of skilled emigrants through training and the transfer of expertise to younger cohorts at home.

A major challenge now facing the region is how to retain, attract back and effectively utilise the rare skills of its nationals, as is required for national development. Initiatives aimed at identifying and attracting back skilled professionals and at utilising their expertise for national development, should be encouraged and supported by development partners and rich countries. African transnational communities rarely sever ties with home, but political leaders courting nationals to return with offers of incentives must also address the push factors that spur the brain drain, so that returnees can work in environments conducive to productivity, with reward for effort.

Bilateral and multilateral agreements between countries sending and receiving migrants should address the issue of depleting sub-Saharan Africa of its scarce skilled-manpower resources. It is important that the residential laws of rich countries be made flexible, to give skilled professionals from the South the opportunity of relocating without losing their residence rights in those countries.

Peace and stability are prerequisites for investment, development and employment-generation. Both richer and poorer countries should make concerted efforts to resolve the contagious conflicts of the region. Good governance can help curtail skills flight and the self-exiling of the intelligentsia.

In many countries, the institutional capacity required to manage migratory flows, and for effective policy formulation and implementation, needs to be strengthened through capacity-building of officials. The key role of trade relations, and especially the short and long term effects of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements on migration, is not yet appreciated by many migration stakeholders and should be explicitly recognised while conducting trade negotiations.

Rich countries should factor into their development programmes cooperation with sub-Saharan African countries at both bilateral and multilateral levels, and should work with or through vibrant diasporic associations active in development projects at home, as well as with financial institutions, to reduce migrants' remittance transfer costs and risks – costs for those sending through the formal system, and risks for migrants in irregular situations using formal courier systems, which might result in their being apprehended and deported.

Most important is the need to systematically remove the high tariffs and technical barriers to trade that cost the region billions of dollars yearly in lost exports – exports that would provide the much-needed revenue for development and employment-generation, and thus reduce emigration pressure. Rich countries should open their markets to goods produced from sub-Saharan Africa: goods whose manufacture is labour-intensive and job-creating, which in turn stimulates economic growth.

Policy dialogue is a useful mechanism for engaging all stakeholders in matters of migration management, and this must be institutionalised. It is important that migrants' associations be included in this process – dialogue and consultative approaches could help balance the interests of all concerned.

Migration in sub-Saharan Africa remains, however, largely regional, and its problems should be addressed within the framework of NEPAD, which aims to strengthen regional economic groupings and play a larger role in the management of intra-regional labour migration. For sub-Saharan African countries that remain ambivalent regarding the principle of free movement of persons, and reluctant to modify domestic laws and administrative practices, now is the time to align national laws with sub-regional treaties, to facilitate intra-regional labour mobility, and the establishment and settlement of migrants. Lessons learnt from ECOWAS in creating a borderless sub-region should be replicated by other sub-regional organisations.

To conclude, while posing real policy difficulties, migration has immense potential for migrants, countries of origin and of destination, and, if well managed, migration can be a win-win-win situation for all constituents. The real challenge is how to develop an international framework to manage migration comprehensively. As the World Congress on Human Movements and Immigration report emphasised, migration policies will be ineffective where they ignore the logic of the labour market and limits to regulation (IEMed, 2004). Improving the economic situation in immigrants' countries of origin is crucial both to retain skilled nationals still in the country, and to stimulate the return of those needed for development at home. This calls for cooperation between rich countries and labour-exporting poor countries, to help sub-Saharan African governments enhance economic growth, generate employment, and reduce poverty amongst their populations – with the potential effect of actually curtailing emigration to rich countries.

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## African brain drain and gain, diaspora and remittances: More rhetoric than action

John Oucho

### Introduction

International migration has become an integral part of globalisation. A scenario being popularised, though not unanimously accepted, is ‘migration without borders’ (MWB) which, ideally, would increase the free movement of people (Pecoud & de Guchteneire, 2005). To this end, Andreas and Snyder (2000, quoted in Pecoud & de Guchteneire, 2005) argue that migration is now structurally embedded in the economies and societies of most countries because once both sending and receiving countries become dependent upon the phenomenon, it is unstoppable. In addition, in this era of globalisation, states face a dilemma because borders must be business-friendly, remaining open to international trade or tourism. As Castles (2004: 860, in Pecoud & de Guchteneire, 2005) contends, ‘migratory movements, once started, become self-sustaining social processes’. These are developments that the countries of destination in the North have recognised as they attempt to control immigration from the countries of the underdeveloped South. Despite these developments, African countries and institutions dwell on debating the pros and cons of brain drain and brain gain, diaspora, remittances and return migration in the context of national



as well as regional (read African) development, the countries being long on rhetoric and theorising, but short on tangible action programmes.

This chapter surveys symptomatic instances of the stock and flows of each member of the ‘migration quartet’ – namely brain drain/brain gain, the diaspora, remittances, and return – and then considers how African countries of emigration could best manipulate these four issues in their development agenda through appropriate actions rather than engaging in perpetual rhetoric. Among the issues that need to be analysed are the lack of bilateral agreements between the countries of origin and the countries of destination – to streamline proper utilisation of the quartet in Africa. Other issues are fiscal changes necessary in African countries to stimulate the inflow of remittances; attracting back ‘brain drain’ (converting it into brain gain), as well as others from the diaspora, to stimulate development in the continent; the lack of Africa-based research to generate information for formulating policy in countries of heavy emigration; the lack of informed policy and programmes emanating from the policies current in most African countries; the failure of African countries to engage the Washington Consensus, the World Trade Organisation and other international organisations in meaningful roles for the quartet in their development agenda; and inability of NEPAD to move beyond rhetoric to sponsoring tangible activities to ensure a positive contribution regarding the African brain drain and gain, and the roles of the diaspora and remittances in the region’s development. The chapter concludes that the onus is on the African countries to prescribe viable solutions for the region – rather than depending on the countries of the North and international organisations, and the aggressive encroachment of the emerging Asian economic powerhouses.

### The quartet on everyone’s lips

Ordinary as well as scholarly discussions on international migration in or about Africa dwell on the so-called quartet of brain drain/brain gain, the diaspora, remittances and return. That much of the discussion relies on data from the countries of destination suggests that little is known about the perspectives of African countries involved with the quartet<sup>1</sup>. This section sheds light on each of

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<sup>1</sup> Previous North-based investigations of international migration include the UK House of Commons International Development Committee (see HCIDC, 2004); research on migration and poverty sponsored by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the IOM and the World Bank; Sweden’s Expert Group on Development Issues–EGDI (see Lucas, 2005); and the Global Development Network (GDN). The report of the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) makes recommendations of interest for countries of both origin and destination (see GCIM, 2005). The African Union (AU), unlike its predecessor, the

the four, avoiding detail that is easily available in the literature, including a growing number of informative websites.

### Brain drain – conceptual and data issues

Definitions of brain drain or skilled emigration are generally imprecise, both conceptually and in terms of data sources. The lack of reliable data is caused mainly by the inability of countries of origin to keep records of their emigrants (Skeldon, 2005). While developing countries often consider it a loss (although in certain cases a blessing in disguise) when the most well-informed people emigrate, developed countries contend that it reduces unemployment problems in the countries of origin, thereby constituting a ‘safety valve’ (Glaser, 1978: xxii). McDonald and Crush (2002: 6–7) advocate using the term ‘the skilled’ because the term ‘skilled’ includes people who have worked their way up the corporate ladder, those with their own successful businesses, and those who play a critical role in the public sector. Iredale (1999) prefers the term ‘skilled migration’ which encompasses brain drain, transitory or permanent movements of professionals, and job transfers. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD–SOPEMI, 1997: 21) prefers the term ‘highly skilled workers’, which includes degree holders or those with extensive experience in a given field or its equivalent. Recently, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) has sought to reverse the brain drain and convert it into ‘brain gain’, as well as to involve the African diaspora in Africa’s development.

It is surprising that the exact interpretation of brain drain by countries of origin in the underdeveloped South is unclear, which means that the concept denotes what the countries of destination in the developed North define it to be. What is interpreted in scholarship as ‘brain drain’ from the perspective of the North could be a blessing in disguise for those African countries of origin which are finding it increasingly difficult to engage skilled and highly educated nationals in productive sectors of their economies.

### Reasons for emigration

Reasons for the emigration of highly skilled individuals range from breakdown of political and economic order to the globalisation of education (Skeldon, 2005). For example, Adepoju (2001, quoted in Tevera & Crush, 2003: 4) cites

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Organisation of African Unity (OAU), is taking international migration more seriously than at any time in the past, though it is too early to pronounce on the results of the AU’s efforts.

economic and demographic imperatives such as immigrants' taking advantage of the demographic deficit occasioned by an ageing population in the North, and the employment of immigrants either in '3-D' jobs (demeaning, dirty or dangerous) or in specialised jobs *often at much lower wages or salaries* (author's emphasis).<sup>2</sup> Through colonial ties, metropolitan powers have been outsourcing 'designer immigrants' from other countries, who opt for training that would increase their ability to migrate (Skeldon, 2005). African countries could exploit these African-North ties to obtain data on their emigrants, in terms of attributes such as number, economic activity and destination (both general and particular).

### Brain gain: the new African vogue

The literature on brain gain underlines its benefits. These include the contribution of the diaspora regarding increased trade, remittances, knowledge, foreign direct investment (FDI), and the skills acquired in the countries of destination (Lucas, 2005, quoted in Schiff, 2005: 201). Schiff (2005: 203), however, cautions that claims about the size of brain gain in traditional countries of migrant origin, and its impact on welfare and growth there have been greatly exaggerated – the fact that brain gain is smaller than has been indicated in the literature should induce countries of origin to investigate both the assumed and actual contribution of this so-called brain gain. Needing investigation are indications that there is a smaller human capital gain than previously thought; and that the various negative effects on other sources of externalities,<sup>3</sup> such as human capital, welfare and growth, have not been taken into account. These are areas crying out for research – because African countries too readily believe what they hear from the developed North about 'massive positive impacts' of brain gain for them. Where the brain drain becomes brain waste in countries of destination, it can in no way become a gain to the African countries. Again, research is relatively silent on African brain drain in instances where it has become brain waste – a situation of specialists being exploited in foreign lands without the knowledge of their countries of origin.

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<sup>2</sup> A detailed analysis of emigration dynamics in sub-Saharan Africa, based on elaborate research, is contained in A. Adepoju (1998) as well as other sub-regional analyses in Appleyard (1998).

<sup>3</sup> The effects – good or bad – of a certain action or decision on people who did not have a choice in the matter (who were "external" to the action or decision), and whose interests were not taken into account.

### Migrants' remittances

From a study done by the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), it appears that by the late 1990s only Egypt (coming 3rd), Morocco (6th), Algeria (14th), Nigeria (16th) and Tunisia (20th) were among the top twenty recipients of 88 per cent of migrant remittances in the world (UNDP, 1999: 27). The picture portrayed suggests that even the much-touted North-to-Africa remittances benefit only a few African countries, namely those with well-established connections with the destination countries in the North.<sup>4</sup>

Migrants' remittances from the North to developing countries currently rank second to foreign direct investment (FDI) and exceed official development assistance (ODA). Globally, the largest recipients of remittances are India, Mexico and the Philippines – a function of the number of emigrants, their earnings and their willingness to remit part of their income. In Africa, Morocco and Egypt currently head the list of recipients (Martin, 2004). In 1975 to 1999, most of the African remittances received were in North African countries – Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia; recipients in Western Africa included Senegal, Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin and Cape Verde, and to a smaller extent Ghana, Togo and Niger. Those in southern Africa were Madagascar and Lesotho (World Bank, 2001, quoted in Oucho, 2003: 226). Sander & Maimbo (2003) suggest that the flow of remittances reflects the patterns of migration to Europe and the Middle East. They estimate that in the past decade North Africa received 72 per cent of total remittances to Africa, followed by East Africa (13%), southern Africa (7%), West Africa (5%) and central Africa (less than 1%); but the estimates made by Ratha (2003, quoted in Sander & Maimbo, 2003) for 1990 to 2001 were slightly different: 72 per cent for North Africa, 14 per cent for West Africa, 8 per cent for southern Africa, 6 per cent for East Africa and 0 per cent for central Africa. Among the top twenty recipients of remittances (as percentage of GDP) were Lesotho (26.5%), Cape Verde (13.6%), Morocco (9.7%) and Uganda (8.5%).

Of the regional economic communities (RECs) in sub-Saharan Africa, workers in Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries generated the highest volume of remittances, followed by those in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the East African Community (EAC)

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<sup>4</sup> There is an increasing number of aid agencies (e.g. DFID, USAID), organisations and country-specific websites on migrant remittances; in Africa, the latter include Rwanda Development Gateway, Ghana Web, Nigeria.com, Kenya Web, etc. that can contain invaluable information; and the website Livelihoods Connect is a 'must read' on this topic. A newsletter of the Accelerated Micro-enterprise Advancement Project (AMA) by USAID and DFID provides useful updates.

(Sander & Maimbo, 2003). In the period 1994 to 1999, net remittances to the ECOWAS countries fluctuated from US \$589 million in 1994, peaking at US \$1839 million in 1997, and declining to US \$1511 million in 1999 (Tiemoko, 2003). From these figures, it is clear that migrants' remittances are highly unpredictable, and tracing them from time to time can be tedious and hardly cost-effective. As migrants' remittances develop the countries of origin, their impact needs to be investigated in those countries on the basis of specific variables at individual recipient, household, community and macro-economic levels.

Sander & Maimbo's (2003) study acknowledges the fact that, throughout Africa, financial and monetary policies and regulations have created barriers to the flow of remittances and their effective investment. For instance there has been restrictive licensing of money transfer services, and the environment for investment is unattractive: corruption is rife, there is poor infrastructure, and governments of recipient countries do not appreciate the nature and extent of investments likely to occur from remittances. These shortcomings constrain the role of remittances as investment capital despite the liberalisation of many national economies from the time that the era of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) two decades ago, SAPs permitting increased inflow of remittances and eased their utilisation by the recipients. Nevertheless, proper accounting of the utilisation and impact of remittances is still not happening in most receiving countries, since the vast volume of remittances goes to individuals and households, and seldom to communities.

In Solimano's (2001) view, there are four schools of analytical literature on the reasons motivating remittances. These are: the *altruistic motive* or *livelihoods school* which considers remitting to be an obligation to the household; the *self-interest motive*, which bases a migrant's decision to remit on his or her economic and financial self-interest; the *implicit family contract I*, focusing on loan repayment, and considering remitting from the family perspective, not an individual's; and the *implicit family contract II*, based on the contract between the migrant and those at home. At the macro-economic level, five broad groups of variables determine remittances, namely economic activity in the host country; economic activity in the home country; economic policies and institutions in the home country; general risks in the home country; and investment opportunities in the home country (Spatafora, 2005, quoted in Ghosh, 2006: 47). In exploring the impact of remittances in Africa, it is necessary to establish which of these – or which combinations of them – obtain, as well as to ascertain their magnitude and value in individual countries. Equally important is meticulous analysis of the macro-economic environment in both countries of origin and destination.

### The African diaspora and development

Despite the concept 'diaspora' having become commonplace, it does not have a standard definition, its meaning varies according to individual countries to suit their conditions and to accommodate those with legitimate claims to be thus dubbed.<sup>5</sup> In reality, Africans in the diaspora consist of several categories: the so-called 'victim' diaspora trafficked in the slave trade, itself a heterogeneous group; those in diaspora as a result of taking permanent residence or naturalisation, having been part of the brain drain or non-returning African students; and the recent category of 'green carders' joined in family reunification by family members. Thus, it is overly simplistic to treat the African diaspora as one cohesive group of Africans outside the continent who look to the continent as their 'homeland' with which they all maintain (or wish to maintain) cultural, economic and political ties.

This sub-section highlights four important strands of utilisation of the African diaspora in development. These are: partnership of countries in the Mediterranean region, a French overture to its immigrants' countries of origin, a framework initiated by the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, and the role of migrants' associations.

### The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP)

This partnership between members of the European Union (EU) and twelve Mediterranean countries, was launched in late 1994, and formally inaugurated in Barcelona in November 1995 (in what has become known as the Barcelona Process). It has three main objectives: (a) to establish a common Euro-Mediterranean area of peace and stability based on fundamental principles including respect for human rights and democracy (political and security partnership); (b) to create an area of shared prosperity through the progressive establishment of a free-trade area between the EU and its partners, and among the Mediterranean partners themselves, accompanied by substantial EU financial support for economic transition within the partners' countries, as well as for social and economic consequences of this reform process (economic and financial partnership); and (c) to develop human resources, and to promote understanding between cultures and a rapprochement between the peoples in the Euro-Mediterranean region, as well as to develop free and flourishing civil societies

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<sup>5</sup> Ghosh's (2006: 106, note 51) reference to the Indian government's definition of diaspora is instructive: [a person in the Indian] diaspora is 'a person of Indian origin residing abroad and an individual who was born in India or has at least one grandparent or parent born in undivided India.'

(social, cultural and human partnership). The EMP is a European initiative consisting of twelve Mediterranean partners in the southern and eastern Mediterranean: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia (Maghreb); Egypt, Israel, Jordan, the Palestine Authority, Lebanon, Syria (Mashrek); Turkey, Cyprus and Malta. Libya enjoys an observer status.<sup>6</sup>

### Co-operation and co-development

The concept of *co-development* was initiated by France to encourage collaboration with the countries of emigration in establishing programmes and projects that would benefit immigrants and stem the flow of potential immigrants. A good example is the Mali-France Consultation on Migration, launched in December 2000. It aims to integrate Malians who wish to remain in France, to co-manage migration flows, and to introduce co-operative development in emigration areas of Mali.<sup>7</sup> This gesture by France led to about 500 unauthorised Malians in France returning voluntarily in exchange for CFA (the local currency) 2.5 million (US\$ 3600), and on arrival open businesses relating to agriculture, and providing a variety of services (Martin and Weil, 2002). It exemplifies the virtues of collaboration between a former metropolitan power and its former colony in injecting mutually agreed development in the latter. Furthermore, the French co-development approach seeks to target ODA at emigration areas in all francophone Africa, with government support supplementing the migrants' contributions already referred to – a radical departure from the EU strategy to withdraw ODA from countries that are insufficiently co-operating with destination countries, especially in the return of unauthorised migrants (Martin and Weil, 2002).

There exists in Senegal the Union of Local Initiatives for Co-development (UNILCO), founded by Senegalese representatives and expatriates and dedicated to the economic development of the country. UNILCO helps the Senegalese diaspora to participate in developing their homeland, raising the standards of living of their relatives and assisting individuals or groups willing to start businesses or social services in Senegal through clarifying, formulating and disseminating their projects.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/euromed/htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/htm), accessed June 3, 2004.

<sup>7</sup> A significant development since its inception has been the issuing of 25 000 visas to Malians in 2001 – compared with 7000 in 1997. This has reduced the fraudulent acquisition of visas.

<sup>8</sup> See <http://perso.club-internet.fr/unilco/summary.htm>, accessed June 6, 2004

### The Cotonou Agreement

On 23 June 2000, the EU and the 77-member ACP signed the Cotonou Agreement (CA) aimed to reduce – and eventually eradicate – poverty by promoting sustainable development, capacity-building and integration of the ACP countries into the world economy. In the context of the scale of migration from the ACP countries to Europe, the CA drew attention to labour migration, calling for: (a) respect for the human rights of migrants who reside legally in CA-signatory countries; (b) strategies to tackle the root causes of the massive migration flows, through supporting the economic and social development of the countries from which migrants originate and through training ACP nationals and improving access to education for their students in the EU; and (c) regulations to counter irregular migration, through bilateral agreements that facilitate the return and re-admission of all nationals found in irregular situations. As a form of migration management, the CA has far-reaching ramifications for African members of the ACP with nationals residing in the EU: it draws attention to international migration and international trade and is probably geographically the most extensive South-North agreement that touches on these issues.

### Migrants' associations

Migrants' associations have proliferated in all countries of destination, partly to receive new migrants and partly to stimulate development in the migrants' countries of origin. These associations (for example Home Improvement Unions) have participated in the whole spectrum of national development in Nigeria, Senegal and Ghana, to name but a few, and illustrate the contribution they could make once governments of the recipient countries decide to work closely with them. In Kenya, the once-vibrant social welfare organisations, most of them operating along ethnic lines, stimulated community-level development before the government proscribed them at the turn of the 1980s (Oucho, 1996). African female migrants in France, and elsewhere in Europe, through their association *Initiatives des femmes africaines de France et d'Europe* (IFAFE) have embarked on a variety of economic co-operation. Founded in 1993 and reconstituted in 1996, IFAFE has brought together 23 member associations (IOM, 2005, quoted in Ghosh, 2006: 82), exemplifying the role of migrant associations in homeland development initiatives. Instances of migrants' associations mobilising funds for home development include the 'Migration and Development' association established in 1986 by immigrants in France from the Maghreb region (Ghosh, 2006: 86).



## Return migration

There is overwhelming evidence from the literature that most first-generation migrants expect to return to their home or move to another chosen country at the end of their sojourn. Successful returnees participate in the development of their homeland – provided the socio-economic and political environments permit it. Return migration constitutes the final of the ‘three Rs’ after the first two (recruitment and remittance) have been realised. Unfortunately, return migration has been largely disregarded in the migration literature, receiving systematic attention only since 1973 when economic crisis set the stage for it (Ammassari & Black, 2001:17).

Scholars specify different reasons for return migration precisely because there are different types of return migrants. To Arowolo (2000: 61) there are: those returning to a rehabilitation centre or a newly-created settlement in the wake of war or natural disaster; those returning to areas of origin who cannot identify their earlier home setting; and those born abroad, including some whose place of origin is technically not the place to which they now find themselves attached as ‘derivative return migrants’. The participation in homeland development of those in these categories is predictably as varied as they are. Moreover, some returnees are those who were unsuccessful at their destinations and who, therefore, are more likely to be a burden on returning home. Return may also have been an aspect of ‘homecoming’ after a long-awaited political independence of the home country, as happened with Namibians (Arowolo, 2000: 69) in 1990 or South African exiles in 1994; a derivative of this has been the return of nationals as the democratic space opens in African countries during the second wave of democratisation. There are returnees who are easily reintegrated into the homeland society and those for whom reintegration becomes so difficult that they either embark on yet another episode of emigration or become resigned to the unbearable situation.

Cerase (1974, quoted in Ammassari & Black, 2001: 22) identifies four categories of return migration: the *return of failure* after a ‘traumatic shock’ upon arrival and inability to adapt to the new environment in the destination; the *return of conservatism*, involving migrants who maintain links with their origins and eventually return after residing in a destination for some time; the *return of motivation*, involving those who return with some new and treasured values, ideas and skills which they wish to apply on returning to their home countries (potential ‘agents of change’ in the latter); and the *return of retirement* of those who have terminated their working careers and who return to their home countries as a matter of course.

Unfortunately this classification of Cerase’s omits refugees – Africa’s greatest liability (Oucho, 2002) – refugees who return either as a result of

*refoulment* (being driven back) or voluntarily after conditions improve in their countries of origin. Returned migrants or refugees and asylum seekers could be a great asset to their countries of origin. Workers from abroad often return with the skills and discipline needed to raise productivity: they can provide the energy, ideas and entrepreneurial vigour needed to start or expand businesses at home (Martin, 2004).

The existence of different categories of return migrants implies that institutions engaged in returning migrants may be dealing with only a small proportion or a particular type of eligible returnees. For example, the IOM and the UNDP have been limiting themselves to returning skilled migrants; and NEPAD envisions doing the same thing, as it desires to reverse the African brain drain and convert it into brain gain, and to deploy the African diaspora in the continent's development.

We now draw attention to return some programmes that have become commonplace in Africa and in which the hand of the North can easily be discerned.

### IOM initiatives

Following the outcry from countries of the South that brain drain was crippling their development efforts, the UNDP and the IOM embarked on a return migration scheme known as the Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN). Although the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the IOM entered into a TOKTEN pact in the 1970s, the results were far from impressive. Success stories of UNDP-supported TOKTEN include the payment of 133 Malians to return to their country as consultants to help teach and do research (Martin and Weil, 2002). Even when the IOM came up with the Return of Qualified African Nationals scheme (RQAN) to replace TOKTEN, it did not make a significant impact on African countries. Although the IOM has been providing financial incentives to return migrants in all the return schemes, it has failed to excite many prospective returnees, or even to convince the large number of Africans abroad to embrace the opportunities offered. The most recent undertaking by the IOM is the Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA), which aims to build relationships between host countries and countries of origin, to foster the positive effects of migration for their mutual benefit, and to limit the negative effects of brain drain; it is a form of co-development.

African governments, on the other hand, have not collaborated much with the IOM in this vital activity. Return schemes have failed for several reasons. First, the conditions that sparked brain drain have deteriorated rather than improved in the emigrants' countries of origin: doctors and nurses find run down health programmes with obsolete or unrepairable equipment; teachers return to find schools with poor learning environments and grossly lacking in

basic facilities; university lecturers are confronted with intolerably large classes, lack of equipment and poor research facilities, including lack of research funds; and returning migrants with capital and entrepreneurial skills cannot afford to invest in a risky economic environment. Their immediate reaction is predictable: they simply take off on yet another emigration. Secondly, the public service, which is targeted to benefit from return migrants, sign the provisions of their agreements with the IOM or other parties but hardly adhere to them. Third, even those returning to retire find a shocking homecoming where relatives expect gifts from them rather than being open to collaborate in whatever innovations might be appropriate. These are just some of the reasons for the failure of return migration schemes.

### The NEPAD vision

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the latest institution of hope in the Africa-North relations, aspires to develop the region's human resources (a) by reversing the brain drain and turning it into 'brain gain'; (b) by building and retaining the region's human capacities; and (c) by developing strategies for utilising the skills of Africans in the diaspora for the development of the region. NEPAD intends to achieve these three objectives by creating political, social and economic conditions that could attract back brain drain migrants; by establishing a reliable data base on the brain drain and the African diaspora; and by ensuring the utilisation of African experts abroad in NEPAD-designed projects.

Sadly, the NEPAD vision makes too many assumptions, and also raises some questions: If in the first place African countries do not even have records of their own brain drain, how does NEPAD expect to ascertain the volume, destinations and characteristics of the region's skilled emigrants? What is NEPAD's depth of knowledge of the size and diversity of the African diaspora, its successive generations and its geography? And what has Africa or NEPAD done to benefit from the public relations 'pilgrimage' of the US-based African diaspora to the home continent during the last decade? The NEPAD scheme requires immediate and carefully designed research for policy formulation before the Partnership can propose any meaningful programmes within the continent. Analysis of the African diaspora (apart from that in the United States suggests that it is sizeable in France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain and Canada, and the leading sources of the African diaspora include Morocco, Senegal, Ghana and Nigeria (Oucho, 2004). In these countries, and indeed many more countries (such as Mali, Uganda, Eritrea and Ethiopia), strong networks between the diaspora and non-migrants exist and point to the

value of engaging the diaspora in development. Surprisingly, African countries have not exploited such networks to engage them in the development process.

### Challenges facing African countries

Wherever discussions centre on African brain drain, brain gain or diaspora, African governments frequently behave as if migrants will be swayed by political rhetoric that often ignores policies based on good research or accurate data. The North persists in prescribing solutions to developmental issues for African countries rather than allowing the latter to determine their own courses of action, or, better still, evolving bilateral arrangements with the countries of destination. It is time that the AU set up a bureau responsible for all aspects of emigration from Africa, either emulating or modifying the EU model that has elaborated policy, research and other programmes. The AU should look more broadly into all forms of intra-African migration, working closely with RECs that will eventually merge to form the African Economic Community (AEC).

### Movements of people and knowledge

As Africa has lost – and continues to lose – its professionals and its highly educated, it should embrace work already underway in the European Union. An article by Louise Ackers (2004) should reach the corridors of African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) who have yet to go full throttle on issues pertaining to brain drain. They should realise that the so-called brain drain actually amounts to brain circulation, given that most moves are no longer single permanent moves as was the case in past decades; rather, they reflect the present circumstances, where the flow of ideas, remittances and eventual return to the countries of origin dominate the migration of skills and knowledge. Distinctive features of skilled emigrants – the whole spectrum from undergraduates or doctoral students to ‘research stars’, or from junior scientists to their experienced counterparts – should be ascertained (Ackers, 2004).

### Is it time for the Bhagwati tax?

The famous ‘Bhagwati tax’, which was presumably proposed in the light of Asian emigration, seems to make much sense for African countries which have produced a sizeable brain drain in the wake of the Asian flood. Economist Jagdish Bhagwati (1976a, 1976b) called for a tax to be paid by countries of destination to countries of origin as legitimate revenue from their emigrants. His principal argument is that increased mobility of highly-skilled individuals occurs in spite of their tendency to retain their origin-country citizenship and

associated rights (including the right to vote), thus the failure to tax emigrants amounted to ‘representation without taxation’ for the country of origin. Thirty years down the line, Bhagwati’s ‘taxing the brain drain’ thesis has stood the test of time (Wilson, 2005) and today is perhaps more relevant than ever.

Although a ‘brain-tax’ makes much economic sense, it stands the risk of mismanagement in African countries where it begs one crucial question: does it make sense for such a tax to be paid to the origin country only to be embezzled the same way foreign aid and grants have been in most sub-Saharan African countries? If the argument is that skilled emigrants are well trained and therefore constitute a loss of human resources, several fuzzy areas require further exploration. Among these are: where the training of the ‘brain drain’ migrant took place, who funded it, what additional training was available after the initial education/training, and so on. Before considering taxation of emigrants, governments of the countries of origin must of necessity reach some accommodation with the taxable groups to streamline issues such as the proportion of taxable income, benefits accruing to the taxed individuals, their investment prospects and so on.

### Why not factor brain drain and brawn drain in the WTO agenda?

The time is opportune for factoring African emigration into WTO trade talks, not least Mode 4 of the Doha Round which makes provision for temporary migration of workers in the service sector, and a variant of which could be broadened to include African scholars and professionals of all kinds; and African footballers and other African sportsmen and women who are easily granted citizenship in the developed North and in the oil-rich Gulf States. Also necessary on the WTO negotiations is African brain drain now being exploited without proper origin-destination arrangements.

### Return migration: Physical and/or virtual?

Return of brain drain is one area which African countries now take as a given. Yet, as Skeldon (2005: 15) argues, there must be something for skilled emigrants to return to in the country of origin – at the very least a stable environment in which the returnee can make a living. Where economic downturn and political instability persist, as in much of sub-Saharan Africa, skilled emigrants have no compelling reasons to return. Indeed, their return is likely to render them ‘brain waste’ and destitute, which would be ironic since they had just escaped destitution in the countries of destination. There are instances of some returnees who turn out to be mere sycophants of the political establish-

ment. Such returnees cannot be expected to make any input into development on return because they are already too compromised to provide impartial expert advice.

Armed with viable data, African countries and institutions such as the AU, RECs and NEPAD should design appropriate return schemes, either complementary to or different from the IOM- or UNDP-prescribed frameworks in which they have had little or no say. In this information age, African countries should pay greater attention to virtual return, instructive instances of which now take place in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Ethiopia and Eritrea.<sup>9</sup>

### Actual versus presumed impact of remittances

Remittances are viewed by most African countries as providing the greatest hope for development: for individual migrants' relations, households, and communities as well as for the national economies. However, before attempting to factor migrant remittances into development, the policy arena needs closer scrutiny. To this end, the Director of Research of the Bank of Ghana proposes some incentives for the country, a typical remittances-attracting African economy. These incentives include lowering transfer costs of remittances (by lowering the fees levied, and by offering more favourable exchange rates), reducing the risks involved in the transfers and offering more attractive investment alternatives. Further, he calls for the creation of appropriate savings services for migrants and their families from three perspectives: 'repatriable' foreign currency accounts, foreign currency denominated (remittance) bonds, and savings certificates denominated in foreign currency (Addison, 2004), though the situation might have changed since then. Where trans-national corporations with stronger financial muscle are bringing large amounts of money into a country, individual migrants' remittances would not be seen as having a significant effect in the development arena. Thus, the environment of exchange control, which has dominated African economic reforms, needs to be critically reviewed to enhance predictable inflow and prudent investment of remittances.

To many African countries, migrant remittances are seen as a means of eradicating poverty. Unfortunately, this presumption may hold in certain circumstances and not in others. There has not been a critical assessment of the impact of remittances on national economies because most of the empirical

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<sup>9</sup> Details of national virtual return efforts and schemes can be found on particular websites on the Internet. The best examples are Ghanaian, Nigerian and Ethiopian experts in diaspora who are linked to some projects in their countries, to which they contribute or provide expert advice from their stations in the countries of immigration.

evidence is pitched at the levels of individual recipients or households, and seldom at community or national levels. African countries, individually or through NEPAD should commission the kind of work that applies the Framework for Assessing the Impact of Remittances (FAIR) on poverty (Chimhowu *et al.*, 2003). African countries need to pay attention to the authors' caution that, 'Remittances alone are unlikely to lift people out of poverty: rather it is their interplay with other economic, social and cultural factors which determine the scale and type of impact remittances can have on poverty reduction' (Chimhowu *et al.*, 2003). In addition, African countries need to take an interest in the findings of migration and poverty research supported by the Department for International Development (DFID) at the Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty at the University of Sussex. Most importantly, they should acknowledge – based, for instance, on Solimano's (2001) literature survey – that motivations to remit will vary and cannot be generalised in the way most analysts in the public domain have tended to do. Also, in these days of gender equality and empowerment of women, it is necessary to appreciate that male migrants are more likely to remit because of self-interest, whereas female migrants generally remit out of altruism or livelihood (de la Cruz, 1995, quoted in Chimhowu, 2003).

Studies on the impact of remittances are often conducted at the places of origin of the remittances – using notably *The Balance of Payments Yearbook* published by the IMF, and OECD data – which evidently does not elicit the true impact at their destinations in the developing world, a strand of investigation necessary in Africa. There is need to acknowledge that migrants' remittances are but part of other transfers reported by the IMF, the ILO and other organisations.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, a substantial proportion of remittances are sent through informal channels, resulting in under-reporting of the actual amounts. That the cost of remittances charged by money transfer organisations (MTOs) might discourage remitters is an issue that recipient countries should look into with a view to reaching bilateral arrangements with the MTOs.

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<sup>10</sup> Lucas (2005) draws data from the *IMF Balance of Payments Statistics 2002* and UN (2002) that classify remittances into three categories: 'workers' remittances' or 'current remittances' (from migrants staying abroad for one year or more); 'compensation of employees' – 'labour income' prior to 1993 (from persons staying abroad for less than one year); and 'migrants' transfers' (lumped as 'capital transfers'), consisting of flows of goods and financial assets linked to the migrants' cross-border movements. It is likely that most African countries lump all these categories as 'migrant remittances' and misconstrue them as all coming from their emigrants and others in the diaspora

### Diaspora and dual citizenship

Reviewing national constitutions to institute dual citizenship for migrants is a desirable dispensation for African governments. While the opponents of dual citizenship argue that it fosters conflicting loyalties, its proponents see it as an opportunity to get the best out of both worlds and to let its beneficiaries vie between two different settings depending on the changing fortunes. To Wucker (2006), the benefits of dual citizenship in the United States include the promotion of American goods and political leadership abroad, the nostalgic tendency of wanting to make things better in the countries of origin and the realisation, as in one's dual relationship with parent and spouse, that an individual is bound by nature and choice respectively, loving both equally. African countries must therefore define their interpretation of the diaspora carefully, as there is otherwise likely to be a lack of consistency regarding this concept.

The involvement of those in the diaspora in developing their countries of origin differs from country to country and according to fluctuations in economic conditions. The cases of Scottish and Irish diasporas are instructive for Africa, with considerable diversity. The Scottish diaspora are not all keen on contributing to the Scottish economy mainly because they are professionals who left Scotland voluntarily and do not see their country as suitable for investment. In contrast, the Irish diaspora who were poor and unskilled, and were pushed into exile by the English, take pride in their new-found ability to liberate Ireland economically (*Economist*, October 20, 2001, quoted in Balasubramanyam, 2004). As these contrasting features also occur in African countries, they need detailed documenting to inform policy on the deployment of those in diasporas in national development. It is also time that African countries examined the relevance or otherwise of the involvement of diaspora migrants in the development of their countries of origin. This could be in the transfer of technology and of knowledge and skills; in direct investment in locally-owned firms; in assuming top managerial positions in foreign-owned firms in their countries of origin; and in taking account of the tendency of foreign firms to deter rather than promote technological progress in the local (home) economy (Findlay, 1978). Currently the involvement of those in Indian and Chinese diasporas in their home countries partly accounts for economic buoyancy of these two economies.

### African organisations with clout: RECs, the AU and NEPAD

Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the AU and NEPAD all have an important role to play in the African-North brain drain and the reverse brain gain, as well as in the contribution of the diaspora and remittances to development of the continent. In June 2006, for instance, the member states of the



Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) met in Accra, Ghana, where they set up a commission to determine how best to limit youth emigration to the developed North. This was a move in the right direction and should be emulated by other African RECs. It is perhaps more sensible than implementing the protocol on free movement of persons in which no African REC has made major strides. The SADC member states have formalised the management of migration through the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA), which was established in November 2000, principally to match immigration and refugee law (Klaaren and Rutinwa, 2004). Unfortunately, there is not much to show from the MIDSA initiative. ECOWAS has also made some significant strides in migration discourse and programmes at the level of Heads of State and Government.

The two pan-African organisations, the AU and NEPAD have the potential to develop better-focused programmes and to play a more proactive role in international migration than hitherto. It is suggested that the AU should place on doorsteps research findings, REC initiatives and other developments pertaining to international migration issues which affect the African continent as well African-North interrelations. This pan-African organisation should evolve strong working relations with the EU and emulate Asian and Latin American developments relating to intra-and inter-continental migration. Despite its establishment five years ago, NEPAD has very little to show in international migration. It should assemble practitioners of African migration to help it formulate more pragmatic programmes and thus put rhetoric to rest once and for all.

### The dearth of data in Africa

It should be fairly easy for African countries to keep track of their nationals who return either physically or virtually, particularly when the countries acknowledge the presence and contribution of returnees. Perhaps the greatest problem facing informed insights regarding the quartet is the dearth of data. The problem begins with estimation of brain drain in the countries of destination without the countries of origin even endeavouring to collaborate in the exercise. A very pertinent question is, how do African countries make claims about their citizens whose numbers, characteristics, destination and welfare they know nothing or very little about? Moreover, African countries cannot ascertain whether their 'brain drain' truly reflects that nomenclature, or whether it takes the form, rather, of brain waste or brain circulation at the destinations. Much less, if anything, is known about the African diaspora as a whole, or of those who belong to successive generations. For African countries to succeed in engaging

their brain drain and diaspora in homeland development, they will have to design appropriate means to not only to woo these people back, but also to appreciate the services that the emigrants can provide once they have returned. A major shortcoming relates to data relating to the sources, volume and value of migrant remittances over and above money transferred through established MTOs.

## Conclusion

This chapter has shown that information on the quartet is so patchy and uncoordinated that it does not influence development in Africa in the way that is commonly believed. Brain drain will intensify unless African countries eliminate the conditions that discourage the human resources most likely to spearhead development in the region. Conversion of the African brain into brain gain, and engagement of the diaspora in the continent's development, requires more than rhetoric; it requires well-designed research in areas including the likes and dislikes of successive generations of emigrants; bilateral arrangements between countries of emigration and countries of destination, including in the NEPAD-G8 initiatives; and a proactive stance of African RECs, the African Union and NEPAD. At the moment, virtual return might be more appealing to African emigrants than calls for physical return, since that is riddled with problems.

The stage for these efforts should of necessity be within Africa, and not depend on overtures from the North or from the more aggressive Asian countries such as China and Japan who are keener than previously to enter into pacts with Africa. At the moment, the quartet analysed in this chapter provides scope for Africa's development but only when it is well harnessed for that purpose. At policy level, African countries should revisit their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and the Millennium Development Goals to incorporate those aspects of international migration that these policy documents have failed to recognise. The growing interest in proper utilisation of the quartet in Africa's development provides a ray of hope for a continent which is not poor in resources but poor in taking advantage of opportunities.

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## Experiences with international migration, new policy directions and viewpoints from Burkina Faso

Annelet Broekhuis

This chapter is based on materials collected during a mission to Burkina Faso, organised by ‘International Migration and Development, Viewpoints and Policy Initiatives from the Countries of Origin’, a joint project of Radboud University and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In July 2006 two hundred participants, representing all levels of government and agencies linked with migration issues, as well the private sector, civil society and the Burkinabé diaspora assembled in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, to discuss the country’s main migration issues and policies. The organisation of the symposium ‘Migration and Development’ was in the hands of the Conseil National de la Population (CONAPO), which falls under the Ministry for the Economy and Development, and the Institut Supérieur des Sciences de la Population (Higher Institute for Population Science), a research centre linked to the University of Ouagadougou. Two United Nations organisations, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), took part as well. During the symposium the participants were invited to discuss the country’s major official matters of concern in the field of migration. Prepared reports and keynote speakers delivered input for the debates

on the subjects of poverty, rural exodus and urbanisation, the living conditions of returnees and repatriates, internal migration and access to land, remittances, international migration and the spread of diseases, and finally conventions and migration legislation in the West African region.

The subjects selected for the symposium illustrate that the migration phenomenon in Burkina Faso is linked to the strategy of poverty reduction and focuses on the causes and effects of internal and regional (African) migration. During the symposium, attention shifted somewhat to additional subjects: south-north migration, brain drain, living conditions of Burkinabé abroad, and the use of their skills and competences to facilitate development in their home country. The difference in orientation between the major issues formulated in the first instance and the additional topics discussed during the symposium suggested a new orientation in response to topics highlighted as major issues in the international migration debate.

This chapter explores the context of the migration debate in Burkina Faso and focuses on its policy intentions and achievements. We start with an overview of the migration history and then discuss features of migration patterns.

### Burkinabé migration patterns and characteristics

Long-distance mobility and migration – read as synonyms for international migration – have a lengthy history in West Africa, and population groups living within Burkina Faso's territory are known for their high degree of spatial mobility. According to several studies (Skinner 1965, Gallais, 1967; Riddell, 1981) migrants and traders from various societies travelled and migrated between different agro-ecological zones, across the Sahara and between the towns along the desert borders, long before the region was incorporated into the trade system of Western European powers. The direction of this movement was between regions and towns in the interior of the continent. In colonial times migration flows were directed coastward, where colonisers had established their strongholds and developed their most important economic interests. The various West African micro-regions were incorporated into the world economic system in different ways, and as a result of the local economic and social systems they became poles of attraction or repulsion for migrants (Amin, 1974). Cities along the coast, as well as regions where cash crops were grown for international markets – such as banana, coffee and cocoa in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire – became favourite migration destinations for people in search of work from the interior regions such as the Mossi Plateau and other districts, located in what now is known as the country of Burkina Faso.

In the second half of the twentieth century, Côte d'Ivoire became the leading migrant host country. Increasing numbers of Burkinabé labourers contributed to

the growth of cash crop production in this country and to its economic progress. As a result, 56 per cent of the foreigners in Côte d'Ivoire were Burkinabé of origin, representing 14.6 per cent of the total population in 1998. According to Zourkaléini (2005), flows between Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire continued to dominate the Burkinabé international migration pattern during the period up to 2000: 60 per cent of the returnees who entered Burkina Faso came from neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire, and between 1970 and 2000 Côte d'Ivoire was the country of destination for 90 per cent of its emigrants. The Tabou events of 1999 and the unstable political situation in Côte d'Ivoire since 2002 slowed down this migration flow and the net migration between Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire became negative.

Although less dominant, the migration flow between Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire is still noticeable, but other destinations have emerged during recent decades. Compared to other West African countries such as Senegal and Ghana, the emigration from Burkina Faso turned to intercontinental destinations relatively late. In West Africa the neighbouring countries of Mali and Niger host numerous Burkinabé, as do further away Senegal and Gabon. In addition, a flow to the north and northeast to Arab countries has become significant: some thousands of Burkinabé try to earn a living in Libya, Sudan, Chad and Saudi Arabia.

Most European countries have a small Burkinabé community within their borders. France as a francophone country is a favourite destination, including for students, thanks to French grants. Available scholarships also take Burkinabé to other remote destinations such as China, Russia, Cuba and Syria.

Migration to Italy, dating from the 1980s, has developed its own dynamic. The total Burkinabé migrant stream terminating in a number of Italian cities seems to be composed of several minor chain-migration flows, a fact that illustrates the importance of networks in international migration (Wouterse, 2006). In particular the Bissa community, residents from the central-eastern and southern part of Burkina Faso, migrate to Italy, although this group is represented strongly in Gabon as well.

Despite Burkina Faso's long history as a country of emigration and its huge emigration flows, mainly to other (neighbouring) West African countries, internal rural-rural and rural-urban migration flows are substantial and of increasing importance. The general censuses – excluding that of 2006, the results of which are not yet available – showed that internal migration within rural areas is far more important than migration to urban areas (CONAPO, 2006a), but recent case studies do not always confirm this tendency (Wouterse, 2006). This dominant rural-rural orientation applied to the internal Burkinabé migration as well as to (international) migration to Côte d'Ivoire, and underlines

again the importance of the agricultural sector in the subsistence base for the Burkinabé and as a way of earning a living.

According to the data from the 2000 survey of the Unité d'Enseignement et de Recherche en Démographie (UERD), during the 1980s and 1990s urban-rural migration also occurred. A close examination shows that this out-migration from urban areas was not only a result of deteriorating economic conditions in Burkina Faso's urban centres – a consequence of structural adjustment programmes – but was also a result of the amelioration of rural conditions through a greater provision of education services and better prices for (some) cash crops (Beauchemin, 2006). This finding underlines the negative correlation between rural development and migration.

In general it has been stated that international migration from Burkina Faso is temporary and partly circular. From the large numbers of Burkinabé who have lived for some generations in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire (CONAPO, 2006b), it can be concluded that this fact does not always hold true. However, the UERD survey illustrates that the young men who migrated to Côte d'Ivoire were indeed circular migrants. These migrants were mainly young and uneducated men who had been working in the agricultural sector before their departure. They stayed abroad on average for two years before returning to their home villages. Over time, the village of origin has lost much of its importance as a destination for returnees. Migrants to other countries more often had an urban rather than a rural background, and were unemployed before their departure (Beauchemin *et al.*, 2005; Zoukaléini, 2005).

The strong tradition of migration of the Burkinabé can be explained mainly by the country's position in colonial history – that of a supplier of labour – but it is linked to natural, economic, social, political and cultural factors as well. Burkina Faso is still one of the poorest countries of the world, with an economy based mainly on agricultural production. Due to harsh environmental conditions (droughts, less fertile land) and a low level of technological development, this agricultural sector is unable to absorb the continuously increasing population numbers. As a result, migration makes up an essential part of the survival strategy of many poor farming households in every region of the country. In particular in the poorer, that is, the dryer, regions where the risks of harvest shortfalls are high, farming households use migration to diversify their income strategies and thus diminish income shocks (Aube & Ndiaye, 2005; Wouterse, 2006).

Traditionally the decision on (international) migration has been a matter for the family. According to the new economics theory of labour migration, it was who the family decided which member should go. Nowadays migration can also be an individual decision, in particular in cotton-growing regions, and for sons of later spouses. Prices for cotton have declined and young men who were used



to having access to cash now have to look elsewhere to earn it (Dakuyo, interview 2006). Sons from the first wife migrated as a result of family discussions, while sons from the youngest wife (the last wife is said to be the man's favourite, but her children have the lowest position in the extended family) take the decision to migrate more individually (Sawadogo, interview 2006).

Opportunities for migration, however, are not equal for everyone. For wealthier households it is easier to find sufficient money to pay for the journey. Normally long distance migration routes are covered one step at a time. Migrants work during their journey to pay for the next stage. Even so, one needs money to start. A recent in-depth study in four villages (Wouterse, 2006) illustrates that inter-continental and intra-continental migration have to be seen as two different strategic household decisions. Households with intercontinental migrants belong to the (relatively) wealthiest socio-economic group, and migration to Europe is part of their wealth-accumulation strategy. Those households were in a position to deal with entry barriers linked with capital-intensive economic activities. Households involved in intra-continental migration, on the other hand, have access to fewer forms of livelihood capital and their decision to migrate is a response to push factors. For this group, migration has to be understood as part of a consolidation or survival strategy. 'Eat away' migration is part of the way they save household expenses. Wouterse's survey (2006) illustrated quite clearly the advantages of having a member of the family in one of the developed countries.

### Returning migrants

The sudden repatriation of Burkinabé from Côte d'Ivoire in 1999 and 2002/3 confronted Burkina Faso with the problem of receiving huge numbers of returnees in a limited period of time. According to official estimates, some 365,000 repatriates crossed the border to flee from the hostilities. Apart from all kinds of practical issues that had to be solved, such as how to feed and lodge all those former or new compatriots, this event caused a shock in Burkinabé society. At the same time it encouraged official bodies to consider some fundamental questions, such as how to absorb and integrate such a large group of incoming migrants without disturbing the existing social system, and how to maintain social cohesion; and how should the migrants' access to natural resources, in particular land, be arranged? In other words, who can make claims?

Many temporary and permanent continental migrants – in particular those in Côte d'Ivoire – worked in the rural sector. After their (usually forced) return they are mostly interested in working in this sector again (CONAPO, 2006b). Only 7000 people out of the enormous incoming group of repatriates could be

helped by government agencies, in particular by the Comité National de Secours d'Urgence et de Réhabilitation (CONASUR –the National Committee for Emergency and Rehabilitation Assistance), assisted by UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) during the so-called *Bayiri* operation (Zongo, 2003; Maboni, interview 2006). Other returnees established themselves independently in towns, yet others went to the villages of their ancestors, but a substantial number tried to find land to cultivate. This process had already started before the disturbances of 1999.

Migrants who lived with their next of kin (wife and children) for longer periods abroad do not often invest in productive activities in Burkina Faso. A minority invest in housing, some help their parents with agricultural equipment, or purchase livestock. In fact a migrant has, in the case of a continued sojourn elsewhere, few possessions in his home village. A successful migrant is one who is able to maintain a social network by occasionally sending some money to their place of origin, or taking it with them during a visit every two or three years. '*Les principales dépenses concernent les salutations et autres obligations sociales*' (The most important expenses concern small presents at arrival and other social obligations during the visit) (Zongo, 2003: 119). This situation does not automatically guarantee a warm welcome in the case of repatriation. Children of migrants have even fewer ties with the village of their ancestors.

#### *Migration and the land question*

The flow of returnees from Côte d'Ivoire to Burkina Faso had a chiefly rural-rural character, similar to a substantial part of the country's internal migration. These rural-rural migrants thus contributed to an increase in the pressure on land in southern regions of Burkina Faso. Some of the repatriates were able to offer money for access to land and this rapid commercialisation of the land market resulted in tensions between local groups and internal migrants on the one hand and repatriates on the other. Even intra-family conflicts occurred (about inheritance, between migrants and non-migrants), and disputes about the interpretation of the payment for land (gift or lease) contributed to tensions at village level in certain areas in recent years. In addition to changes in the access to land, several 'new' regulations could be identified in terms of limited lease periods and rents in cash for those who were not members of the lineage. Formalisation of the procedures did not occur. Traditional access to land regulations is proving to be less and less effective. In this matter formalisation is necessary: land registration offices need to be set up, and written proof of ownership needs to become the norm (Zongo, 2006).

*The need for formalisation of the migration process*

Côte d'Ivoire passed a new law in 1998 which prohibited non-Ivorians from owning land. With this law the country removed all former rights that migrants had had in this country since independence. (Their children were entitled to even fewer rights.) The situation regarding the repatriation of the Burkinabé in Côte d'Ivoire also illustrated the consequences of the lack of any comprehensive formal regulation of migration in the West-African region and showed that as a result of the informal character of migration, the official status of migrants is often unclear. Many Burkinabé emigrants have never formalised their status in their place of destination, sometimes due to missing official documents which could prove their identity. As migrants within the ECOWAS region they are allowed to enter and stay ninety days in any member country. If they want to remain longer they are obliged to formalise their presence. Ignorance of the laws, lack of documents, but especially the high costs of the procedures do not really induce people to comply with the rules.

If migrants or their children wish to apply for the nationality of their country of residence, the procedure is frustrated for the same reasons: lack of official documents (birth certificates or identity papers of parents), and cost. For second generation migrants the situation is extra complicated: children of repatriates could not obtain Burkinabé nationality if they were unable to show official papers which prove their parents' Burkinabé nationality. These children became migrants at the very moment they entered Burkina Faso, immigrants and not repatriates.

In Burkina Faso, terms such as 'illegal' or 'clandestine' migration have not been used in the recent past. Flows of migrants who tried their luck by travelling to other places abroad hoping to find paid work were called '*migration spontanée*' and '*migration sauvage*' (Sawadogo, interview 2006). Crossing a border along the way did not change the migrant's situation or his/her behaviour. And except for occasional disturbances or expulsions, African host countries and employers did not put many obstacles in the migrants' way.

Current pressure from the European side, combined with its more rigid immigration legislation, is, however, forcing African states, Burkina Faso included, to manage their migration flow more strictly, and in addition to implement decisions formulated in many sub-regional (ECOWAS, UEMOA) conventions and agreements. The experiences with the repatriation of Burkinabé and their offspring has added to this necessity. Both, the state and the migrant have to make clear decisions about this matter. The migrant has to prepare for return and must invest in Burkina Faso if his sojourn abroad is temporary. In the case of 'permanent' migration, the migrant has to integrate and invest in the country of destination and legalise residence and establishment

permits (i.e. choose a new nationality). At the level of the state, the important question now is how to legalise the status of citizens abroad and of present migrants having no official residence permit. This would be a first step towards regulating the migration process.

### Migration policy intentions

Except for the period 1980–1982, when the Burkina Faso government tried to reduce the negative effects of mass emigration by imposing exit visas, the approach to international migration by the successive governments can be characterised as *laissez-faire*. After independence in 1960, the government tried to regulate international (labour) migration by bilateral conventions and multi-lateral agreements (mainly at the level of ECOWAS and UEMOA), but in fact – as in the other ECOWAS countries – most conventions, treaties and agreements turned out to be dead letters, without ratification by national parliaments or translation into national laws (Soulama, 2005).

Burkina Faso does not at present pursue a real migration policy (Soulama 2005, CONAPO, 2006d; Ouedraogo, 2006); but it does intend to do so soon, partly as a consequence of the call by countries of destination for migration regulation, and also because of the international migration debate and the country's experiences with returnees.

In what direction is Burkina Faso heading? The proposed policy intentions can be summarised as follows:

- Facilitate the positive side-effects of international migration, not by extending emigration, but by improving the quality of migrants (anticipating future labour needs in the ageing developed world);
- Establish bodies for monitoring migration and collecting appropriate data; standardisation and homogenisation of definitions and measurement methods in accordance with all other West African partners;
- Manage internal agrarian colonisation and rural-rural migration to avoid future land conflicts; apply the Agrarian and Land Reform Acts (RAF: Réorganisation Agraire et Foncière of 1986/1991 and 1996) and the establish an Office for Land Registry, to enforce security of land property, which is expected to improve agricultural productivity; integrate migrants into local communities to maintain solidarity; promote a sustainable development of natural resources;
- Strengthen the urban network, urban-rural linkages and the position of secondary cities and towns, by decentralisation processes and investments. Cities are seen as engines for development.
- Manage international migration and protect migrant rights; apply international (ECOWAS/UEMOA) conventions which guarantee the right of free

movement, residence and settlement. In addition allow voting rights to Burkinabé abroad; inform migrants before their departure about the conditions in their intended host country; combat illegal migration; reinforce the role of civil society in migration management; invite migrants to use their capacities to contribute to national development; facilitate access to social security rights (pensions) for returnees.

A number of points arise. Firstly, this list of policy propositions is clearly a result of recent experiences and shows intentions which are compatible with the decisions taken by heads of West African States on various occasions. In the framework of many conferences held on the initiative of various multilateral institutions (ECOWAS, UEMOA, ILO, OIM, AU), Burkina Faso supported all the conventions and treaties which followed from these meetings. Unfortunately most of the decisions taken have only partly been translated into national laws, either in Burkina Faso, or in any of the countries involved.

Secondly, although the intentions are good, they are not always realistic. For instance the human resource base of Burkina Faso with regard to formal education is poor. The country has one of the highest levels of illiteracy in Africa (an overall rate of 74 per cent in 2002). Access to well-equipped schools is not available to most children; schools are overcrowded, and do not have enough well-trained teachers, and primary enrolment is about 50 per cent for boys and 40 per cent for girls (OECD, 2005). Besides this, the education system is still rather traditional, with a strong theoretical character and not very application-oriented (van der Waals, interview 2006). All in all it is not a strong base on which to meet the needs of distant labour markets.

Thirdly, these policy intentions point at a formalisation of the migration process and a willingness to fulfil some of the desires of the migrant population. Migrant organisations expressed a long list of demands. These include assistance in the case of emergencies, or after expulsions by embassies or consulates; improvement of money transfer possibilities; regulations for social security and migration quotas through bilateral agreements; and information for potential migrants about rights and obligations in the country of destination. They also wanted information about investment possibilities in Burkina Faso, such as possibilities other than housing projects; easier procedures for buying land; fulfilment of international treaties by Burkina Faso (criticism of host countries is impossible if one's own country is a bad example in this matter). Other requests are for embassies to collect and make known information about compatriots present in the country; for migrants' right to vote in their place of origin – which would enforce the involvement of the migrant in developments in the home country – and for easy procedures in obtaining official documents, including for the children of Burkinabé abroad.

The intentions can be seen as an attempt to institutionalise elements of transnational migrant networks. We elaborate on this aspect in the following subsection, given its importance in the debate on migration and development.

### Institutionalising transnational migrant networks

Optimising the possible contributions of migration to development involves the institutionalisation of elements of the network of transnational migrants. This idea can be related to the diminishing role of the government as a consequence of Structural Adjustment Programmes, and the emerging need for alternative role players to join the development efforts (Beauchemin & Schoumaker, n.d.). Policy in this field is still in its infancy in Burkina Faso, but a tiny start has been made. In 2003 a first step was taken to mobilise the diaspora by establishing the Conseil Supérieur des Burkinabé à l'Étranger (CSBE: Higher Council of Burkinabé Abroad). This institute was given the task of looking after its compatriots abroad and assisting them if necessary (renewing passports, delivery of official documents, etc.) and was put in charge of the Burkina-MIDA<sup>1</sup> project. It focuses in particular on the potential of wealthier 'permanent' migrants, and of migrant associations.

Three elements are important as a context to judge this aspect of Burkinabé migration policies: the changed amount of remittances, the MIDA initiative, and the possibilities and objectives of migrant organisations. These are now discussed.

#### *Remittances*

One of the wishes of migrants is for an improvement of money transfer possibilities. Migrants expressed much criticism of the lack of services of SONAPOST (the Burkina postal service) and the high cost of transfer by banks. It was even suggested by the migrants that there should be a focus on the development of internet banking! However no specific measures have yet been taken by the government to facilitate the transfer of money between host countries and Burkina Faso. A clear overview of the total amount of money transfers (through formal and informal channels) does not exist. Migrants can use several official channels (banks), post offices and the services of Western Union and Money Transfer. During the last decade the number of banks in Ouagadougou has increased, but in rural areas the population still have no access, or very limited access, to banking facilities.

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<sup>1</sup> MIDA is the 'Migrations pour le développement en Afrique' project, launched in 2001 by twenty African countries.

The Secretariat Permanent du CSBE has announced that it will explore the possibilities of establishing a bank especially for Burkinabé migrants, to facilitate their investments in Burkina Faso, but the mobilisation of remittances for productive investment to support development has not yet been worked out (CONAPO, 2006e). This lack of initiative can be linked to the fall in the amount of remittances. The contribution of remittances to Burkina Faso's GDP declined gradually from nearly 6 per cent in the 1980s to 1.7 per cent in 2004, after the expulsion of Burkinabé migrants from Côte d'Ivoire. The case of Burkina Faso has shown that remittances are an unstable source of income, both on the level of the state as well that of individual households.

#### *MIDA initiative*

The MIDA project, which aims to encourage and facilitate the return of qualified nationals, is an example of the so-called co-development strategy and involves initiatives and finances from private and public parties. It is being carried out in cooperation with OIM (Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations) and consists of three elements. The first is the establishment of close links between the home country and strongholds of Burkina Faso abroad. For this goal an inventory was made of Burkinabé organisations abroad, and missions were planned to visit countries with substantial Burkinabé migrant communities. Lack of finances has so far limited these missions to one visit, to Ghana, Benin and Togo.

The second element involves the establishment of a database by stocktaking qualified Burkinabé living in foreign countries who are willing to apply their expertise to projects in Burkina Faso, either during a short stay or by passing on their advice and knowledge through modern communication means (teleconferencing etc.). A first inventory has been made and compatriots are invited to register at a website. At the same time government institutes and agencies have been approached to make an inventory of their needs (in terms of knowledge/skills). This inventory has been completed. The next step is to make matches and to find finances for the follow-up, the real transfer of knowledge. It is obvious that there is a price tag on the follow-up of this project.

The third element calls for the diaspora to invest in Burkina Faso. This invitation contains the possibility of investing in construction projects (housing) through two agencies: the Centre de Gestion des Cités (CEGECI: Cities' Management Centre), with its *Projet Diaspora Investir au Pays* ('Diaspora Investing in the Country' project), and the Société Nationale d'Aménagement des Terrains Urbains (SONATUR: National Company for Urban Land Management). Interested persons can buy an existing house or construct one, either through new urban projects such as Ouaga 2000, or in their home village.

Cooperation with banks, such as BIB, BACB<sup>2</sup> and Ecobank, facilitates the financing of such investments. Information about these projects was sent to Burkinabé embassies to inform possible participants. In 2004, CEGECI had about 250 applications, and SONATUR 500 (Hein, interview 2006).

### *Migrant organisations*

Migrant organisations in host countries can act as engines to encourage good migration management, as they create an infrastructure for the reception and relief of newcomers and can act as channels of information, remittances and development assistance.

Three types of migration organisation can be distinguished in Burkina Faso: the international and domestic varieties (both having members from a single place of origin), and organisations of returned migrants. During the 1970s and 1980s, Africa witnessed an enormous growth in migrant associations. From approximately 1970 to 1990, the number of migrant organisations in Burkina Faso involved in development projects in migrants' place of origin rose from 58 to 119 (Diarra, in Beauchemin & Schoumaker, n.d.), with domestic associations in particular emerging in that period, partly as a response to deteriorating economic and environmental conditions (the so-called African crisis: limited growth of food production per capita; high debts compared to GNP; ecological degradation; severe drought (Harts-Broekhuis & de Jong, 1993)). International associations developed in Côte d'Ivoire in particular, but representations are also found in some other African countries (Niger, Senegal, Toga and Ghana), as well as in countries on other continents (France, Italy, Germany, Belgium, and the USA) (author's own findings during mission).

In view of the dominance of continental international associations (based in Côte d'Ivoire), Beauchemin & Schoumaker contend that international organisations have a weaker impact than their domestic counterparts in terms of development assistance. This hypothesis is based on the following reasons: incomes in Côte d'Ivoire – where most international Burkina migrants live – are not high, and consequently only a modest amount of remittances can be sent by these groups, and migrants in Côte d'Ivoire have limited access to sponsors or other donors (such as NGOs).

Migrant organisations fulfil different functions for the members themselves and for their communities at home: financial (organising informal insurance between the members and rotating credit 'tontines'<sup>3</sup>, and social and cultural

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<sup>2</sup> Banque Internationale du Burkina, Banque Agricole et Commerciale du Burkina.

<sup>3</sup> An informal group of people who regularly deposit a small amount of money which is allocated to one of the members by lottery.



(organising social and sportive events). In the case of a collective transfer of remittances, members of an organisation can support initiatives and investments in their home village. In addition, the migrant organisation can act as an intermediary (broker) between potential donors (aid programmes, government organisations, NGOs) or sponsors (private persons) and the home community. It is impossible to estimate the overall development effect of these investments supported or started up by migrant initiatives and remittances, but positive results for local development identified by Bauchemin and Schoumaker (n.d.) concern agricultural projects (dams, irrigation pumps, mechanisation, market gardening), infrastructure (roads, mills, boreholes, telephones), public facilities (schools, health centres, mosques) and various other economic investments.

Associations of returnees – the third distinct type of migrant organisation – focus on the protection and promotion of their members' interests, and also function as lobby and political pressure groups (Afou, Songho, Ramde, interviews 2006; Zongo, 2003). Some even have the promotion of the integration of returnees as one of their objectives. Although the emphasis usually lay on financial and social support, tensions between returnees and other Burkinabé have stimulated these organisations to look after the political interest of the repatriates as well. (An example of such distinction can be seen at the University of Ouagadougou, where students differentiate between *diaspo* and *tenga* (locals).)

The most famous and influential migrant organisation is Le Tocsin, established in 1997, with more than a thousand members. Its focus is on South-South relations and migrants, and it lobbies for human and migrants' rights, such as the right to vote. One of the statements on which the establishment of Le Tocsin is based is remarkable: 'People in Burkina Faso are inclined to forget the ones who have left the country!' Part of the objectives of this organisation, however, form a perfect match with new government policy. Le Tocsin aims at encouraging Burkinabé abroad to participate in the development of their country of origin and wants to support the relations between government organisations and the Burkinabé abroad.

### Migration and risks

Migrants, in particular undocumented (illegal, clandestine) migrants and vulnerable groups such as children and women, are exposed to various risks. Burkina Faso has acknowledged some of those risks – the spread of diseases, and human trafficking – and interventions to minimise these negative side-effects for the migrants as well for the country have begun. Other risks have not yet been dealt with, to the great annoyance of migrant organisations. These

include a lack of protection abroad, poor labour conditions, and financial losses which are often related to the informal or undocumented position of the migrants and members of their families.

*Migration and the spread of diseases*

The mobility of people contributes to the spread of infectious diseases, and in recent times the link between the spread of HIV/Aids and spatial mobility in different parts of Africa has been discussed in the literature. The study of Lalou and Piché from 1994 (cited in CONAPO, 2006c) revealed a strong correlation between migration and the spread of HIV/Aids in several West African countries. Older documents mention a rather high prevalence of Aids among Burkinabé, though recently published numbers indicate a much lower rate of infection, but this difference is related to different methods of measuring (Segbo, interview 2006).

Infection rates are significant among people involved in international transport and migration to Côte d'Ivoire. A survey of 739 truck drivers from 1999 showed that 19 per cent of them were sero-positive and that 96 per cent of the infected persons who visited medical posts between 1996–1999 were seasonal labourers (Segbo, interview 2006; CONAPO, 2006c).

The Aids problem is explicitly mentioned in the Burkinabé Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (Ministry of Economy and Finance, 2000) and a specific office for tackling the problem has been established (Conseil National de Lutte contre le Sida), a step that underlines Burkina Faso's awareness of this threat to its public health.

The majority of Burkinabé migrants go to other African countries. According to the views of Burkinabé officials concerned with HIV/Aids, temporary international migrants share a profile which makes them highly prone to infection: these migrants are dominantly male, young (mostly married) and not highly educated. Ignorance, inability to understand information campaigns and a trust in 'gris-gris'<sup>4</sup> contribute to a limited (25%) use of condoms (CONAPO, 2006c). Moreover, the circumstances in the places of destination (Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana) add to the high risk of being infected. A thriving sex market, abundantly available prostitutes, and even sex cinemas are believed to encourage slack morals. If migrants have been infected during their sojourn abroad, the chance is great that they will infect their spouses when they return. In

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<sup>4</sup> Gris-gris are amulets, charms, and spells intended to ward off pregnancy.

addition, the systems of *levirate*<sup>5</sup> and *sororate* as well as polygamy contribute to a further spread of the disease within the local community.

In view of the lengthy analysis that has been done of the HIV/Aids issue (CONAPO, 2006c), the recommendations for policy are very modest and vague. There is a call for more international cooperation in this field, and greater involvement of NGOs which are expected to be closer to the people infected.

#### *Trafficking and child labour*

In West Africa, in particular in the Sahelian countries, it is not uncommon to send family members away to look for work in other places. This long-standing practice holds for all family members, young children included. Children in Burkina Faso are sent out to work by their parents for several reasons: they are not happy at school, their family cannot pay the school fees, or simply in order to have one mouth less to feed ('eat away migrant'). Besides this, girls are sent to towns to work as domestic servants or as agricultural labourers to earn money for their trousseau. Boys are usually sent to work on cocoa, coffee, cotton, yam and cashew plantations in Burkina Faso or in one of the neighbouring countries (especially Côte d'Ivoire). But they can also work as domestic servants, as miners in gold mines or as wood and metal workers.

In the West African context intermediaries are often involved in this kind of transaction. These intermediaries are family members, acquaintances or persons trusted by the village community. Traffickers, however, can present themselves as intermediaries and offer training opportunities in carpentry, or working as mechanics, or sewing, either secretly to the children (without informing the parents) – or to the parents. Occasionally these agents pay the parents a small sum of money. Malevolent intermediaries however, sell the children afterwards to plantation owners who are in need of cheap labour, or to other entrepreneurs who are interested in cheap labour. Some of the children involved in these transactions are exploited and are forced into hard labour, and, even worse, some end up as street children who have to beg, or work as prostitutes (Yaro & Sawadogo, 2005).

It is difficult to estimate the number of children who suffer yearly from these practices.<sup>6</sup> It is evident that the eastern and south-western parts of the country

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<sup>5</sup> *Levirate* marriage is one in which, if there were no children, a woman marries one of her husband's brothers after her husband's death, in order to continue his bloodline. *Sororate* marriage is one in which a man marries (or engages in sexual activity with) his wife's sister, if his wife dies, or if she is infertile.

<sup>6</sup> Data found on the internet from a study by the World Bank and Terre des Hommes, based on a sample of 4500 households on a national level: 165 000 children aged between 6 and 17 are

are important recruitment areas, and that within these areas some villages are more involved than others (Yaro, 2006; Yaro & Sawadogo, 2005). Besides this, a particular pattern of destinations can be distinguished within each region. Various household surveys revealed that between 13.5 and 25 per cent of the households had children below the age of 18 (with an average age of 14.6 years) who lived and worked elsewhere; on average 1.4 children per household.

The destinations of these children are in Burkina Faso itself and in surrounding countries. From the south-western region, for instance, children move first to Côte d'Ivoire (plantations around the cities of Divo and Bouna, sugarcane plantations and sugar-cane works in and around Férékéssédougou and Korgho), and then to Ghana. According to Kress (2006) Burkina Faso functions as a transit point for sending children from Benin, Togo and Mali to other countries in the region.

In December 2001 all ECOWAS members agreed on a Political Declaration and Action Plan which aims to combat the trafficking of people by establishing special anti-trafficking police units and a regional task force dedicated to handling this problem, among other measures. In line with this agreement, Burkina Faso signed bilateral agreements with Ivory Coast and Mali on combating trafficking, and the cooperation with Mali resulted in the repatriation of twenty Burkinabé child-traffic victims. In 2003 the Burkinabé anti-traffic law was signed, and in 2004 four child-trafficking networks had already been broken up and the arrested traffickers sentenced to prison.

Formulating laws is not sufficient to combat human trafficking and child labour. In addition the Burkinabé government, together with donor organisations, including the German development organisation GTZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit – German Company for Technical Cooperation), has also established Vigilance and Surveillance Committees in nearly all provinces and is working with UNICEF on providing transit centres for trafficked children. In 2005 a total of 921 children, more than half girls, were received in these centres. The members of the watch committees are representatives of organisations usually involved in child labour, such as cotton producers, the police, NGOs and social welfare agencies. In 1999, the Burkinabé government joined the IPEC (International Programme on the

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involved in child labour and/or child trafficking. See Kielland A. & Sanogo, I. (2002) *Burkina Faso: child labour migration from rural areas* ([http://home.online.no/~annekie/Africa\\_docs/BFEnglish.pdf](http://home.online.no/~annekie/Africa_docs/BFEnglish.pdf)); and *School attendance reduces likelihood of child migration* (<http://www.eldis.org/static/DOC10689.htm>).

Elimination of Child Labour)<sup>7</sup> programme, launched by the ILO, which aims to prevent child trafficking for work purposes on cotton plantations (Segbo, interview 2006).

A second additional policy is to give information on several levels. Together with the ILO and donors, the government organised seminars for customs officers against child trafficking, to train them to recognise types of transport used in trafficking. The GTZ-sponsored programme against the trafficking of children organised awareness programmes in seventy villages, with the help of a forum-theatre. By watching a play and participating in the re-enactment, the taboo surrounding the dark sides of migration was broken, and parents became aware of the risks their children face during their sojourn elsewhere. For parents watching, the enactment or the re-enactment was often the first time they became aware of the real experiences of their children.

At an early age Burkinabé children conform to the unwritten rule that bad experiences are not talked about and that the benefits of migration have to be displayed. They save their earnings bit by bit to be able to buy something nice before returning home, such as new clothes or some gadget (Segbo interview 2006; *Le Pays* 21 July 2006).

Last but not least, policy measures to assist parents with the development, during the dry season, of additional economic activities (dams, small irrigation projects, horticulture, etc.) are important in preventing the departure of parents and the children. And there is some financial support for parents who send their children to school on a regular basis. GTZ noted positive effects of the establishment of school canteens with free meals for the pupils.

## Final remarks and conclusion

Burkina Faso has a long history as a country of emigration, and migration has a positive connotation in all circles in society. Migration is seen as a free choice on the part of individuals and families, who are able to improve their living conditions thanks to remittances. At the same time these remittances contribute to the national income and are welcomed, despite the proven insecure character of such cash flow. Initiatives to facilitate the transfer of remittances and to diminish the transfer costs are still limited, and Burkinabé migrants encounter various obstacles and few possibilities if they want to invest their money in their home country.

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<sup>7</sup> Burkina Faso is one of nine countries participating in this USDOL-funded project to combat the trafficking of children for exploitative labour in West and Central Africa (see [www.fisek.org.tr/atlas\\_index.php#burkina](http://www.fisek.org.tr/atlas_index.php#burkina)).

The Burkina Faso government hopes the country will be able to profit more from international migration to northern countries and takes the example of India as an exporter of highly qualified labour. According to officials, the ageing populations in Europe offer possibilities for Africans in the European labour market, and (temporary) South-North migration can favour fundamental productive investments and knowledge transfer. The risk of a brain drain is recognised, but this has not yet been translated into policy measures. In fact, the attitude of the government is ambivalent on this matter. Adequate knowledge of future needs of labour markets in the North was not apparent during the discussions and interviews during the mission. With references only to the ageing process and to a possible growing demand for labour in Europe, authorities seem to be inadequately informed about the possibility of increased labour migration to the North.

Migration to neighbouring countries is still a more important issue in the migration debate than migration to Europe (mainly Italy) and the United States. In addition to this 'regional' migration, the country has to deal with substantial internal migration streams, resulting in agrarian colonisation and urbanisation, which both require particular policy attention. The most important migration issue in recent years has been the forced return of Burkinabé migrants from Côte d'Ivoire and its consequences for the country as a whole and for the returnees in particular. The re-entry of the returnees has fuelled the national discussion about access to resources, especially land, and reintegration, while at the West African regional level the debate has centred around the regulation of informal migration and how to secure migrants' rights.

The government's efforts in the field of mobilising the Burkinabé diaspora are still in their infancy. With the aid of the OIM, the first phase of a project in this area is near completion, so that an overview of qualified Burkinabé who live abroad and who are willing to utilise their skills and knowledge in Burkina Faso will be available.

Migrants from Burkina Faso have established migrant organisations in various national and international destinations, and after their return they participate in migrant organisations at home. Those organisations have several functions, but their focus is primarily on mutual support rather than on facilitating local development initiatives. This somewhat limited focus on development-related initiatives is linked to the more constrained financial means of the migrant organisations, which are mainly based in other African countries.

In addition, the spread of modern communication systems not yet reached rural areas and for most Burkinabé the information era has yet to take off. The link between migration and knowledge (education, instruction, information, advice) was not an explicit issue during the discussions and interviews during the mission, but arose in many guises and with one causal relation: a lack of

knowledge and information. This lack limits the optimal use of possibilities for the development and management of migration – both at the level of the state and that of the individual migrant – and even exposes vulnerable migrant groups to unacceptable risks.

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## Migration management: Mozambique's challenges and strategies

Inês Raimundo Oucho

### Introduction

Limited research has been undertaken in examining migration per se, or migration and management. This chapter is concerned mainly with how Mozambique is handling challenges and strategies on migration management.

In Mozambique, as well as in other countries and in other parts of the world, migration management has become an important issue since irregular migration, human trafficking and border control have increased across the world. The discourse of migration management seems like 'soft idle chat to put the bull to sleep' (a popular Brazilian saying), since, up till now, no strategies have been found to curb the massive exodus. Developing countries are impotent in managing these movements since poverty there has increased considerably (Adepoju, 1995; Boswell & Crisp, 2004), while developed countries still use border enforcements and highly controlled strategies regarding entry, instead of looking seriously at the factors that generate the massive exoduses. International statistics have shown that the growing number of irregulars in these countries is not formed solely by unskilled workers but also by the skilled (Borjas & Crisp, 2005; Hatton & Williamson, 2005).

Traditional sending or receiving countries have changed their roles, so that many countries can no longer be defined exclusively as ‘sender’ or as ‘receiver’. A country like Mozambique cannot be held responsible solely as a country that sends migrants. It has latterly become a receiving country, although its traditional role as sender still remains the dominant trend (Covane, 1996; Das Neves, 1998; INE 1999).

Several scholars have tried to define sub-Saharan Africa in terms of patterns and trends of Mozambican migration, and the existing data still does not show Europe or America as privileged destinations for Mozambicans. Apparently, even though the economic, social and environmental fragility that the country has shown in the three decades of her independence, international boundaries are still continuing to be crossed (UNDP, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001). That Europe and America are not preferred destinations is demonstrated, firstly, by the historical perspective showing Mozambicans following labour migration routes to South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Swaziland. After independence, people who had to flee from civil war also used these routes, as well as those to Tanzania, Zambia and Kenya. Secondly, during the 1980s, Zimbabwe and South Africa represented the strongest economies in the region – even Portugal could not compete with them. Lastly, apart from labour migration studies, no substantial research on migration flows, and trends, or on the survival strategies of migrants, either internally or internationally, have been conducted. What we know about migrants often depends on the information given by the local media when Heads of State meet people in the diaspora on their official visits to these countries.

Questions that arise are:

How did these people reach these destinations?

What have they been doing since they got there?

What contributions do they make to their country of origin?

Additional information has come from recent studies undertaken by SAMP (the Southern African Migration Project (SAMP, 2006a; SAMP, 2006b), and indirectly through other studies undertaken in South Africa but with no relevant statistics on Mozambicans overseas.

Formerly, migration to South Africa was highly controlled in Mozambique, through ‘travel permits’ (*guias de marcha*) issued by the Ministry of Security, and crossing regional borders<sup>1</sup> was controlled by the Ministry of Labour since people were travelling to South Africa for work. The strategy of control did not succeed since Mozambique went through a civil war that left the government

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘regional borders’ is used to refer to all (international) borders within the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

without any control over its people who had to flee to urban areas or cross such regional borders for security. Most of those who fled overseas did so clandestinely, since some of them were later linked with political movements fighting against the FRELIMO (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique – Mozambique Liberation Front) government. With the end of socialism and the introduction of a market economy, the Mozambican government seems to have disregarded its role of controlling movement since it is engaged mainly with locating those who are ‘jumping’ regional borders, particularly to South Africa, without much concern about those who go overseas legally (interview: Cossa<sup>2</sup>). Unfortunately nobody has followed this up. What is certainly important is to have a passport, no matter how long people stay during their leave or what they are doing there.

This chapter is based on empirical evidence from fieldwork that I have recently undertaken on migration, gender and urbanisation in Mozambique, together with some numerical data – from written information or from the Internet. Some interviews from immigration officers are used as supporting evidence. In ten years of university lecturing and with the experience gained during my research on the topic, I have learnt that from the 1990s until now ‘migration management’ practice is still a side issue for government, since no one has taken the issue sufficiently seriously. This chapter seeks to analyse migration management strategies as well as the challenges that policy makers have exposed, and it also highlights the assertion that migration serves as a significant source of income for origin communities. The question then is: is poverty a driver for migration, or has migration contributed to human welfare? And to what extent has migration been managed by government decision-making?

### Migration trends

Although there is a lack of information about Mozambicans living abroad, this chapter aims to show that the existence of limitations on statistics can lead to misleading generalisations. However, experiences from other countries can probably tell us what situations Mozambicans face and how these experiences can contribute to the discourse on migration management.

Migration is not a new phenomenon in the history of African countries or in the world (Adepoju 1994; 1995; Oucho 2001). People have always moved in times of need, and in different directions. Population movement in Mozambique increased during the period of armed conflict (1976–1992). Approximately 1.5 million people fled to neighbouring countries, namely Zimbabwe, Swazi-

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<sup>2</sup> Some detail of the interviews is supplied at the end of the chapter.

land, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and South Africa, and between four and five million were displaced internally because of natural hazards such as drought, floods, and cyclones (UNDP, 1998). Because of its close links with Mozambique from its colonial legacy, Portugal in Europe also became a main destination for individuals or groups of people from Mozambique, particularly those who were against the regime (Vines, 1991). Some left the country immediately after independence and others during the worsening of the war. Several went to the former West Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom, and to a lesser extent to Kenya and the Comoros Islands. This was possible because the then RENAMO (Resistência Nacional de Moçambique – Mozambique National Resistance) had branches in countries named as being sympathetic towards their cause (Vines, 1991).

In terms of migration, Mozambique has for a long time been both a sending and a receiving country. Some of the reasons for this are: its long historical link with trade with Arabic countries, colonialism, mine labour, decolonisation, civil war and natural hazards (Penvenne, 1982; Covane, 1996; Whitaker, 1985; Das Neves, 1998). The country is heavily dependent on foreign exchange earnings from migrant labourers working in South Africa as well as on exports from agricultural production. Empirical studies have demonstrated that the country has also survived through cross-border trade and long-distance trade with countries such as Brazil, Hong Kong, China and Taiwan (SAMP<sup>3</sup>, 2006 a).

The character of migration in Mozambique has followed world trends. Even though there is a lack of study on migration, empirical evidence has shown that, quite apart from the migration of labour to South Africa and Zimbabwe, rural-urban migration has grown considerably. Lack of research on rural-urban migration which could help to understand this typology of internal migration might lead to generalisation of aspects related to migration issues. As I mentioned earlier, well-developed research has been done on labour migration to South Africa and Zimbabwe, with a focus on migration from southern Mozambique (Maputo, Gaza and Inhambane provinces), and researchers such as Katzenellenbogen, Harris, Penvenne, Covane and Das Neves have made a study on labour migration to Zimbabwe (Manica province). But, apart from these, few studies have been developed in relation to rural-urban migration, in particular within Mozambique itself.

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<sup>3</sup> The Southern African Migration Project, established in 1996. It is a regional research organisation comprised of Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, in partnership with Queen's University, Ontario, Canada and funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the UK Department of International Development (DFID).

During the 1980s and 1990s, international labour migration was hampered by the South African government's reducing the recruitment of mineworkers due to tensions between the two countries, and because of the consequent economic crisis in the mining sector (Hanlon, 1986; de Vletter, 2000). This situation increased the number of people seeking employment, and many had to find work in other markets such as urban areas, and eventually across international (non-SADC) boundaries.<sup>4</sup> The failure of the rural economy (mostly engaged in large-scale agriculture) to create sufficient employment opportunities in the rural areas, as well as the failure of communal development to stimulate rural development through the creation of communal villages, was another factor contributing to rural-urban migration (Lattes, 1990; de Vletter, 2000; Raimundo, 2002).

Mozambique has been defined in world statistics as the poorest country in the world (Republic of Mozambique, 2001; UNDP, 2001). According to the data from *Inquérito aos Agregados Familiares* (National Household Survey on Living Conditions of 1996 and 1997), its poverty was characterised by the following: slow economic growth until the beginning of the 1990s; poor levels of education of economically active members of households, especially women; high dependency rates in households; low productivity in the family agricultural sector; lack of employment opportunities in the agricultural sector and elsewhere; poor development of basic infrastructure in rural areas. This last resulted in the isolation of communities due to the lack of adequate roads, and therefore in poor integration of rural markets – which would have allowed the sale of agricultural surpluses. Poverty puts people in a state of permanent vulnerability and migration is one of the ways they find to survive (SAMP, 2006a).

The Republic of Mozambique,<sup>5</sup> which achieved independence from Portugal on 25 June 1975, is administratively divided into eleven provinces. It is a country of about 19 million inhabitants, where women constitute 51.5 per cent of the population and are responsible for 52.5 per cent of active economic production (UNDP, 2001; INE, 1999). The average annual population growth was estimated between the first post-independence census (1980) and the second (1997) to be 1.7 per cent, and for the period 2000–2005 to be 2.5 per cent (Republic of Mozambique, 2001; INE, 1999).

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<sup>4</sup> The 1997 census shows more than seven million people of working age in Mozambique at the time of census, of whom only about 500 000 were in formal employment (SAMP, 2006b: 8, quoting the UNDP report of 2006). The informal economy in the cities is fed by migrants from the rural areas (Knauder, 2000), highlighting the importance of agriculture and the informal sector to household incomes and economies (see also 2006 report by the National Institute for Statistics).

<sup>5</sup> Formerly the People's Republic of Mozambique (1975–1990).

## Migration literature

Much of the literature on migration in Mozambique is related to labour migration to neighbouring countries – to be mine workers in South Africa, or to work on plantations and in mining in Zimbabwe (Penvenne, 1982; Covane, 1996; Das Neves, 1998) – and general cross-border migration to South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Swaziland. The existing literature on cross-border migration has explained that migration is a consequence of the civil war and the consequent lack of development. It has been facilitated by the opening of the border with South Africa in the post-apartheid era (Covane, 1996; UNDP, 1998; Das Neves, 1998; Peberdy & Crush, 1998; Rogerson, 1995, 1997, 1999).

An unpublished SAMP report on Mozambique (July 2006) indicates that visa exemption agreements signed between South Africa and Mozambique in April 2005, and between South Africa and Swaziland in May 2005, have resulted in increased cross border movement, in particular a growing number of informal cross-border traders. Entrance entitles the owner of the passport to stay thirty days in each country, so most Mozambicans cross the South African border and stay for thirty days, and then travel back to the border, to have their passports stamped for a further thirty days. This new trend has made the life of many Mozambican migrants very much easier (interview: immigration officers).

The factors which impel people to migrate are explained by socio-economic and ecological factors (Lattes, 1990; Araújo, 1997). Climatic extremes such as droughts and floods have forced thousands of Mozambicans to move out of rural areas into urban areas (Araújo, 2000; Raimundo, 2002). It seems that people are eager to leave their place of origin, not primarily because of the hazardous conditions there, but due to the high level of poverty (SAMP, 2006a).

Management of Mozambican migration started after independence from Portugal in the mid-1970s with the authorisation of people coming into cities, and was accelerated by state nationalisation in 1976, which culminated in 1990 with the revision of the country's constitution (Raimundo, 2002).

The types of Mozambican migration most publicised and studied have been cross-border and refugee migration. The SAMP studies (2006b) have emphasised that cross-border trade is a way of survival for many households in the region, due to the increase of poverty, as well as the general worsening of the economic situation (for example in Mozambique), and because of political instability (Zimbabwe and Democratic Republic of Congo). In this context, the SAMP studies emphasise that South Africa is a core country where traders do their businesses and constitutes the final destination for most migrants. This is evident in the growing body of literature examining cross-border migration to South Africa, which has begun to emerge (Rogerson, 1997; de Vletter, 1998;

Peberdy & Crush, 1998). In the case of Mozambique, the geographic situation facilitates the crossing of borders as well as human trafficking since South Africa is being targeted as the destination for migrants and as the place for cross-border traders because of its links to the rest of the world through its well-established infrastructure.

The circumstances that favour border crossing are historically related to the kinship that exists between people living alongside the artificial borders made during the division of Africa in 1885–1886 by colonial countries. As Vines (1991: 6) points out, ‘most African countries are defined by borders laid down in the European partition of Africa in 1890.’ Also the absence of employment opportunities, the hazardous conditions and the fragile commercial network in rural villages push the increase of cross-border trade (Raimundo, 2002). However, for a country that has experienced a diverse number of events ranging from civil war to droughts, economic destabilisation and natural disasters, as well as the tightening of border controls in Europe, there has been a glaring neglect in the literature of how these factors have impacted on migration within and outside the borders of Mozambique. Little is known on how people's rural livelihoods have been affected, or what the migration experience of urban-ward migrants has been, or the contribution of those who live overseas.

A census of population and housing taken in 1997 found that internal and regional migration in and from Mozambique was caused by civil war. During the armed conflict, a large number of people moved from their home areas to other places, and eventually to other countries, in search of a safe place to live. At the same time the country experienced a long dry period that also resulted in people's displacement. The migration that occurred after the civil war is the most complex. Many people who were living abroad during the war returned to the country after the signing of the General Peace Agreement (1992), but some stayed on in the countries of refuge. Unfortunately, data referring to people who moved overseas are not shown in the census, and therefore migration managers are not very clear about destinations, nor do they know how many people went overseas and how many are still living there, although the electoral registration in Europe in 2004 attests to about 8000 Mozambicans living in Europe, and indirect information indicates many others in the United States (interview: Cossa).

One of the most interesting findings of the 1997 census is that migration often occurs over short distances, for example, between adjacent provinces or districts. Manica, Sofala, Maputo province and the city of Maputo had the highest rate of immigration. In the case of Manica, the majority came from Sofala province, while people who went to Sofala came from Zambezia province.



A recent national SAMP study of 1375 households undertaken on ‘Migration and Poverty’ (SAMP, 2006a) covers the period of the civil war where people concentrated by preference in three main cities. It shows little change in rural-urban migration: the capital city is still the main destination (Raimundo, 2004). The survey gives figures for households with the breadwinner working in the home country (46.1%), followed by those who live in South Africa (5.7%). It found that five members of the households which were part of the survey live in Europe (including the UK), one in North America and two in Asia.

Recent studies undertaken in Portugal by Portuguese researchers (whose work has not yet been published) have corroborated this idea of ‘lack of interest’ from Mozambicans in going to Portugal since it shows fewer than five thousand Mozambicans in that country. This is in contrast to the numbers coming to Portugal from Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea and Brazil – all former colonies. Quoting from the second national census of Population and Housing of 1997 there were over 90 thousand foreigners registered in Mozambique, as shown in Table 5.1.

*Table 5.1* Number of foreigners living in Mozambique in 1997, by province and gender

Province	Men	Women	Total
Mozambique	58,786	32,061	90,847
Niassa	4,239	3,877	8,116
Cabo Delgado	1,721	1,290	3,011
Nampula	250	157	407
Zambezia	7,843	7,138	14,981
Tete	10,522	9,083	19,605
Manica	4,217	2,782	6,999
Sofala	2,002	1,012	3,014
Inhambane	6,666	830	7,496
Gaza	11,865	2,063	13,928
Maputo province	4,989	2,031	7,020
Maputo city	4,472	1,798	6,270

Source: INE, 1999: 99; refers to a national survey undertaken in the year of 2004 on Migration and Poverty where 1375 households were interviewed.

## Defining migration management

According to the Oxford Dictionary (1995), ‘Management is the control and making of decisions in a business or similar organisation.’ It implies taking action to make the desired results come to pass. In this sense migration management, if seen as a business, can be the means that enables the government to design and implement a migration policy. Hence for successful management, all involved stakeholders – the government, the general popula-

tion, and researchers – must all play a role in defining migration procedures. So that their success can have legitimacy, they need to share ownership.

Government has the role of creating regulations for the movement of people. These regulations must be based on what is actually happening, in terms of how many migrants the country has, internally and internationally, and why they migrated. This information comes from researchers who have analysed the process of migration and the circumstances under which people are leaving. The population becomes the ‘target’ of the immigration policy. The government designs immigration integration by having a long-term strategy, which balances the interests of all stakeholders while sharing responsibilities with every role-player in society.

After independence, migration in Mozambique was managed through draconian rules under the socialist regime (from 1975 to 1990). Everybody was governed according to ‘popular power’, by Labour Agreements (made during the colonial period), and – since everything, including the population, was seen as the state’s property – regulated by strong connections to socialist countries such as the former Soviet Union (USSR), the former Eastern Germany, and Cuba (see the Mozambican Constitution, 1975). During that period people going abroad to study were authorised to go only to Eastern countries, and after finishing their studies were compulsorily sent home. There was another group who went to work in Eastern Germany under restricted regulations. Not everybody had the right to possess a passport unless there was serious illness needing foreign treatment (preferably in the former socialist countries of Europe, and latterly in South Africa). It was not normal to possess a passport, and everybody had – as is normal – to apply through the Immigration Office, which was, however, controlled by the Ministry of Security through the so-called Mozambique State Security (SNASP). The applicant had to explain why he or she needed a passport (interview: Cossa). The Mozambican State was able to control overseas migration through these stringent regulations.

For fifteen years, during the 1970s and ’80s, Mozambicans were forced to settle internally in communal and urban villages (due in part to the civil war, floods and drought – see INGC (2003) – and because ‘Operation Production’, an unsuccessful attempt to move people out of the cities) (Hanlon, 1986). The authorities used to demand an internal travel permit (*guias de marcha*) from all citizens crossing provincial and district boundaries. Nevertheless, these travel permits were statistically useless because no-one processed the information contained in these forms (interview: Panachande). In fact during these years migration was a taboo subject since it was considered a matter of state security. Policy on immigration focused on enforcing borders and combating irregular movements, making this task the responsibility of the ministers of Security, Justice, Interior and Defence. Even though this occurred during the time of tight

control of movement, no member of the government can tell us how many Mozambicans lived in the so-called forbidden Western countries during the time of exile.

With the advent of the multiparty system in 1990 and a market economy, migration became a 'normal' issue. This was because, according to the revised Mozambique Constitution, all citizens have equal rights and opportunities, including the right to hold a passport, hence the right to travel and to live wherever they want to, including living abroad (Mozambican Revised Constitution of 1990).

In the sixteen years since the introduction of a market economy, the topic of migration seems to have been poorly managed in Mozambique since the government has 'released' the citizens after a period of tight control. The institutions that deal with migration have no information on who is moving, where people are, how many at each place and what they do, and how many are moving in and out, particularly moving overseas. What exists is a general sense that Mozambicans cross South African borders irregularly and are involved in cross-border trade, even in crime gangs. In May 2006 the Television of Mozambique (TVM, July 2006) showed a programme about the trafficking of girls by an old man in Namaacha district, Maputo Province, which is bordered by Swaziland and South Africa. That the situation of trafficking had increased is difficult to substantiate since the statistics regarding trafficked people are inconsistent, depending as they do on personal opinion rather than hard data. Since the year of 2005 the IOM in Maputo has assisted eight women ageing between 16 and 24 years, mostly among the Mozambican southern borders with South Africa and Swaziland. The IOM has not assisted people in the other borders such as Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe (interview: Chimedza).

A new direction of migration studies, namely gender and migration, was started in 2002 by Raimundo, who discussed the issue of gender and migration in southern Mozambique. But no substantial studies on migration in general have been undertaken by Mozambican scholars, apart from two who did their doctoral studies on labour migration, and one on refugee studies. This lack of interest, either from scholars or from the government, creates a shortage of information. What exists are merely assumptions and not accurate data about what is going on.

Although the government requires its people to fill in immigration forms during entry into and departure from the country, this exercise seems to be useless since that information has not given us statistics, and after five years of storage the forms have now been destroyed (interview: Panachande). In reality this practice dates back to the time of citizens' control of movement to and outside of the country.

The sad and amazing situation is that none of the ministries, neither Foreign Affairs nor Interior, has accurate information about Mozambican migration, for example, who lives overseas. During socialism it was a serious offence to live in Western countries. No one who dared to flee registered at the local embassy or consulate because they feared persecution and harassment. The conjecture advanced in this paper is that it therefore became a habit not to register in the country of destination. As stated by the Mozambican General Consul in Johannesburg, the same happened with those who lived in South Africa, because most people came to South Africa for irregular purposes (*Notícias*, 1 August 2006).

## Out-migration from Mozambique

### *Regional migration: Mine and plantation labour*

Out-migration, particularly to the southern African region, has been an historical feature of life in Mozambique for over a century (Covane, 1998; Das Neves, 1998). Authors Penvenne (1982), Covane (1998), and Lubkemann (2000) all consider that this phenomenon was shaped by the colonial agreement between the then Portuguese government and the Republic of South Africa.

*Table 5.2* Number of migrant labourers working in South Africa

Year	Workers	Year	Workers
1970s	100,000	1997	52,000
1975	118,000	2000	43,860
1977	41,000	2001	45,254
1982	46,000	2002	50,589
1985	55,000	2003	52,205
1990	42,000	2004	48,099
1995	52,000	2005	46,256

Sources: de Vletter, 1998; TEBA-WENELA, 2006

Migration has latterly become a way of survival strategy and, as Lubkemann (2002: 193) says in a Portuguese case, ‘emigration is often considered the only possible route to material success.’ In fact, migrants in rural areas are sharply different from the other ‘citizens’ because they are able to build better houses, with solar panels, private boreholes, donkeys for transportation, bicycles, etc., as shown in a survey on Migration and Poverty in Mozambique (SAMP<sup>6</sup>, 2006).

Studies conducted by SAMP are beginning to examine cross-border migration. They have examined the processes involved and Mozambique’s relationship with South Africa based on the migration of large numbers of Mozambi-

<sup>6</sup> SAMP has published more than forty research reports on the issue of migration in the region.

cans to the gold and coal mines in South Africa (Rogerson, 1997; Peberdy & Crush, 1998; Das Neves, 1998; Covane, 1996). However, it is worth noting that the work of SAMP does not look at the flow of migrants *from* South Africa to other countries of southern Africa, nor does it investigate the socio-economic impact of such migration on the economies of these countries. The SAMP studies are faulty because they overemphasise the role of South Africa as a core in-migration country, which is understandable since this country has the highest Human Development Index after Botswana (UNDP reports, 1998, 1999, 2000; 2001). However, data from the census of 1997 and a recent study done on refugees and socio-economic conditions in the Maratane refugee camps and in the city of Maputo in 2004 (CEMIRDE & CEP, 2004) have demonstrated that Mozambique (as well as other southern African countries) is not only a sending country but a receiving country as well, with migrants entering the country from Nigeria, the African Great Lakes, China, Pakistan and Lebanon (interview: Cossa).

In South Africa, the genesis of the migrant labour system required large supplies of cheap labour. Internally this was, historically, enforced through various techniques such as taxation, labour coercion (Penvenne 1982; Covane 1996, Das Neves 1998), land alienation, and ultimately rural impoverishment. African men from many parts of the region were involved in the labour system in South Africa (Hanlon, 1986). A growing body of literature examining the impact of the migrant labour system on the rural economies of Botswana, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Lesotho and Mozambique can be found in various literatures (Covane, 1996; Das Neves, 1998; de Vletter, 2000; Peberdy & Crush, 1998).

Of paramount concern in this literature is the effect of rural–urban migration and its implications for the economy of rural African households, and more significantly, for women left behind. In general, the paradigm of the successful migrant career is seen as a means for men to establish households and build up a capital base through the acquisition of land, livestock and equipment, to take care of their retirement and to maintain an independent livelihood (de Vletter, 2000).

Migration in southern Mozambique was primarily connected with masculinity, especially migration for economic reasons. In her 2005 study on *The Interaction of Gender and Migration: Household Relations in Rural and Urban Mozambique*, Raimundo found, through focus group discussions and life histories, that the extent of one's manhood was seen to be determined by

migration: ‘My son, go to Joni<sup>7</sup> to be a man.’ Because of the issue of ‘manhood’, the desire to go to ‘Joni’ went beyond the colonial exigency of paying taxes. Young men were forced by society to challenge harsh mine conditions in order to gain the status of manhood. Young men and adults were also attracted by friends and relatives who returned well-dressed and bringing goods such as bicycles, motorbikes, dresses, shoes, etc. However, because of their long stays in Johannesburg, some of these men, added, to some extent, to the responsibilities of the wives they left behind. These women had to ‘become men’ since they had to perform the traditional duties of men, such as contracting workers to the fields, and mending their houses.

Table 5.3 Remittances and deferred pay, in South African rands (ZAR)

Year	Compulsory deferred pay	Voluntary remittances*	Total
1992	155,999,283	5,100,421	161,099,704
1993	163,115,778	11,656,474	174,722,252
1994	171,013,678	19,540,839	190,554,517
1995	200,163,229	21,433,277	221,596,506
2005	432,816,199		

Sources: de Vletter, 1998; TEBA, 2006

\* Refers to the money collected through mining industry channels (de Vletter, 1998: 15).

#### *Estimation on remittance flows*

In 2005 the contribution of Mozambican mine labourers in South Africa corresponded to 3.6 per cent of the country’s GDP (TEBA-WENELA, 2006). Part of the earnings of most migrants is sent home as ‘remittances’, either as cash or in the form of goods. These remittances can be sent through formal channels, such as banks, employers, and contractor agencies, or informally through friends, crew members, drivers, etc. As discussed earlier, remittance-sending to Mozambique is usually directly linked to mine labour activity, and is thus constrained by the agreement between the then governments of Portugal and South Africa with regard to the mechanism of Deferred Pay. These governments agreed that the miners had to deduct sixty per cent of their salaries as a deferred payment. This money is then paid to them at the end of their contract. Annually, all foreign mine workers have remitted an amount equivalent to about R432 million. That amount is for deferred pay, compensation for widows, pension payments, provident fund payment, and loan services awards payment and for ‘financial benefit’ (interview: Carimo).

<sup>7</sup> The nickname that people of Southern Mozambique give to the city of Johannesburg, South Africa.

*Mine workers' remittances*

Several scholars (e.g. de Vletter 2000; Boswell & Crisp, 2004) have pointed out that migrants contribute to poverty alleviation and development in their origin countries through their investments and through the diffusion of financial and knowledge-based capital. Depending on the length of their stay abroad, and the type of work they find there, workers gain financial, human, social and other types of capital. Although data on remittances is insufficient, migrants' remittances to the country of origin represent a significant role in making a difference within the community. As Jose Carimo says, the money that comes through TEBA Bank Ltd. has helped many families in meeting household needs and has improved their standard of living. Widows have survived from this money since the widows' cash compensation is for life, whether they marry again or not. In fact from 2000 to 2005 transactions through TEBA Ltd., amounting to millions of rand, have increased considerably. That money, according to Jose Carimo, is directly controlled by TEBA Ltd., without government intervention. Table 4 refers to the cash that was transferred from South Africa through TEBA (which is a recruiting mining agency). That money is sent monthly to the spouses 'at home'. It has been usual to see by the end of the month women queuing outside of the TEBA office in the city of Maputo.

*Table 5.4* Payment transactions (in million ZAR), remitted through TEBA, Ltd.

	Month		Year transaction deferred	
	Number of miners	Amount	Number of miners	Amount
Deferred pay	3,434	19,493,139.81	54,463	316,046,980.65
Cash wives	5,206	4,052,074.73	59,339	39,364,143.30
Cash cheques	0	0.00	0	0.00
Cash widows	2,441	3,089,145.58	25,984	32,035,850.73
Cash IGF (widows' compensation)	1,813	1,935,986.02	20,609	24,894,062.25
Rand Mutual Insurance	1,607	2,408,208.53	12,419	16,555,055.80
Other funeral advances	63	356,087.10	614	3,920,106.65
<i>Totals</i>	<i>14,564</i>	<i>31,33,641.76</i>	<i>17,3428</i>	<i>432,816,199.38</i>

Sources: TEBA, Ltd. 2006, Maputo; Carimo interview

### International migration

International migration<sup>8</sup> has become more complex since the numbers moving from place to place have increased, and the media has repeatedly portrayed large numbers of Africans as crossing international boundaries in search of welfare. What worries managers, politicians and human right societies is the way in which much of this movement occurs. i.e. in irregular situations (undocumented people), and the increase in the number of people who are smuggled and trafficked. A number of people<sup>9</sup> have been clandestinely transported to Maputo in ships, from China, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Lebanon. Their ultimate desired destination was probably South Africa (interviews: Cossa; Chimedza).

Several reasons have been given (Adepoju 1995; Boswell & Crisp 2004; Koser & van Hear, 2005; Martin *et al.*, 2006) to explain why people are forced to leave their places of origin in Mozambique: for work, to join family members, to study, for protection and safety due to political and ethnic persecution or human rights violation. These movements of people pose challenges of integration and exploitation. Globalisation has increased the likelihood of international migration, and poverty in African countries, as well as insecurity, has also exacerbated conditions promoting migration. Furthermore, managers have been unable to cope with the massive and irregular movement of people leaving Mozambique. Hosting countries have controlled more and more of their borders, but the situation has not changed significantly since the media still show an increasing number of people moving irregularly.

Generally, people move because they are forced to do so. No-one wishes to live far from her or his culture unless something strong pushes her or him to leave the place of origin and be exposed to new neighbours, cultures, language, and food. Empirical studies (e.g. Winge, 1998) have indicated that people are also persuaded to move if their neighbours, who have been living abroad for years, have remitted food and goods to those who were left behind, and eventually return, bringing back a new style of life. And to some it is a matter of pride to have a family member in Europe or America (Raimundo, 2005).

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<sup>8</sup> The reader is reminded that the term 'international' is used to refer primarily to countries *outside* the SADC region.

<sup>9</sup> The numbers varied according to the source. For example, Humberto Cossa said that nearly thirty of these people per week go through the Maputo International Airport. Later the same people were found trying to cross the borders of Swaziland or South Africa – they cannot travel directly to South Africa since control is strict on that side, so they fly to Maputo, get visas at the point of entry, and then go by road to the South African or Swaziland border. Nelly Chimedza's estimate of numbers was considerably lower.



As explained earlier, very little data on international migration exists in Mozambique, partly because, in the time of repression, the movement of people to other countries was controlled by SNASP. This practice was abolished by the revised Mozambican Constitution of 1990, although, for military reasons, all youths aged between 18 and 30 years still have to ask permission to move from the Minister of Defence (interview: Cossa).

Mozambique is one of the few African countries where international migration outside African boundaries is probably not significant. Immigration officers have not yet received people deported from Europe or America, unlike what has been reported by the media in relation to other African countries. The problem is the almost complete lack of information about movement in and out of Mozambique. According to Humberto Cossa, only one case of deportation from Europe to Mozambique was reported last year: two Comorians were deported from Portugal to Mozambique. This happened because the flight they caught to Portugal was from Maputo. (They were on travelling on faked French passports.) However, each week and month Mozambique reports people from China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Lebanon and Ethiopia who have used the country as a gateway to South Africa. For example, on 14 May 2006, twenty-seven Ethiopians aged between 18 and 25 landed at Maputo airport, with visas valid for thirty days, but with no idea where they were going to stay (interview with the Director of Immigration Office in Maputo, June 2006).

The *Instituto Nacional de Apoio as Comunidades no Exterior* (INACE – the National Institute of Support for Mozambicans in the Diaspora) has indicated that in the past few years it has helped (only) one Mozambican, who had been living for ten years in the USA, to be re-settled, and to have access to land for building a house for his family, who were at that time still living in the USA (interview: Matavele), July 2006). Some hundred or so other Mozambicans have returned from Kenya where they have been living for more than forty years. The policy of the institute is to help Mozambicans who live in the diaspora to access facilities in registration at their home embassies or consulates, and to protect their interests, particularly those of people who want to return to the country, with custom facilities, etc. (interview: Angelica).

Some literature, and the media, have indicated that Africans are taking advantage of historical routes and are migrating to the ‘metropolis of the former colony’, painting all African migrants with the same brush by implying that every African goes to the UK, France, Italy, Germany, Spain or Portugal – the former colonial powers (Martin, Martin & Weil, 2006). However, according to Humberto Cossa, it seems that Mozambicans do not care about Portugal in particular. Even though there is no accurate data about people who live overseas, the Director of Immigration said that empirical evidence has demonstrated that Mozambicans are widely spread in South Africa, Tanzania, Malawi,

Zambia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and Kenya, but no significant numbers are found in Europe. In Portugal, for example, they are fewer than ten thousand Mozambicans, and in other European countries – namely Spain, Germany, France, Italy and United Kingdom – fewer than a hundred thousand in each country.

The reason for the presence of Mozambicans in these Western countries, even without colonial connections, is that they hosted RENAMO and other groups who were against the FRELIMO regime, as described by Vines (1991). The Mozambicans in Germany are those who were working in East Germany, and, with the collapse of the Berlin Wall, decided to move to West Germany, as their home country was still at war and with no significant signs of peace. Most of these people acquired permanent residence in Germany and did not care to register at the embassies to be identified as Mozambicans (interview: Cossa).

Empirical data has shown that, apart from people who use Mozambique as a gateway, there are a considerable number of foreigners from different countries of Asia, especially from the middle east, China, Taiwan, and Pakistan, to name some (Director of Immigration, June 2006) living in the country. However, the USA census of 2000 (Bump & Martin, 2006) indicates that Mozambicans in the USA are 0.4 per cent of the Lusophone foreigners born in 2000, as can be seen in Table 5.5. Unfortunately the statistic quoted does not indicate Mozambicans born in the year of entry as shown for the other countries.

*Table 5.5* Origin of foreign-born lusophone people in the US in 2000

Country of origin	Number of migrants	Percentage
Mozambique	2,025	0.4
Portugal	203,120	44.6
Brazil	212,430	46.7
Cape Verde	26,605	5.8
Angola	4,365	1.0
Macau	6,720	1.5

Source: Bump & Martin, 2006

The same source indicates that these Mozambicans are well-educated compared with the other Portuguese speakers in the USA, including those from Portugal. About forty per cent of these Mozambicans have Bachelor or higher degrees, with Cape Verde and Portugal being less than ten per cent (Bump & Martin, 2006). Despite their success in education, unemployed Mozambicans number five per cent compared to three per cent of Portuguese. I conclude, therefore, that there is what could be called a ‘brain drain’ to the United States, since most Mozambicans living there are well educated.

Oucho (2006) calls the attention of scholars to two points. Firstly that there exist various interpretations of the phenomenon in different circles, including in

academia and public service, and secondly that the brain drain must be interpreted as the movement of highly trained and skilled people. The figure from the US census bureau represents the few Mozambicans with a degree higher than that of Bachelor, which should perhaps not be used as an example to make definitive conclusions about a brain drain. I do not think that we should fear to label that phenomenon as a brain drain since Mozambique faces a shortage of qualified people in a country where illiteracy is unacceptably high.

### Skills needed in Mozambique and available in the diaspora

Data from Internet sources indicate that by the year 2004 there were 8 000 Mozambicans living in the diaspora in Portugal (Mozambique News Agency, AIM reports, 2004). At the time of registration for the third Mozambican general election in 2004, a total of nearly 47 000 were found in the diaspora, with close to 45 900 Mozambicans living in Africa (South Africa, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania and Kenya), and only 1100 in Europe (in Portugal and Germany) (Mozambique News Agency, AIM reports 2004).

Although there is a lack of information about Mozambicans living abroad I do not deny their presence. Rather, my work is trying to prove the limited nature of the available statistics, which can lead to inaccurate generalisations. However, experiences from other countries can probably tell us what situations Mozambicans face and how they can contribute to the discourse of migration management.

As the management of migration remains critical in Mozambique and the lack of consistent data is one of the main obstacles to effective migration management, a national migration statistic unit is urgently needed, to collect information on migration. The Centre for Population Studies at Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo has recently established a unit studying migration which, in collaboration with eight regional universities, conducts small surveys on specific issues, such as migration and poverty, migration and HIV, cross-border trade, etc. The unit has also tried to establish a training programme for immigration officers, frontier guards and staff of other related departments on how to deal with migration, as well as providing assistance on the systematisation of registration mechanisms. Advice is also given regarding the forms which immigration officers require for every person who leaves or enters the country.

The data regarding the skills of Mozambicans in the diaspora are the most difficult from which to draw a profile, due to the inability of the relevant ministries to keep records of emigrants, particularly those who received scholarships to study abroad. Although the country has been independent for thirty-one years, most of the available data refers only to the 1990s. Most of the govern-

ment officers interviewed (and listed at the end of this chapter) were not able to indicate how many of those who benefited from scholarships have returned home. Even though there has been a request for data for this study, ministries such as Health, Defence, and Education are still organising their information. This situation indicates that, for the thirty-one years of independence, state institutions have, in most cases, not processed the information available to them.

One hypothesis that could be posited regarding migrants is that they intentionally remain in the host countries because, as Oucho said<sup>10</sup>, 'highly skilled people are not welcome in their countries of origin.' A senior officer of the Ministry of Agriculture (interview: Tamele) said, however, that of about thirty people from this ministry who were trained abroad only two did not return after completing their studies.

As has already been mentioned, there is very little data available, and many officials do not even know who from their ministry or department is abroad in training programmes, or in what countries, and little or no data is classified by gender.

Data on human resources training programmes offered by different ministries show that Mozambicans have been trained in a variety of countries, and have benefited from different experiences in America, Europe and Asia. However, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which Mozambique has been brain-drained over the years of independence since neither the census nor the ministries keep records on who departs or who returns. As in every African country, there is no mechanism for expand the data by documenting migrants' educational achievements, skills or even destination. In fact, scholars and government officers have only estimated the statistics. Interviews were conducted with the heads of Human Resources departments in different ministries – but out of twenty-four ministries I was able to get information from only six. The information they gave is shown in Table 5.6.

### Illegal migration routes and human trafficking networks

While human trafficking has become a hot international issue, as has already been pointed out, Mozambique is still a country without accurate data on migration. The issue of trafficking is still not taken seriously since no law has yet been passed to ban the practice of human trafficking in Mozambique or South Africa, making it difficult for law enforcement agencies in either country

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<sup>10</sup> At a lecture given during a training course on migration management in June 2003 at the Public and Development and Management School, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

to investigate and prosecute perpetrators. However, Mozambique has signed the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, but it has not deposited the instrument of ratification at the UN Secretariat, so it cannot be considered party to the protocol.

*Table 5.6* Emigration for training purpose

Ministry	Number of people in training (Europe, US, Australia)
Transport and Communications	28
Environmental Affairs	13
Interior	57
Tourism	22
Agriculture	81
Mineral Resources	117

Sources: Ministries, as listed at the end of this chapter

Mr Adriano Ubisse, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, said that the government of Mozambique was worried about the situation and efforts had been done in order to create a database on the issue (*Savana*<sup>11</sup>, 8 September 2006). Quoting the same source, he said that migrants to foreign countries form 2.1 per cent of the total population of Mozambique.

Data referring to human trafficking has come from inconsistent newspaper and Internet sources. For example, according to Eye on Human Trafficking, an International Organization for Migration (IOM) bulletin of news, information and analysis on trafficking in persons in Southern Africa (19 April 2006), Mozambican women and girls often approach smugglers to arrange their undocumented entry into South Africa. Officers from the IOM office in Maputo (Nelly Chimezda and Belarmino Cristos) argue that migrant-smuggling can lead to human trafficking and the sexual or labour exploitation of female, male and child migrants.

According to Chimedza, statistics on trafficked people is erratic (see endnote 6). Since last year (the year that the IOM Maputo office was re-established) they have assisted only eight women, between the ages of 16 and 24 years, mostly along the southern border. According to Chimedza, there are many reasons why it is difficult to identify a trafficked person. She says that traffickers take advantage of the high incidence of poverty, which makes it easier to capture people, particularly girls and boys. The girls are used for prostitution, while the boys go into plantations in Mpumalanga Province in South Africa. Once they

<sup>11</sup> Mozambique's leading independent weekly newspaper.

are in the hands of the traffickers most of these people do not escape since some traffickers convince them that they are Sangomas (traditional healers) with power to control their lives.

There is a group of civil society organisations across the region mobilising to raise awareness on child trafficking and exploitation, and to assist governments to develop strategies to combat it (interview: Chimedza).

## Conclusions and migration policy

Migration management is complex in the sense that it involves interactions between policy makers, civil society and researchers. Maintaining a satisfactory migration policy that can respond to all stakeholders' interests is a complicated and difficult matter. In Mozambique this challenge has become more complex with the increase of poverty in the country, which affects people's mobility, either on a temporary or a permanent basis. It is notable that people depend increasingly on crossing borders – internal, regional, or international.

This chapter has sought to analyse migration management strategies for Mozambique, and to examine the problems that policy-makers have exposed. Is poverty a driver for migration, and has migration contributed to human welfare? The chapter has discussed the ways in which migration serves as a significant source of income for origin communities. Based on primary sources (interviews) and secondary sources (official statistics, policy migration and the Immigration Act – Law no. 95 of 1993<sup>12</sup>), the chapter explores potential relationships between migration, development and management. In doing so, it looks for trends in international and regional migration from Mozambique, which consists of a small exodus to Europe and North America, and – importantly – a massive exodus to southern African countries, namely South Africa, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and Malawi. Even though there is no net out-migration, it is important to explain why this is so. How can developed countries take from Mozambique an example of a strategy for managing influx from other African countries?

The discourse on traditional sending-countries like Mozambique has become outdated, since the country has actually turned into a receiving country. Hence the issue must be understood within a regional context and eventually at an international level. Although the data in Mozambique is not reliable, this is a trend that has been seen around the world.

Until recently the country had been – for years – either sending labour to mining or plantations, or acting as a refugee sender. However it has now

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<sup>12</sup> República de Moçambique, Regulamento sobre imigração, Lei Número 95/1993. Maputo.

become a country receiving refugees, a destination for people from different corners of the world, and a country where internal migration has increased, particularly from rural areas.

The experience accumulated from management, the execution of migration and the need to reflect internally, together with advances flowing from international conventions, have all influenced an open migration policy in Mozambique.

It seems that international migration, as well as migration per se, will not end. In fact current society is following what nomadic people did in the past. No one country is enclosed in a shell and no one country can live without migrants.

A set of elements on current migrations still need to be clarified as follows: given the importance of immigration that occurs within the region and internationally, and the extent to which it affects the economy of Mozambique, the government should regularly undertake to collect and analyse data on these migrations. This task could be part of the census or of a regularly-held survey. In addition:

- Migrants who live away from home should be encouraged to be registered at local consulates or embassies;
- International statistics on skilled and unskilled migrants in hosting countries should be undertaken;
- Regular consultations should be held with migrants themselves, to determine whether they want to return to their homes, and if so in what circumstances;
- Since one of the routes of emigration is Africa, African countries must ensure that they have a harmonised migration policy, which implies coping with differences in regional development.

Some countries with strong economies believe that if they open their borders they may become porous i.e. be 'invaded' by the poor from other countries. This then requires a regular monitoring of the effects of visa agreements, and concord of migration policy is strongly recommended in order to assess how things are progressing. However, none of these interventions are likely to be effective without collective efforts between the sending and receiving countries. Also important is the role that should be played by all principal participants in the process of migration management. Lastly, it must be acknowledged that we are living in critical times; it is difficult to deal with migration, since no fence or regulation, or even suggestions from scholars and politicians, can restrain the flow of migrants.

Migration management is a collective effort and everybody is invited to take a closer look at the phenomenon. Such action will help all targeted people (migrants) not only to live as survivors but to thrive and contribute to the process of poverty reduction through their remittances. Managers need to define

an inclusive strategy that, which does not prohibit people's movement, and facilitates the movement of peoples, in order to avoid irregular migration. Hosting countries have often criticised the increasing numbers of migrants without even knowing the circumstances in which they came.

## Interviews

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 Jose Carimo, TEBA<sup>13</sup> Ltd representative, Maputo. July 24, 2006  
 Nelly Chimedza, IOM Counter Trafficking Program Assistant, Maputo. September 1, 2006  
 Belarmino Cristos, IOM Counter Trafficking Program Assistant, Maputo. September 1, 2006  
 Humberto Cossa, Director of Immigration of the city of Maputo. June 9, 2006  
 João Cumbane, HR Head, Ministry of Transport and Communications. June 2006  
 Angelica Matavele, INACE. July 2006  
 Higiene Mussengue, HR Head, Ministry of Environmental Affairs. June 2006  
 Marta V.J. Pecado, HR Head, Ministry of Mineral Resources. June 2006  
 Carlitos Rupia, Head of Ministry of Tourism. June 2006  
 Momade Panachande, former National Director of Immigration. 2004  
 André Tamele, HR Head, Ministry of Agriculture, Maputo. 11 June 2006  
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<sup>13</sup> The Employment Bureau of Africa.



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# Contemporary patterns, trends and development implications of international migration from Botswana

Thando Gwebu

## Introduction

This chapter addresses patterns and trends of voluntary international migration from Botswana over the past half century. Migration is a household livelihood diversification portfolio (Kerven, 1982). The household may be viewed as spreading its resources, including its members, in such a way as to ensure an income in a risky semi-arid environment. By placing some of its money and time in crops, some in cattle, some in beer-brewing and some in job-seeking in towns or in South Africa, the household diversifies its portfolio of income-earning activities, protecting itself against uncertainties in any single activity (Lucas, 1982).

The aim of this chapter is to assess the extent to which international migration promotes the realisation of development. Development encompasses the progressive realisation of economic and ecological efficiency, as well as the fulfilment of intra- and inter-generational equity. The Government of Botswana has articulated its development goals, objectives and targets in various docu-

ments, including its National Development Plans, National Millennium Development Goals and Vision 2016.

Data for the chapter were obtained from secondary sources such as periodic censuses, sample surveys, the Botswana National Migration Study (1982) and the Southern African Migration Project (SAMP) (Campbell, 2000; Mukamaambo, 2000). These sources have been complemented by information taken from the Internet and other listings in the References.

A large number of people have always been able to find work in South Africa illegally, often with the help of close relatives living there. Compared with other African foreigners, Botswana people are not easy to detect because they blend easily into the South African socio-cultural landscape. Published statistics therefore tend to underestimate the numbers of migrants involved because they exclude clandestine Botswana migrants. In addition, in cases where no household members remain in Botswana, absentees cannot be easily identified in normal census counts. Colclough & McCarthy (1980: 253) have observed that, owing to hidden migration to South Africa, even population census estimates of outmigration understate its true magnitude.

The chapter is divided into five main sections. After this introduction, the contextual background within which international migration has evolved is presented. Migration patterns and trends are then examined. Their development and policy implications are then articulated. Finally, emerging themes linking emigration to development are discussed, with a view to making relevant policy recommendations.

### Contextual background for international migration from Botswana

Botswana, with a population of 1.8 million, is a multi-party democratic republic located in central southern Africa with South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Zambia as its immediate neighbours. Notably, its boundaries are long and separate kinsfolk: for example the Babirwa, the Bakalanga and San along the Zimbabwe border; the Tswana along the South African border and the Baherero, Bambukushu, Basubiya and Bayei along the Namibian border. For practical purposes, these frontiers therefore remain porous and almost impossible to administer effectively.

Botswana is a member of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), the SADC, the African Union (AU), the British Commonwealth, the Lomé Convention, and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of states. Membership of these organisations has facilitated, to varying degrees, the transnational movement of persons, goods and services to and from Botswana.

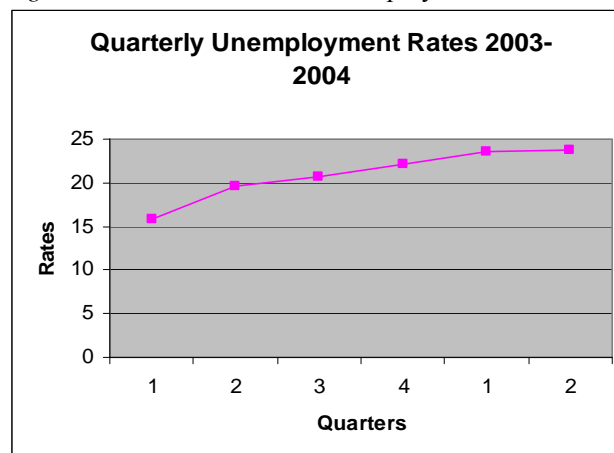
The country derives over 80 per cent of its foreign earnings from the export of diamonds and beef, and financial services and tourism account for the rest. Its

major import partners are SACU (74%), the European Free Trade Association (17%) and Zimbabwe (4%). The major export partners are the European Free Trade Association (87%), SACU (7%) and Zimbabwe (4%). Apart from formal trade, substantial undocumented informal intra-regional trade takes place, involving mostly food products, arts and crafts, foreign currency, clothing items, electrical goods, and so on, within the southern African sub-region.

A succession of good rain seasons, and the discovery and exploitation of copper, nickel and diamonds soon after independence in 1966, gradually transformed Botswana's economic fortunes from poverty to prosperity. Since the 1980s, economic growth (adjusted for inflation) has averaged 5.5 per cent per year, and there is no suggestion of a near-term economic down-turn. (Sanderson *et al.*, 2001). Because of its buoyant economy, honest bureaucracy, democracy and political stability, the country has attracted substantial foreign investment and has often been cited as an ideal economic development model for the rest of Africa. Economic development has been accompanied by expanded employment opportunities for locals and expatriates in the public and private sectors and has impacted significantly on both social and spatial mobility patterns. GDP per capita has increased from about US\$100 in 1966 to about US\$5178 in 2005. Consequently, Botswana is now regarded as a middle-income country.

In spite of these positive macro-economic indicators, close to a third of the national population live below the poverty datum line. Figure 6.1 presents quarterly unemployment figures from 2003 to 2004. About 52 per cent of the unemployed are youths.

Figure 6.1 Recent trends in unemployment in Botswana



Source: BIDPA (2004) Economic Forecasts

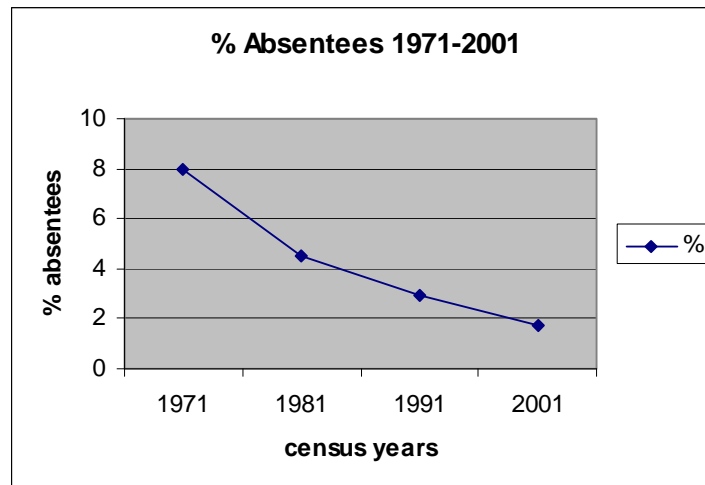
The capacity to generate employment in Botswana is compromised by environmental hazards, managerial constraints, low labour productivity, high utility costs, a small internal market, protectionist government policies that squeeze out external competitive entrepreneurship, and foreign direct investment patterns that promote capital intensive extractive activities (LocoMonitor, 2006). In addition, Gross Domestic Product growth is under threat from HIV/Aids. Expenditure on health and social welfare is set to increase by 7–18 per cent. Government revenue could, as a result, shrink by 10 per cent. How these developments will impact on the international migration processes and patterns is still not clear.

### Patterns and trends of international emigration from Botswana

Schapera has argued that although there were social and psychological reasons for labour migration from Botswana, the key to the early growth of migrancy was a lack of cash-earning opportunities at home, rather than the attractiveness of work abroad in South Africa (Schapera, 1947).

Of the approximately 70,000 Botswana absentees employed in South African farms, mines and industries in the 1970s, as many as a third did not pass through officially-registered recruiting organisations. Although the data are not entirely reliable, approximately one-third of Botswana's male labour force typically worked in South Africa in the early 1970s, and up to half of them found work in the mines (CSO, 1972). Figure 6.2 shows the trends in the number of absentees over the past three decades.

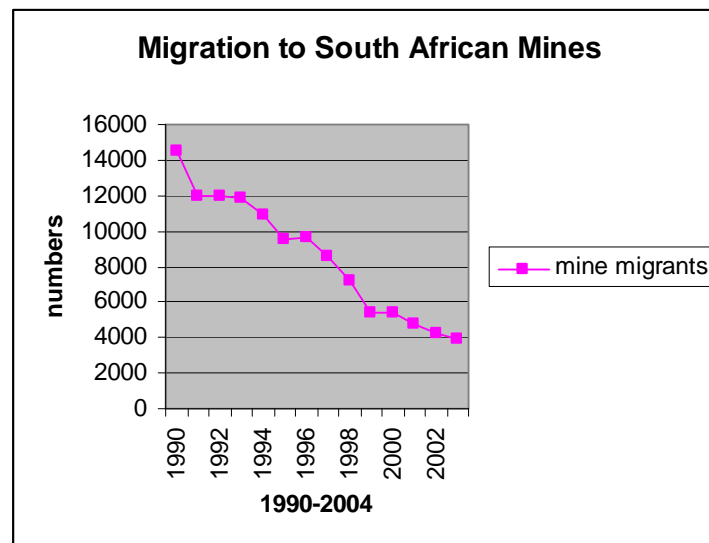
Figure 6.2 Percentage of absentees 1971-2001



Source: Central Statistics Office (CSO) 1973, 1982, 1992, 2001

Reduction in South Africa's recruitment of external mine workers since the 1970s could be a major reason for the declining absenteeism of Batswana. The number of seasoned mine labour recruits from Botswana to South Africa dropped from 40,390 in 1976 to 19,648 in 1986, and the proportion of novices among all recruits declined from 25 per cent in 1976 to only 1.6 per cent in 1985 (Taylor, 1990). The declining trend of overall migrants to the mines has continued beyond the 1990s, as is shown in Figure 6.3.

Figure 6.3 Migration trends to South African mines 1990-2004



Source: SAMP POS database at <http://www.queensu.ca/samp>

For both economic and political reasons, South Africa has been trying to stabilise its national mining workforce by offering better working conditions in terms of wages, housing, career advancement and longer contracts. However, when long-serving miners were given the option of applying for permanent residence in South Africa two-thirds of the Batswana turned the offer down (Crush & Williams, 1991). Those who accepted must have done so in the hope of benefiting from the ongoing reforms in the mining sector and in cognition of difficulties in transferring their mining skills were they to return to Botswana.

With increasing affluence in Botswana – due to lucrative revenues from diamond exports – effective demand for goods and services has risen, and some South African businesses have established commercial and trading enterprises in the country. These have created much-needed local employment opportunities. Perhaps these declining trends in both in- and out-migration to the mines of South Africa also reflect that more educational opportunities are now becoming



locally available as a result of the establishment of secondary, tertiary and vocational institutions (Gwebu, 2003).

The 2001 census on Population and Housing (CSO, 2001) registered the number of Batswana that had been out of the country for at least a year as 28,210. Table 6.1 depicts the percentage of emigrants by destination and socio-economic activity.

*Table 6.1* Percentage of absentees by destination and socioeconomic activity

	Mines	Farms	Domestic	Other employ	Student	Visiting	Official business	Other business	Accom- panying	Medical	Other
RSA	98.5	87.5	87.8	74.4	64.6	61.3	46.4	70.0	60.8	59.5	64.0
Namib.	0.3	5.5	5.4	7.6	1.4	8.7	7.0	7.8	8.0	16.7	8.2
Zimb.	0.3	3.4	3.4	5.3	4.8	16.7	7.7	13.3	11.9	11.4	15.9
Other	0.9	3.6	3.4	12.7	29.2	13.3	38.9	8.9	19.3	12.4	11.9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Central Statistics Office, 2001

Absentees target intraregional and extra-continental destinations. Globally, South Africa remains the single most important destination, especially for employment in primary and service sectors. Business-related as well as academically-related and social reasons also feature prominently. Next to South Africa, and also within the SADC region, the other main destinations are Zimbabwe and Namibia. These two countries are important for socio-economic, socio-cultural and business-related moves. Although these moves could be tied to formal business transactions, recent studies have shown how economic non-competitive networking, especially among women, through informal cross-border trade (ICBT) linkages, has helped in the progressive growth of women-owned micro-scale enterprises in Botswana (Ntseane, 2004). Informal traders explained that they do not have to carry cash when conducting business in South Africa or Zimbabwe because, through business networks in those countries, they were able to open bank accounts. Moreover, their markets are served by female networks in host countries in the region, to minimise the risks associated with female cross-border trade such as rape, theft, and other forms of harassment experienced at border posts (Ntseane, 2004). Such informal transfers reduce transaction and transfer costs and minimise transfer risks across borders.

Studies done by SAMP have revealed that the duration of visits to South Africa is less than one month for 80 per cent of movers, with only 2 per cent having stayed for over a year (Mukamaambo, 2000). For over 60 per cent of those who have recently visited South Africa, the three main reasons are shopping, visiting family or friends, and holiday tourism. The first reason might be related to cheaper item-costs because of the relative strength of the Pula compared to the Rand, coupled with the broader variety of goods available in

South Africa. The second reason (visiting) could relate to the socio-ethnic affinities of a people with identical cultures separated by artificial boundaries (Gwebu, 1998). The third reason could be because of the greater diversity and modernity of the tourist sector in South Africa and the strength of the Botswana currency.

Although South Africa is rated highly for the employment and services that it offers, Botswana is still rated as a relatively better country in which to settle – by 65 per cent – mostly due to non-tangible factors such as peace, low crime rates, family safety, a decent place to raise children, and relatively high levels of freedom and democracy (Mukamaambo, 2000). Consequently, less than 10 per cent of Botswana are either likely or very likely to migrate to South Africa permanently. A study on the ‘emigration potential’ of skilled Botswana revealed that about 60 per cent of skilled Botswana had never considered emigrating (Campbell, 2001). Nearly all professional Botswana have strong faith in their government and country. They are also cognisant of possible constraints against their relocation. It is however difficult to see for how long patriotism and altruism can prevent potential migrants from taking up new global job opportunities, because push factors seem to be more important than pull factors in translating migration intentions into actual migration.

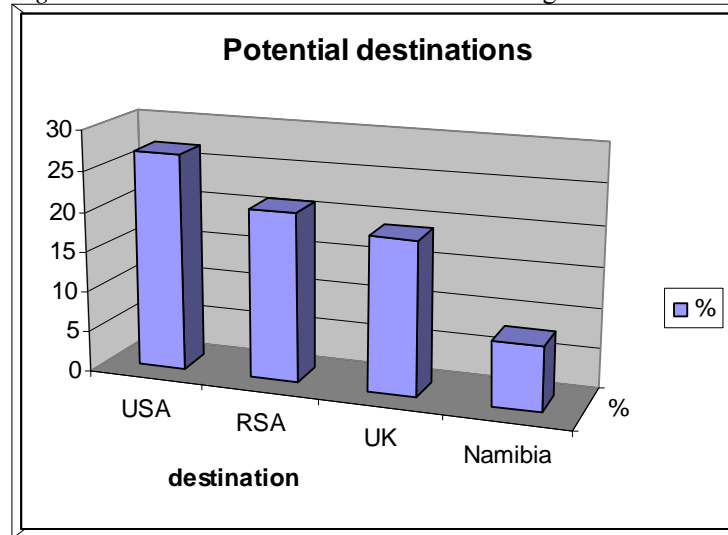
There are other compelling factors that have encouraged Botswana to remain in their country, including the economic booms of the 1980s and 1990s that were accompanied by increased employment opportunities (especially in the construction and service sectors), a relatively stable and strong currency, and policies that ensure that locals will eventually replace expatriates, as well as job reservation for nationals in certain sectors of the national economy. The government has taken steps to ensure that jobs and positions are eventually taken by the locals, to the exclusion of non-nationals (van Dijk, 2002). Companies and institutions have been forced to employ ‘understudies’ for any foreigner. In the case of private enterprise, these understudies must eventually become shareholders or co-owners of the companies, and have the opportunity, in the near future, to take over leading positions from foreign owners or leaders. In addition, in certain economic sectors, it is no longer permitted to employ foreigners, while for others all sorts of privileges or bonuses for foreigners are being annulled. In 2005, Botswana announced that it would no longer renew the permits of expatriate teachers and drivers, and would probe the hiring of allegedly under-qualified southern African artisans in the mining sectors. These protectionist and foreign exclusion tendencies are forcing expatriates to look elsewhere to invest their skills and capital (van Dijk, 2002).

According to the database for Table 1, there are, notably, no extra-regional African destinations for Botswana absentees, probably because of the relatively depressed economic and volatile socio-political circumstances in the rest of sub-

Saharan Africa, and the weakness of historical, political and socio-cultural ties with north Africa. The other destination countries are located outside the continent: in North America, north-western Europe, Oceania and Southeast Asia. The main attractions there are business, education, visiting/accompanying or medically-related moves.

Recent behavioural studies by SAMP, on the most-preferred destinations by potential skilled emigrants from Botswana, indicate that the United States (27%), South Africa (21%), the UK (19%) and Namibia (8%) are the most prominent target countries (Campbell, 2000) (see Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4 Potential destinations of skilled emigrants



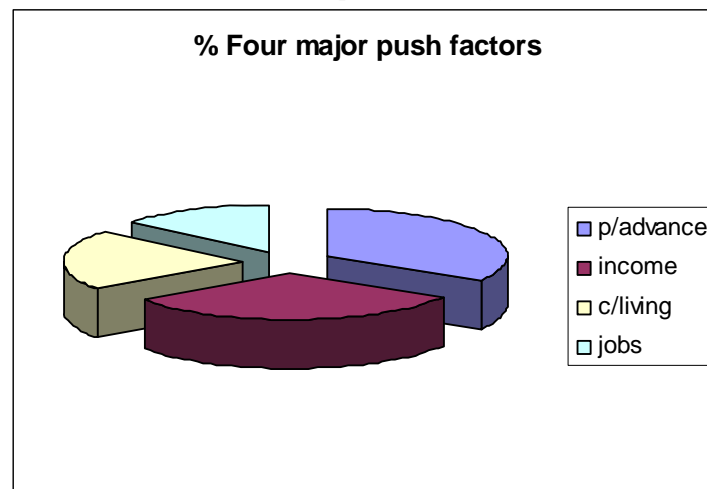
Source: Campbell, 2000

The first three countries just mentioned are economically more developed and diversified than Botswana. Thus they are perceived as offering better prospects for professional or career advancement, and as regards standard of living. Botswana's student placement programme finances students to study in the colleges, universities and technikons in these countries. Moreover, the governments of the US and UK provide scholarships for the training of Botswana students in their tertiary institutions. Potential migrants to these countries could thus be considered to be 'returnee migrants' (Adepoju & Hammar, 1996). Geographically and socio-ethnically, South Africa and Namibia are closer to Botswana, and in addition the feeling is that skilled Botswana could be comparatively more competitive than their South African or Namibian counterparts.

In the order of importance, the four main reasons for moving from Botswana to another country, as shown in Figure 6.5, are: prospects for professional advancement (29%), better income (27%), lower cost of living (18%) and a better job (12%) (Campbell, 2000).

Skilled Batswana are attracted to South Africa and extra-continental destinations by prospects of better incomes, rapid upward mobility, and career advancement.

Figure 6.5 Push factors on potential emigrants



Source: Campbell, 2000

## International migration and development

### *Links with South Africa*

'Migradollars' have indeed been earned from emigration to South Africa. Table 6.2 shows the extent to which migrant employment contributed to Botswana's economy in the 1940s (Schapera, 1947).

Table 6.2 Main source of income for the native population

Source	%
Employment outside the country in South Africa	46.6
Employment in the country	34.2
Sale of agricultural produce	19.2

Source: Schapera, 1947

According to Silitshena (1978), the total wage earnings of mine workers nearly trebled from P11.2 million to P32.17 million in the two years from 1974 to 1976. Deferred payments more than doubled from P4.18 to P10.52 million, while remittances trebled from P0.63 million to P1.7 million, while the value of goods brought in by returning miners increased from P1.02 to P4.50 million. Cash spent in South Africa, for consumption, increased from P4.77 million to P13.7 million during that time. Mine labour industry wages accounted for close to a third of the proportion of formal personal income for Botswana (Field, 1982). Lipton (1978) estimated that 40 to 50 per cent of Botswana personal income came from South African sources of employment in 1977/78. Migrants and their households benefited financially. From their amassed capital, they could purchase cattle (31%), build houses (19%), purchase food (15%) provide child support (10%), finance other needs (25%) including education, clothing, arable agriculture and hiring labour (Field, 1982).

Certain studies have confirmed that cattle-ownership is strongly associated with former emigration histories (Kerven, 1976), since migrant labour has been the only means of accumulating enough capital to buy cattle and to start farming effectively. Expenditure on household welfare needs must have contributed to national human capital development, an important factor that contributes to economic growth.

The main contribution to public finance and tax revenue was through customs and excise receipts, determined by quantities of taxable goods entering Botswana from the countries of the Southern African Customs Union.

Migration has also been associated with local-level population-livelihood-environment dynamics (Lucas & Stark, 1985). The argument has been that by diversifying the livelihood alternatives and improving the livelihoods of remittance-receiving families, international migration contributes to ameliorating the negative links between poverty and natural resource over-exploitation. For example, it has been established that the worse the drought in Botswana, the higher the level of remittances (Lucas & Stark, 1985), thus preventing receiving families from over-exploiting *veld* products, forest products, and wildlife, just to stay alive.

Any environmental and economic gains from labour emigration must, however, be balanced against the losses in production resulting from the export of such large population numbers, especially, of young men and women. Rural out-migration has traditionally involved a large proportion of the working-age population and has effectively hindered rural development (Schapera, 1971). By drawing on the young and able-bodied men and women who should be decision makers, labour migration has had a depressing effect on the development of agriculture by discouraging the adoption of modern farming methods. Because of the general shortage of men, acreage ploughed and crop yields have been

much lower than they would have been if the absentees had been available to help. For such families the migrant labour system has carried a cost in terms of lowered agricultural incomes.

The Native Advisory Council (the administration before Botswana gained independence in 1966) observed that many young people were no longer available at their homes to attend to the routine tasks of tribal life and, as a result, both animal husbandry and agriculture suffered (Schapera, 1971).

Migration was a response by Botswana to a primary industry that was faced with labour shortages and which came to be under-written by family-based subsistence production. Of the 1573 migrants who were recruited to work, mainly as fruit-pickers, from farms in South Africa in 1977, only 500 were male (Schapera, 1994). However, since the arable agricultural peak season in South Africa coincides with peak arable agricultural labour demands in Botswana and most of the arable agricultural work is performed by women, this posed a serious threat to Botswana's food security. National food self-sufficiency was disrupted and a precedent set for the dependency syndrome of a peripheral/satellite labour reserve economy that Botswana has become to South Africa. As Massey (1977) has observed about Botswana, 'After over 100 years of sending labour to South Africa little progress seems to have been made in agricultural development.'

The losses caused by the migrant labour system assume even greater seriousness when one adds social implosion, dislocations and disruption. The scale and nature of migration had both immediate and lasting effects on social and economic gender power relations and the institution of marriage. The impact of migration on the roles of women in contemporary Botswana has its roots in the past. There is ample evidence to show that the migration of men was a key ideational and practical pathway to liberating women from certain bondages of patriarchy (Datta, 1995; Datta, 2004; Kalabamu, 2005; Larsson *et al.*, 1998). The out-migration of men from the rural areas for employment in the modern capitalist sector made the women who remained behind *de facto* household heads who could now take decisions that had customarily been made by men. This however increased their workload and contributed to a breakdown in the traditional strict division of labour.

The formation of female-headed households might, subsequently, have been an exercise in choice – particularly among educated women – rather than a product of abandonment and neglect by men (Gulbrandsen, 1986). Employed as clerks, school teachers, and nurses, some women gained economic independence and freedom from the control of men (Schapera, 1994). They bore and raised their own children outside marriage. Unmarried mothers thus became *de jure* heads of households (Kalabamu, 2005). Certain women came to regard

marriage with growing ambivalence, and unmarried women were no longer scorned but respected (Datta, 1995; Dow & Kidd, 1994).

Perhaps all this explains why Botswana has one of the highest levels of female-headed households globally. Nationally, 47 per cent of all households are headed by women, and over 50 per cent of those in rural areas are classified as such. The fact remains however that the frustration of intergenerational transfers of certain positive survival skills, moral norms and values, that emanate from the presence of a paternal figure, and the legacy of family break-up cannot be disassociated from the disintegration of the essential basic unit of national moral fabric and integrity. The failure to negotiate gender contracts, authority and power relations at household and national levels, and the subversion of gender roles, set into motion an unprecedented social perversion in the form of anomy and domestic gender violence (rape, incest, defilement, emotional abuse) that have today degenerated into what is euphemistically termed 'passion killings'.

Some of the most serious costs of the migrant labour system therefore relate to its detrimental impacts upon the organic structure and stability of the family. Some migrant men never returned *makgwela* (household deserters) and were regarded as lost. Labour migration implied long or even permanent separation of spouses. Due to the absence of so many males over the years, there was a break-down of domestic control and children were reared in socially-inappropriate environments (Gaisie, 1995). There was delayed average age-at-marriage, and an increase in the 'never married' category – reinforced by the missionary ban on polygyny. That may have tended to keep the fertility rate lower than it might otherwise have been, causing negative long-term effects on the threshold market size for sustainable industrialisation.

The system also made sexual relationships more impermanent than they might otherwise be. Increasing rates of male absenteeism have also been associated with an increase in the number of children born out of wedlock and in the number of women bearing children by more than one man (Schapera, 1971). For married couples, it appears that husbands' long absences in the mines, or even desertions, increased marital discord and extramarital affairs. This in turn has tended to increase the rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (especially syphilis), as well as pathological sterility, and divorce (Schapera, 1971). Untreated or partially treated STIs are today also associated with HIV infections, of which the country has the highest global rates among the economically-active population.

An emphasis upon aggregate income benefits alone moreover masks the wider costs of the migrant labour system to both society as a whole and to particular population segments within it. Enhanced labour flows abroad must have increased the number of women who are unsupported and economically

isolated, as a result of the disintegrating traditional safety networks and absence of males. The problem of feminised absolute rural poverty in Botswana is likely to have increased rather than diminished as a result of these trends (Colclough & McCarthy, 1980; CSO, 2003).

Apart from generating gender inequities, mining incomes created regional inequities. In the past, mine labour recruitment portrayed a distinct rural-to-urban bias, with less than 1 per cent of recruits originating from towns (Field, 1982). Case (1982) observed that nearly 70 per cent of Botswana recruits to the mine in South Africa originated from village areas. Within the country, there was a regional bias reflecting cost-minimisation considerations, with most migrants coming from the south-eastern districts of the country. The implication was that economic benefits from migrant labour directly benefited only this sub-region of Botswana.

#### *Links with SADC and extra-continental destinations*

Recent trans-regional socio-economic studies show that poverty is endemic in the SADC, where an estimated half of the population lives on less than one dollar a day (Akinboade, 2005). This situation is more pronounced for women and has an added significance in a sub-region where nearly half of the households are female-headed. Women's deprivation is manifold and ranges across the economic, social and political arenas (Akinboade, 2005).

The Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's World Food Programme (FAO/WFP) reports that ICBT played a significant role in averting widespread food insecurity in Southern Africa during the major regional drought of 2002/2003, through the movement of food and agricultural goods.<sup>1</sup> ICBT in maize, beans and rice imports continues to play a significant role in redressing supply/demand food imbalances in the region. The Southern African Regional Poverty Network Report of 24/5/06 however found very little ICBT in food taking place across the gazetted Zimbabwe/Botswana border. This was because Botswana has a very strict rule for agricultural products entering the country. Zimbabwe too imposes restrictive import laws for rice or maize trade across its borders. Although there was very little informal maize trade, there was some trade in beans and rice. In most cases, beans flowed into Botswana from Zimbabwe and the opposite was the case for rice. The Southern Africa Food Security Update of November 2004 confirmed that barriers to informal trade, specifically high import levies, have acted to constrain trade levels between certain neighbouring countries such as Botswana and Zimbabwe.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.fews.net/resouces/gcontent>



For national economies, cross border trading is a source of foreign exchange. Unfortunately, state response to ICBT has taken the form of very stringent and restrictive regulations, forcing hundreds of informal traders to cross border posts with under-invoiced, mis-declared goods, or with unrecorded merchandise, sometimes with the full collusion of immigration officers – smuggling of goods through ungazetted points has become very common. Because of this, the belief is that ICBT undermines local industries, distorts price incentives, misguides domestic economic policies, has impacted negatively on foreign exchange earnings, and reduced tax revenues. The traders face major bureaucratic and other obstacles – despite the fact that the region is aiming for free trade by 2008, and although trading is the key means of livelihood for many households.

The emigration of skilled Batswana to other SADC countries characterises reverse technology transfer or brain circulation/exchange, otherwise referred to as cooperative exchange of skills – something that an integrated SADC seeks to promote. For the region as a whole, within-SADC brain circulation therefore means no net loss of human resources.

Conversely, the brain drain, fuelled by aggressive recruiting of health professionals for Europe and North America is very problematic, coming as it does at a time when the country can ill-afford to lose medical staff, given the HIV/Aids pandemic. The country's nursing programmes turn out three hundred nurses a year, of whom between one third and two thirds leave immediately after graduation, recruited to fill nursing shortages in wealthier nations (Hurlburt, 2004). Few of the medical students that the government sends overseas ever return (Hurlburt, 2004).

Government efforts to train enough medical doctors have turned out to be a nightmare for the Department of Student Placement and Welfare because those that have graduated are refusing to come back home. The Department sends an average of 65 students a year abroad to study medicine, but out of this number only about twenty normally return after completing their studies. Companies from the UK come to Botswana to recruit different cadres of medical students. The Department is however happy with countries like Australia, Cuba and the Czech Republic which give students visas specifically for study; once their student status ends, they are forced to leave (*Botswana Guardian*, August 1, 2006).

Foreign health-related donors such as the Harvard AIDS Institute, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Merck Company Foundation, have aggravated the problem by hiring talented Batswana away from implementation programmes (Hurlburt, 2004). Furthermore, the remaining health staff themselves remain vulnerable to HIV/Aids. All this impedes the delivery of essential health services and undermines efforts to deliver quality and comprehensive health services that are essential to achieve health-related Millennium Devel-

opment Goals. As part of a bilateral agreement signed with Botswana in 2002, Cuban health professionals now work in several hospitals and clinics that specialise in treating people living with HIV/Aids. To what extent this is sustainable remains an open question.

### International migration, development and policy issues

Although international migration has not been formally integrated into national development policies and programmes in Botswana, four inter-related main thematic issues for development emanate from the above discussion, namely:

- Brain drain versus brain circulation
- Pro-poor diversification of livelihood strategies
- Negative economic, socio-demographic and epidemiological externalities
- Appropriate data on migration and development.

These themes relate to seven of the eight goals of Botswana Millennium Development Goals, namely:

- Eradicating poverty and hunger
- Gender equality and empowerment
- Child mortality
- Maternal health
- Combating HIV/Aids and other diseases
- The environment
- Global partnership

These issues and their policy implication on development will now be discussed briefly.

#### *Brain drain versus brain circulation, and development*

Botswana is becoming increasingly integrated into transnational formal and informal continental and regional socio-economic networks. International migration patterns show that emigrants from Botswana mostly target intra-regional destinations. This pattern presents vast opportunities for the realisation and promotion the SADC goals on transnational interdependence and integration, retention and free circulation of human, financial, material and technological and resources, and the achievement of collective self-reliance within the region.

Extra-continental migration streams to the North are in response to the push factors in Botswana, complemented by the structural needs of industrialised markets. This net leakage of skilled human resources, over which the country has invested much of its scarce capital resources, is unaffordable for the reasons already discussed, and also because it represents significant tax losses that could

have been used to support government programmes aimed at poverty alleviation, schooling, and other public sector investments. The current reversal of gains made against child and maternal mortality by the early 1990s could be related to weakened health delivery systems. The fight against HIV/Aids is also compromised. The loss of skills in general also undermines the regional social and economic development efforts and the achievement of collective self-reliance to which SADC has committed itself.

Movements to extra-regional locations must therefore be curtailed and/or reconfigured by attracting back, retaining and effectively utilising the highly skilled personnel – firstly by addressing the push factors (in Botswana and other SADC countries) such as the current lack of proper professional, academic and research conditions. The establishment of Regional Centres of Excellence, with competitive salaries and conditions of service, could be one way to stem the tide. This would help in the achievement of the SADC objective of collective self-reliance in human capital. At the core of the problem of capacity-building, retention, and utilisation are issues related to material and moral incentives and good governance.

There is also an urgent need to develop a legal framework for temporary (as opposed to permanent) labour emigration. For example, locally, sponsored students need to travel on student visas and sign a return commitment and bonding with the Botswana Department of Student Placement and Welfare. Destination countries must demonstrate their willingness to conclude agreements concerning temporary migration programmes in terms of facilitating free travel and eventual return and integration. Reintegration assistance and special programmes for returning migrants must ensure that their skills and experience are utilised to benefit the economy of Botswana. In addition, recruitment agencies should be levied and held accountable to ensure the return of migrant workers and thus help counteract brain drain. The assistance of host countries and the international community is furthermore required to complement the wages of returning professionals in order to make return programmes feasible. The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) on temporary migration could regulate and enhance circulation and reduce brain drain.

Cooperation between international organisations, Botswana and the North could be an effective means of developing temporary return programmes to counter brain drain. An example of such cooperation is Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA), a capacity-building programme launched by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), aimed at mobilising the competences acquired by African nationals abroad, by encouraging temporary returns of qualified migrants to their countries of origin. Another programme designed to facilitate the temporary returns of professionals is Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN), facilitated by UNDP. The Interna-

tional Agenda for Migration Management could also serve as a framework for regulating international migration. Botswana needs to work closely with other SADC member states to seek a harmonised SADC solution to the brain drain problem, possibly through the International Return of Talents Program in Africa which is sponsored by the IOM, in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

Botswana embassies need to engage more on a face-to-face basis with their diaspora on job and investment opportunities available at home. The 'Home-coming Summit' called by the government of Ghana in 2001 could be a good example to learn from.

#### *Diversification of livelihood portfolios of the poor*

Intra-regional migration in Botswana has mostly involved the poor: either in selling their labour at their point of destination (Schapera, 1947; Colclough & McCarthy, 1980; Field, 1982; Harris, 1982), or in informal cross-border trade (ICBT) (Akinboade, 2005; Ntseane, 2004; SARPN, 2004).

International migration had positive developmental impacts on Botswana when the country was poor. Migration to South Africa was central to contributing to state revenues through payment of personal taxes, customs and excise on remitted goods. Migrants' deferred pay, remittances of cash and goods uplifted the material welfare of the and that of their dependents. Migrants also invested in agriculture and housing (Field, 1982). Migration has proved an alternative source of livelihood leading to the prevention of the overexploitation of the environment (Lucas, 1982).

Rates of emigration from Botswana reached their peak when the country was experiencing massive unemployment and underdevelopment. However, there was a down-turn in emigration rates once the country's economic fortunes changed with the discovery and exploitation of diamonds. This had a multiplier effect on the rest of the economic and socio-economic sectors such as administration, education and health. A combination of tangible economic, socio-economic and intangible factors such as good governance, tolerance, respect for civil liberties, honest bureaucracies, moral incentives and personal safety seem to be critical controls of emigration. As a result, the number of absentees has been declining, and most professional Batswana are reluctant to work outside their country. Cognisance of this fact is important in the retention and capacity-building of human resources both nationally and regionally.

Special attention needs to be paid to the declining numbers of Batswana migrant miners because this implies the drying up of a previously reliable source of livelihood for a mostly uneducated and unskilled labour force and their dependents. Botswana needs to diversify its economy to create employment. Proactive policy has to be devised through consultation with the South

African Government, and with the mining industry through The Employment Bureau of Africa (TEBA).

In the past, there was a guarantee by the Chamber of Mines of South Africa to TEBA to continue the recruitment of an agreed quota of Batswana up to a certain period. This provided the Botswana Government with a grace period to adjust to changes in the migrant labour recruitment system. Should a quota system for migrant labour be found mutually agreeable, efforts should be made to ensure more flexible, subsidised and concessionary terms for frequent visits for migrant family members, to minimise socio-economic implosion.

TEBA, being a member of the Botswana Employers' Federation, which is represented on the National Employment Manpower and Incomes Council, could be used as a forum to plan and coordinate efforts to absorb Batswana mine labour. The then general manager of TEBA expressed a willingness to cooperate with the Botswana government, should it devise such a plan for disengaging from the migrant labour system.

In the light of declining labour recruitment to mines, Botswana needs to pursue and intensify its efforts for creating more employment opportunities in order both to cater for the returning migrants and retain any potential ones. The new Small, Micro and Medium Enterprise Policy, The New Industrial Policy, the Revised National Policy on Education, the Rural Industrialisation Programme and the Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency, among others, are laudable policies. However capacity-building needs to be strengthened in order to ensure their implementation, monitoring and evaluation. State paternalism that tends to work against foreign investors needs to be revised to promote competitiveness and an efficient economy in the era of globalisation.

International migration has been closely associated with the weakening of patriarchal systems through renegotiation of gender roles and contracts, and empowering women as decision-makers. Gender auditing and streamlined policies and programmes need to be put in place to ensure that women live decent lives. Evidence has been cited to show how ICBT has assisted in the development of women enterprises from survivalist, through micro- to small businesses (Ntseane, 2004). ICBT is also an important avenue both for sustaining the livelihoods of the poor, who happen to be mostly women, and as a mechanism for redistributing food and averting regional hunger and associated mortality (Akinboade, 2005). Unfortunately, restrictions prevent the smooth operation of ICBT.

Restrictions on ICBT should be abolished because this is an important avenue for sustaining the households of the poor in the in the food deficit areas. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) aims to promote regional development through cooperation and integration. SADC aims to strengthen and consolidate historical, social and cultural affinities amongst the

people of the region. Those ideals of ultimate free trade and economic integration will however be hard to achieve within a climate that is not conducive to the free movement of persons, capital and goods. For example bureaucratic restrictions of ICBT on food items between Botswana and Zimbabwe should be removed. In a world in which borders are becoming eroded, it is difficult to perceive how effectively such restrictive policies will stem transnational movements.

Regional migration policies, legislation and practice that are fragmented along national lines do not appear to meet the objectives of SADC policies and NEPAD to foster African cooperation, unity and development, and need to be removed. On a regional level, the SADC is intent on fostering regional integration and cooperation for development and the alleviation of poverty. The SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan identifies numerous migration-related issues and concerns that the Community will have to confront, including the brain drain, informal trade, mobility of the factors of production, tourism, etc. The implication is that migration should be factored into national and regional development policies.

In 2000, the SADC Free Trade Protocol was ratified. In 2003, the SADC Secretariat revived discussion on the Facilitation of Movement Protocol which not all regional governments have formally endorsed. Attempts to move towards the free movement of people within the SADC have not been successful however. It is encouraging to note that in August 2006 Botswana became the eighth member of SADC to sign the SADC Protocol on the facilitation of movement of citizens within the region.

The Southern Africa Migration Project (SAMP) and the IOM have combined, in partnership with SADC states, to establish the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA). During 2003, the major development was the preparation by SAMP of a report on migration policy harmonisation within the SADC region. This report was presented and discussed at the November 2004 MIDSA forum on migration and development in Maseru, Lesotho. The forum underscored for senior officials and policy makers the important role of migration in poverty reduction. Active regional support is imperative for the success of such efforts.

#### *Negative economic, socio-demographic and epidemiological externalities*

Negative impacts of international migration have created certain negative externalities within Botswana. The feminisation of rural poverty derives from male emigration. Gender-sensitive proposals to address the resultant feminisation of rural poverty have been outlined in the National Development Plans. There has been a breakdown of the traditional family structure with its supportive social networks. There has been a spread of occupational diseases such as

pulmonary tuberculosis and sexually-transmitted infections. The economic benefits of migration have accrued mainly to the relatively more urban south-eastern districts of Botswana.

There has been a weakening of traditional pastoralism and arable agriculture which threatens food self-sufficiency. Traditional agriculture has been on the decline in Botswana over the past two decades, partly as a result of international migration, and partly because of recurrent spells of drought, and also because of un-remunerative prices paid by the Botswana Agricultural Marketing Board and the Botswana Meat Commission for agricultural products. The National Policy of Agricultural Development (1991) – which recognises the importance of women, who constitute the larger part of the rural workforce – should be supported through land capability studies, irrigation, monitoring and extension.

Alternative employment needs to be created through the policies outlined above and the through diversification of the economy, e.g. through support for small and micro enterprises, ICBT, community-based natural resources development, downstream processing of raw materials such as beef, grain, minerals, timber, *veld* products and game.

Spatial and sectoral policies need to be strengthened, through the National Settlement Policy, by locating and allocating resources to support self-employment in those areas now threatened by returning unemployed migrants from South Africa.

The solution to the breakdown of positive social mores requires life-time learning, as well as relearning and unlearning of entrenched perceptions. Innovative educational systems must be developed to inculcate relevant knowledge on gender, ethics, and moral and civic education. For example, a study by the US-based Horizons Program<sup>2</sup> and the Brazilian NGO Instituto Promundo, examined the effectiveness of interventions designed to improve young men's attitudes towards gender norms and to reduce the risk of HIV and STIs. The latter found that more equitable gender norms and related behaviours can be successfully promoted, with significant improvements in HIV/STI outcomes. Addressing inequitable gender norms, particularly those that define masculinity, can be an important element of HIV prevention strategies. These findings suggest that group education interventions can successfully influence young men's attitudes toward gender roles and lead to healthier relationships. The findings also provide empirical evidence that a behaviour change intervention focused on combating inequitable gender norms is associated with improvements in HIV/STI risk outcomes.

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.popcouncil.org/horizons/horizons.html>

Prevention, treatment, mitigation and care programmes already exist in Botswana for the management of occupational and sexually-transmitted infections. However, they usually lack support, in terms of financial and human resources. Southern Africa is at the epicentre of HIV/Aids infection. Being relatively wealthier and having more mobile populations, Botswana and South Africa have greater chances of spreading this infection through migration (Lurie, 2003). Research needs to be conducted on how this could be mitigated.

#### *Appropriate data on international migration and development*

Comparable, accurate and up-to-date migration data and operational definitions are required to formulate research-informed policy and programming interventions to regulate international migration for the achievement of sustainable development, nationally, regionally and globally. This could be achieved, for example, through the harmonisation of the immigration/emigration forms issued at airports and border posts, the creation of a regional data bases on migrants and their profiles and identification of regional human resource needs and available regional personnel.

#### Conclusion

The chapter has discussed patterns and trends of international migration and their implications for development in Botswana. Most movements are intraregional. This underscores the need for formal facilitation of the movement of persons, goods and services within SADC.

Reversal in migration, especially of unskilled migrants returning from South Africa, presents challenges to Botswana in terms of creating employment. Various possibilities of how this could be done have been discussed.

There are potential and actual migration streams of highly skilled personnel to the North. This represents a net loss of the human resources required to drive the development process both nationally and regionally. Migration policy regulation needs to focus on programmatic interventions that will promote circulation rather than brain drain. How this can be achieved has been suggested in the chapter.

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# Governance of migration in Senegal: The role of government in formulating migration policies

Maguemati Wabgou

## Introduction

Current trends in policy-making have aimed at minimising the negative effects of migration flows, while optimising their development impacts. Migration policies in African countries in general, and particularly in western Africa, tend to be characterised by a laissez-faire way of dealing with migrations, together with a lack of harmonisation, efficiency, and appropriateness in management.

The West African country of Senegal is one of the few countries in sub-Saharan Africa to have addressed the migration of its people as a foreign and public policy issue and to have started dealing with these migratory flows as a global reality in Africa, Europe and America. Across the country, the government has begun taking steps to promote migration policies, and to improve cooperation in migration management, as well as the facilitation of movement across borders in Africa, through a number of bilateral agreements. It has become increasingly obvious to policy makers that migrations from Senegal, both to other African countries and to the mega-cities and the industrial countries in the North, are related to global processes which go beyond modern nation-states, which are on based concepts and borders. Unfortunately, how-

ever, the contribution of the Senegalese government in reducing the negative impacts of migrations on economic development has been rather limited.

So, how does the Senegalese government set up its plans for governance of migration to favour reintegration and capacity-building at local and national levels? To what extent has migration, as a new policy domain, been inserted in policy agendas and activities (at the local, national and regional levels)? To what extent does the Senegalese government promote managed migration through bilateral, regional and multilateral agreements?

In order to expand knowledge on Senegalese migration, and identify policies and reforms that could lead to more successful development outcomes, this chapter first explores briefly (in Part I) how Senegalese foreign workers – essentially unskilled and semi-skilled workers – work as hawkers or hustlers, or self-employed in their own small businesses, and in all sectors of the economy in the host country. These include the restaurant industry, retail, construction, manufacturing, hotels, food production, landscaping – all of which are necessary to the economy of that country. Skilled immigrants work as engineers, technicians or ‘experts’, musicians, professors, computer scientists, and so on. The chapter then examines (in Part II) some policies and reforms that could lead to better management of migrations, and assesses the Senegalese government’s capacity and political willingness to address the control of migration flows, especially the brain drain. It analyses the adequacy and efficiency of existing initiatives in managing the positive and negative aspects of migrations.

### An overview of Senegalese migration flows: The Senegalese diaspora

I believe that my people who are trained and educated should stay in their country ... I do not invest in their education and training so that they can contribute to development in France ... It is necessary to discuss labour migration issues jointly in France: we cannot allow pillage of managerial and technical elites in developing countries; France should assure jobs for people who are being hosted, in order to prevent them from living in overcrowded conditions in hovels, where they are exposed to fire and death ... Selected immigration has to be the result of a concerted action between France and the origin countries. (Senegal’s president Abdoulaye Wade, 2006, cited in Katata, 2006)

Immigration is a group and not an individual process because decisions to migrate are usually made within a collective context that includes the family and local community. Immigration flows through social networks uniting places of origin and destination. Furthermore, the overall economic ‘climate’ that affects the local group is likely to influence an individual’s decision to migrate even when that individual is not affected in the same way as are others. Tilly puts the issue succinctly: ‘Individuals do not migrate, networks do’. People migrate together from particular places and settle together in particular destinations. It is only within the context of a network of

social relationships that individual calculations become useful predictors of the direction and flow of migration. (Roberts, 1995: 45–46)

### *Internal migrations*

The panorama of migratory exchanges between Senegalese administrative regions shows relevant contrasts regarding migrations – both temporary and lasting – to more advantaged destinations. Generally, the rural exodus affects the inner regions of Senegal, especially the areas that were economically successful in colonial times. These places – formed mainly by the regions of St Louis<sup>1</sup>, Louga, Thiès, Kaolack and Diourbel (and known as *le bassin arachidière*) – specialised in peanut cultivation. As a consequence of the intensive and exhaustive character of this cultivation, the soil and farm fields have, over the years, been drained of nutrition. Along with this land impoverishment, vast regions located in St Louis and Louga have become desert, since Senegal is a Sahelian country that continually suffers drought. Few political initiatives have been taken in order to remedy the effects of the degradation of arable land.

In this context, when all their hopeful attempts for a viable resolution of their problems are exhausted, many peasants undertake the way of migration, transformed into a survival strategy. In the Saloum region, for example, the migratory flows – made up, for the most part, of the young – are directed towards the cities as well as to other more developed rural areas (Diop, 1992). An example of internal migratory flows within Senegal is found in a town located in the northern region of St Louis: Fuuta Tooro. The people of Fuuta Tooro are remarkable in their deep sense of solidarity, both within their lineages or ‘clans’ (*lenyol*) and within their extended families (*galle*).

In Fuuta Tooro, there are two types of migratory flows: temporary and lasting. In the first case, the town inhabitants move to other cities for professional reasons and for periods of less than a year. In the second case, the duration is longer than a year although the reasons for the migration are the same. Destinations vary but are almost always urban centres. Short term migrations are towards nearby urban areas such as Richard Toll city (St Louis region) where sugar plantations and the biggest domestic sugar factory are located, attracting and making use of manpower (Guilmoto, 1997: 18–19).

Dakar is the most significantly attractive city for temporary and permanent immigrants originating from Fuuta Tooro. Their position in the labour market falls into two distinct categories: the earlier arrivals were employed in very insecure jobs such as being hawkers (*bana-bana*), but the second wave found

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<sup>1</sup> During colonial times, the Saint-Louis and Dakar regions also used cheap manpower for their few factories and industries.

permanent jobs that are more socially valued. Female migration is almost non-existent in this Fuuta Tooro town; a fact that has traditionally been explained by their lack of autonomy and by their being reduced strictly to their role as housewives. The reproduction role of the domestic unit that they perform is incompatible with long-duration migrations. The few who do emigrate are almost all single women. Married females involved in migration flows, act recklessly with their husbands' consent. That explains why there has been a masculinisation of the migratory flows originating from Fuuta Tooro<sup>2</sup>.

### *International migration*

Data on sub-Saharan migration flows provided by Nkoa (2006: 4-5) indicate that, in 2000, migrations from Senegal to OECD countries (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) represented 2.6 per cent of all sub-Saharan migrants living in these countries. Followed by Ghanaians (1.9%), the Senegalese were – with Liberians (also 2.6%) – the third most important West African foreign workers group after Cape Verdeans (3.5%) and Gambians (3.1%). Outside Africa, Senegalese immigrants usually migrate to Europe (France, Italy, Portugal, Belgium, Germany, and so on), North America (USA and Canada), Asia (Japan, China, Taiwan), and even to some rich countries of the Arab world (Kuwait, Bahrain, Dubai, Saudi Arabia).

In Senegal, young people migrate to bordering countries (Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Guinea-Conakry and Mali) and to relatively more wealthy ones (South Africa, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Congo-Brazzaville, Gabon, Algeria, Morocco). These are countries where they would find economic opportunities. For some of them, these are considered to be transit countries, since their goal is to accumulate the economic means to make sure their travel continues until 'Europe's door' (usually Spain<sup>3</sup>).

Also, the internal situation of displaced persons and refugees from Casamance (Southern Senegal) exposes aspects of the effects of international migration on sections of the Senegalese population. They have become refugees in bordering countries such as Guinea Bissau and Gambia. The flows of

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<sup>2</sup> This traditional concept of the women's role, based on unequal task-division according to gender, indicating male protagonism (autonomy) and female subordination, was analysed in a previous study: *The Impact of the Cultural System on African Women* (Wabgou & Munévar, 2000).

<sup>3</sup> After these migratory stages (some even by road through Sahel's desert), they arrive in Spain via Morocco, having passed through Ceuta or Melilla. We have previously written about these migratory trajectories (Wabgou, 2001: 460-477): some of our Senegalese interviewees stated that they went by sea and by air, while others said that they came to Melilla by land, the so-called 'Europe by land' route. From there they may migrate to European, North American or Asian countries, including some rich countries of the Arab world.

displaced persons and refugees, originating in the conflicts<sup>4</sup> that pitted the Senegalese armed forces against the Casamance MFDC (Casamance Movement for Democratic Forces) rebels, increased human mobility across borders.

*Brain drain: Senegalese students, professors, technicians and professionals*

Although the data are not consistent<sup>5</sup> regarding the number of qualified Africans who reside in the North, it is necessary to mention the alarming character of the brain drain<sup>6</sup> phenomenon in Africa. Being a sub-Saharan country, Senegal suffers from the loss of its most-trained people after or during their academic or professional training; mainly to Europe and North America. The Senegalese educational system faces a very serious problem related to the development: the country needs these graduates<sup>7</sup> but cannot offering them anything that matches the attractive work conditions which prevail in their host countries. A portion of those who arrive in the North are, theoretically, there to complete their higher studies and then return home. Most of them, however, find themselves forced to remain when they complete their studies since they do not see their professional future in Senegal (Wabgou, 2001: 481-482).

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<sup>4</sup> Although at the present time we live in a post-conflict period in Casamance, we consider that the displacements caused by internal conflicts have to be included in this study because they contributed to reinforcing international migratory flows in Senegal. It is worth stressing the Senegalese government's efforts to force the reconstruction of Casamance, and to revitalise social and economic activities in order to consolidate peace in the region: (<http://fr.allafrica.com/stories/200607310418.html>).

<sup>5</sup> According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), some twenty thousand departures of highly qualified African people toward countries of the North have been registered. The reason is believed to be that salaries and the life style are usually more attractive there. In its 1998 annual report, the *Bureau régional pour l'Éducation en Afrique* (BREDA, UNESCO) states that more than thirty thousand Africans with doctorates work outside African continent. These figures are lower than those given by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD): more than a million qualified Africans, with higher education diplomas, reside in their member states, viz: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States. These people's specialisations are usually located in the health and the education fields, and the World Health Organization (WHO) indicates that two thirds of African countries do not meet the minimum rate of twenty doctors per hundred thousand inhabitants. ([http://www.jeuneafrique.com/jeune\\_afrique/article\\_afrique\\_dossier.asp?art\\_cle=LIN10075fuitesniaci0&dos\\_id=142&dosweb=142](http://www.jeuneafrique.com/jeune_afrique/article_afrique_dossier.asp?art_cle=LIN10075fuitesniaci0&dos_id=142&dosweb=142)).

<sup>6</sup> For more details on the mobility of Senegalese academics and its classification see Bassirou (Fuite des cerveaux) in *Sud Quotidien Feb 22, 1999*.

<sup>7</sup> The student body is not, *a priori*, part of the economic migratory flows. However their probable conversion into economic immigrants makes us take them into account. We referred to the 'African brain drain' phenomenon in a recent book (Wabgou, 2006: 90 & 187-189).



The migration of Senegalese technicians and professional people is usually to the USA or to France. In Spain, for instance, there are few Senegalese professionals: they are household heads who immigrate with all their family members. Their stay is usually temporary but may become permanent. It can also happen that the worker leaves one host country and moves to another one; thus his return to his country of origin becomes a more and more unlikely project. Other categories of young Senegalese with vocational training are obliged to emigrate to Spain to look for better job opportunities since the internal labour market (in Senegal) does not favour their integration. This phenomenon is currently undergoing a significant growth.

As individuals and as integrants of communities, Senegalese migrants link their host society with their country of origin. While crossing borders, they have become, in a context of transnationalism, almost a commonplace in today's world where corporations and ordinary people alike seek economic survival and benefit. Senegalese foreign workers preserve and reinvent their cultural patterns in their host country, where they remain linked to one another by ties of kinship, shared resources, and cultural exchange.

The cultural patterns we are concerned with here are those constructed and based on traditional solidarities and social networks, reinforced by religious practices. Among the Senegalese diaspora, the solidarities and support routes are both informal (individual to individual, within groups of individuals, and/or among groups) and formal (between people but within the framework of specific migrant associations). In both cases, the goal of solidarity is a goal to be reached and is consolidated through mutual support. Senegalese migrants living in their destination countries nevertheless still participate in social networks and interactions in their home countries. For instance, remittances (the money that migrant people make by working abroad and send back to their homes) are collectively or individually sent for the realisation of social, concrete and collective utility projects, and a resulting difference is noticeable in the level of people's individual well-being, as well as in that of the local collective group.

So the question now arises: to what extent can national policies accommodate migration flows in Senegal?

## Policies and reforms for development

Some policy ideas suggested in the past period focus on the brain drain, such as legal restrictions on exit or a 'departure tax' paid by receiving countries to sending countries, are now seen as archaic and unimplementable. Other ideas, such as a transnational community of scientists and engineers helping both the receiving and sending countries may be even more feasible due to globalisation. Thus while globalization might aggravate some old problems it might also entrain some new solutions... One argument is that the costs of higher public education should be

treated as a loan (secured in some fashion) unless the graduates satisfy certain minimum requirements of public service after graduation. This policy would seem to be fair but it may be difficult to implement. (Ellerman, 2003: 29-30).

This way, transnationalism is considered as a key element in the role played by transnational communities which are built up through the pressure of international migration. It doesn't only represent a novelty, but among so-called global studies it constitutes an ongoing theoretical field with decisive *political relevance* for the future, precisely for the future of the lower class people, of those who, being wrapped in the globalisation trends, have very little political power; however, their place in the economy is more and more decisive for its nations of origin. (Lozano, 2003: 8)

Senegalese government capacity-building and cooperation on migration policies are now analysed using four-fold data. Firstly we examine existing migration policies in Senegal, giving an inventory and an assessment. The next section deals with the need to improve migratory policies pertaining to the homecoming of immigrants – qualified, semi-qualified or unqualified. Next, the bulk of remittances arriving in Senegal requires a government policy that can channel migrant monetary flows and strengthen their positive effects, without being either repressive or restrictive. Finally, domestic or local policies on development need to include transnational networks in their programmes since transnationalism is a core characteristic of Senegalese migration.

#### *Senegalese migration and national policy*

For decades, Senegal has been relatively liberal regarding the entry and residence of aliens, although there have been changes as economic conditions have worsened. Since 1975, Senegal has been a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS/CEAO) and has been fulfilling the demands of the protocol on free movement of persons, rights of residence and establishment. As a country member of ECOWAS, Senegal has been implementing the agreement on free circulation of people that was signed on 28 October 1978.

Senegal maintains bilateral agreements on labour migration with France, which is one of the main destination countries of Senegalese migrants. In the context of bilateral relations between France and Senegal, France's Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy recently signed an agreement with the Senegalese government (23 September 2006), related to concerted efforts and joint actions focused on migration flows. Within the framework of policies for the integrated management of migrations, this Franco-Senegalese treaty is conceived as the continuation of operations plans that were previously elaborated in France and Morocco. On 24 July 2006, the French parliament passed a law on immigration and integration which establishes the fundamentals of a collaborative policy on immigration between France and the immigrants' countries of origin. In

addition, a conference of Morocco (10 & 11 July 2006), in which Senegal participated actively, launched the South-North Partnerships in order to discuss issues related to migration and development.

Some of the major decisions of the Franco-Senegalese agreement on migrations focused on were:

- (1) Measures against the brain drain: making it possible for Senegalese students and professionals to migrate temporarily to France, to enhance their professional skills and then to return home, to participate in the development of their country.
- (2) Measures against illegal migration: allowing France to support and finance Senegal, to foster its capability to take control over its maritime coast. (This is the place from where young Senegalese people usually start their journey to Europe via the Canary Islands, jeopardising their life by making use of unseaworthy small boats that sometimes sink.)
- (3) Measures to strengthen Franco-Senegalese cooperation for economic and social development: aiming at supporting the Senegalese government in speeding up growth and development in Senegal, in order to eradicate the root causes of general migration through the creation of jobs and the enhancement of agriculture, fishing, health, micro-projects for development – all within the framework of co-development policies.

Thus, in respect of the migration policy's international approaches, Russell, Jacobsen & Stanley (1990b: 75) state that these agreements cover:

... not only issues of entry, residence, and departure, but also occupational and social rights, participation in trades unions (as members and staff delegates but not in administrative or management capacities), and social security rights (sickness and maternity insurance, disability, old age, accident and family allowance).

These treaties have, however, not taken into account the views of the migrants themselves; in this sense it is an exclusive bilateral agreement between governments instead of being an inclusive one. Moreover, in February 2006, the then French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy announced a migration bill, focusing on the qualification of permitted migration from Africa: so-called 'selective migration'.

The questions the French minister was trying to respond were: Who is entitled to immigrate to France? and How much inflow is allowed?

In response to these questions, Sarkozy proposed new immigration laws, to curtail unskilled labour immigration in favour of skilled immigration. He proposed a points system to rank potential immigrants on the basis of their country of origin and their qualifications. The legislation would also restrict family immigration, which up till now has constituted by far the main part of

migration to France.<sup>8</sup> This project was severely criticised by the Senegalese president, Abdoulaye Wade (cited in Katata, 2006), but the bill nevertheless became law on 25 July 2006, and was due to take effect in early 2007.

In this context, the Franco-Senegalese agreement on migration is described as a new deal between the two countries since they considered that previously 'there was a misunderstanding' between Senegal and France regarding the concept of selective immigration. Sarkozy said '... we've had discussions ... and with this agreement, we'll select *together* those who migrate, we'll ease the application and granting of visas and we'll assist our Senegalese friends who are working in France and Senegalese students in getting their visas (Sarkozy, 2006).

At this point it is especially important to highlight the unilateral character of such agreements – the initiative came from France, and the Senegalese government merely 'negotiated' with the French one. In any case, the idea of selective immigration still stands, the only change being that the selection is now performed together with the Senegalese government or with Senegalese policy makers. We believe that, in order to find real solutions to the issue of migration from Senegal, the Senegalese government has to take its own initiatives instead of waiting for proposals from France, because propositions such as these are often approved through some kind of 'negotiation', performed within a context strongly characterised and influenced by the unequal bargaining power between the relational partners. As long as the Senegalese government has no proper proposals for bilateral agreement within the framework of its international relations (its policies) relating to international migration, it will remain dependent on French initiatives. We believe that Senegalese authorities must be pragmatic and realistic (*Realpolitik*) while dealing with the challenges of migration.

Regarding the Senegalese government's own initiatives for the control of migration, it is worth mentioning their creation in 1993 of the *Direction des Sénégalais de l'Extérieur* (DES) ('directorate for Senegalese [nationals] living abroad'), thus recognising the need for a rational management of Senegalese nationals who reside in foreign countries. It was, however, inefficient in protecting immigrants and supporting them in their homecoming and their re-incorporation into the Senegalese labour market, and so a first Symposium of the Senegalese Diaspora (Symposium des Sénégalais de l'Extérieur) was held in November 1994. It aimed at deepening reflection on questions related to the mechanisms and strategies of the Senegalese government, to provide better protection of immigrants and to grant them a fertile environment for innovations

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<sup>8</sup> K Murphy, at [http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/Backgrounder2\\_France.php](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/Backgrounder2_France.php)

and investments. This endeavour received the support of the government who, through Decree 95–154 (of February 9, 1995), created a High Council for Senegalese Living Abroad (*Conseil Supérieur des Sénégalais de l'Extérieur* or CSSE) with the intention of managing more efficiently the specific needs of the Senegalese diaspora, and to encourage them participate in the expansion of the government's migration policies. However, no significant action was taken by this Council, so a second Symposium of the Senegalese Diaspora was organised, and took place in Dakar in July 2001. It was organised by the Senegalese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the African Union and members of the Senegalese diaspora, and aimed at setting up basis to extend migration policies and thus develop a dynamic partnership between Senegalese migrants and their country of origin.

This new partnership with the Senegalese diaspora has been more developed inasmuch as the members of the diaspora participated in the organisation and celebration of the symposium. Its outcomes include the involvement of the Senegalese government in elaborating strategies to support those of its nationals living abroad who wish to return or are planning investments at home. The guidelines or targets through which the government has affirmed its political will to face efficiently the challenges of migration include:

- (1) reviewing the structure and orientations of the CSSE, and supporting the proposal that only a representative of the Senegalese diaspora could preside over the CSSE;
- (2) creating a mutual fund or insurance system for the Senegalese diaspora, to assist migrants and their families with health problems;
- (3) setting up a bank for migrants;
- (4) removing customs duties, taxes and fees imposed on any imported equipment – especially agricultural materials – intended to create 'joint responsibility' and/or to generate local projects;
- (5) offering and giving priority to a quota scheme for financing immigrants willing to participate in the construction of family housing in their society of origin, through housing programmes;
- (6) favouring access to financing mechanisms for co-development<sup>9</sup> established between Senegal and France, and setting up a commission for the promotion of projects chaired by women.

Although these governmental initiatives are addressed to the whole Senegalese diaspora, our observation is that the last of these policy guidelines (6) is mainly focused on the agreements it has with French government. As a conse-

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<sup>9</sup> This involves several social players, including women, in the process of local and national development.

quence, it is more beneficial to immigrants who live in France than to those who reside in other destination countries such as the USA, Canada and Italy. At this point, the Senegalese government should make more effort to expand its initiatives towards these other countries, so that Senegalese migrants established there can take direct advantage of the governance and management of international migration.

There is thus a need to expand the partnership of Senegal to all the different countries of destination for Senegalese people. Issues on multilateral agreements between Senegal and these destination countries should be addressed, with it being a compulsory item on migration policy agendas. However, it is worth mentioning a relative improvement regarding housing programmes (target 5): for the five years ending in June 2005, Senegalese living abroad have received thirty per cent of the loans granted by the Senegalese Housing Bank (*Banque de l'habitat du Sénégal* or BHS). They are considered to be 'Very Important Customers' because they contribute fifty per cent of the savings deposits for financing social housing. Thus, the Senegalese Ministry of Heritage Sites, Housing and Construction (*Patrimoine bâti, de l'Habitat et de la Construction*) considered that the involvement of Senegalese people living abroad in the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in their home country had to be oriented towards of construction equipment, to foster the housing sector in Senegal. However, our concern is that, although the social housing policy is not the only response to local development, the Senegalese government has emphasised this facet, knowing that some migrants involve themselves in the programme because they are motivated more by 'selfishness' than by a real desire to be involved in local development.

Some very important initiatives have arisen from the second symposium regarding the need to build firm relationships with international organisations and other institutions which are partly or wholly dedicated to migration flows through bilateral or multilateral agreements. These are: firstly with the IOM and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in order to conduct a credible statistical census on Senegalese migrant community; secondly with the IOM and UNDP for the production of a guide for the Consular Agent; and lastly with consular missions which could rely on the Senegalese government for social and human service assistants. One of the major problems is, however, that the Senegalese government has no accurate data on the number of Senegalese people living abroad, although according to non-official sources, this is estimated as being between two and three million. It is therefore urgent that existing initiatives related to data collections be strengthened through Senegalese migrant associations and through consular departments, while expanding the number of social actors involved in this endeavour –namely local NGOs and other institutions involved in the field of migration. Statistics are not unimpor-

tant: there is certainly a need to build a reliable database with socio-economic profiles of immigrants, to test, and if necessary contest, the claims that are often made about the harm they cause their country of origin (by being absent) and the benefits (in terms of local development) that they produce for their host country.

In order to expand and strengthen existing initiatives – which are, most of the time, unproductive and inoperative – these observations lead us to focus on other considerations about migration policy-making in Senegal.

*Return policies: a powerful tool for development*

Nowadays, there is an increasing interest in policies related to the development impact of migration on the home region. We point out the politicians' responsibility regarding the training and support of those immigrants who decide to return home. At the present time, a better organisation of members of the Senegalese diaspora is needed, so that, when they decide to return home, they have the state's complete support. This is an important condition for increasing the benefit that the country of origin can gain from the returning migrants' knowledge and experience.

Despite this, all immigrants (qualified, semi-qualified, and non-qualified), when contemplating their return to Senegal, face such paradoxical and frustrating dilemmas that they become very anxious, even though they cherish return to the homeland as the end point of their migratory itinerary, originally conceived of as a round-trip process. So strong is the desire to be identified with one of the societies in which they live – or have lived – (origin and destination) that they end up justifying the lived ambiguity. They are aware of the distance that separates them from their society of origin but they do not consider themselves as thoroughly integrated members of the community of destination. This feeling is usually expressed in terms of 'I am not from here, neither am I from there', which we refer to as 'double absence'.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, they manifest the opposite attitude – of double presence: 'I am here, and I am there.' These two attitudes are connected since those who are aware of their presence, evidence *ipso facto* their absence; recognising also that their sense of double presence implicitly recognises their double absence.

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<sup>10</sup> We take this expression from Sayad (1999: 93-94) who has studied different stages of Algerian emigration-immigration to France, from the colonisation of Algeria until its independence – including the First World War, a crucial stage of this migratory process. There is also the eloquent testimony of an interviewee of Criado Calvo (1999: 593) which clearly illustrates the idea of double absence: 'What I really won by coming here is: *you are neither there nor here, you cannot go back, and you neither know if you will go ahead*. It seems to me a mistake, but a very big mistake [...] and then there is another issue: that are not in homeland [...] then later you return home and what do you do?'

Difficulties with territorial, cultural and political entities are worsened by the immigrated person's hesitation in the face of the possibility of returning home – feelings that are increased when he must decide on the time of his return. The question is 'until when will such a situation persist?', a question that expresses strongly his will to return one day to his country of origin. In many cases, a decision regarding the return date is put off, and becomes ever more insubstantial. The continual postponement of return affects the execution of this goal until it is transformed into a mere dream. The unpredictability of return of the immigrant has been described as the 'myth of return'<sup>11</sup>. The return to 'the homeland' escapes from the migrant's hands due to the prevailing cultural, socio-economic and political conditions in his country of origin. In addition, the economic constraints that he undergoes, and the legal constraints that make a return to the host country at a later date seem improbable, are some of the causes of the endless procrastination of the *worthy*<sup>12</sup> realisation of his homecoming.

A major involvement of the Senegalese government in the return process would have very positive effects on immigrants' decision-making and the realisation of their return since it would encourage them in this aim. Currently, the government has proposed a wide perspective of programmes favouring migration and development. In particular it encourages the immigrants' return to be linked into agriculture: *Retour vers l'agriculture* (REVA). Recently, undertaken actions by the Senegalese government with the purpose of favouring the development through the responsible administration for the migration flows include:

- the establishment of a five-year commitment to serve their country, which has to be completed by all pupils and students who take advantage of a state scholarship ('this will help us to prevent our skilled manpower from being caught by the European economy ... otherwise, we should be refunded all tuition and fees which have been involved in their education');

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<sup>11</sup> Here too we have been influenced by Sayad (1999: 59). This author considers that the Algerian immigrant-emigrant, who idealises France as a stable world, full of work opportunities and constant salaries, dreams of transforming it – in the short term – into his 'second homeland'. Without renouncing Algeria (first homeland), he thinks that with his French earnings, he could change his living conditions in Algeria, and also those of his family. But after his arrival, he becomes settled, he looks for a job, and as time goes on: months, years '... voilà cinq ans, voilà dix ans, voilà vingt ans, voilà la retraite ...', said Sayad's interviewee. ['... it's five years, it's ten years, it's twenty years, it's retirement ...']

<sup>12</sup> We insist on this word because the Senegalese immigrant usually has a very peculiar conception of the dignity or honour that he would receive if he returned home. This dignity is linked to the concomitant improvement in his socio-economic conditions.



- the reduction in the duration of study to obtain a Bachelor's degree in Medicine to five years instead of seven in Senegal ('now France can no longer rob us of our doctors');
- the introduction of a plan of action for the integration of migrants who have been returned or sent home into agricultural activities and rural development;
- all of the above-mentioned measures are being sustained by the power of political will, in order to implement highly ambitious policies for training, education and job creation.<sup>13</sup>

However, our concern is that if immigrants are not associated (from the bottom) in the implementation and completion of this plan, this state endeavour (from above) will collapse again, as happened in the past. It is thus necessary to insist on the integration of transnational networks into state policies. Senegalese policy-makers should take into account the return and re-integration of qualified nationals, and focus on other related programmes in striving to facilitate the return, retention and re-integration of unqualified and semi-skilled migrants, in order to promote their participation in development. These actions would force the Senegalese state to take some responsibility for channelling remittances in order to maximise their positive contributions at economic and social levels.

*Policies on remittances channelling: A pragmatic but difficultly feasible recourse*

Governments should seek mechanisms for fostering productive activities through remittances. We agree that 'since remittances are private transfers, they have tended worldwide to elude government control. A traditional mechanism for overcoming this difficulty has been to require that a given proportion of workers' income be remitted through official channels, and to secure the assistance of government and employers abroad in enforcing such provisions. This kind of arrangement has worked to the benefit of several parties other than the workers themselves' (Russell, Jacobsen & Stanley, 1990a: 27).

We now consider the main proposals of the United Nations, supported by the International Organization for Migration, in order to illustrate policy approaches for maximising the development impact of the diaspora's financial resources:

- improving baseline data collection on international and internal remittances and the volume of investments from diasporas to create a knowledge base to inform policy development;

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.capafrique.org/blogafrique/p=74>

- conducting further studies of decision-making mechanisms with regard to the transfer and spending of remittances, as well as their macro-economic impact;
- promoting the transfer of remittances through official channels;
- reducing the cost and enhancing the accessibility of remittance services for migrants, by (among other things) facilitating improved access to financial services in cooperation with financial intermediaries, local communities, public and private sectors (such as banks and post office networks, credit unions, microfinance institutions and other rural service providers), and facilitating access to banking for migrants in countries of destination and their families in countries of origin. As irregular migrants, too, can have a positive developmental impact on their home country, it is important to assist undocumented migrants to gain access to financial services;
- streamlining and optimising the process of remittance transfer, including the promotion of the better use of modern technology to reduce transfer costs;
- promoting savings which could be used to increase the liquidity of micro-credit institutions as a buffer against economic shocks...
- creating investment schemes and vehicles into which remittances can be channelled, such as industry, education, infrastructure development, and the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises;
- creating incentives to channel remittances into development schemes ...
- encouraging migrants to establish small and medium-sized enterprises to ensure their self-reliance in the long run, while ensuring that their funds contribute to local economic growth...<sup>14</sup>

Based on the dynamics of remittances, their intended and actual use and their impact at the individual, family and community levels, we believe that policies in Senegal should take them into account, including the ideas of second-generation immigrants who generally are more reluctant to invest in their parents' country of origin – which is also theirs, with the difference that they tend to adopt cultural patterns of the country of their birth (their parents' 'host' country).

#### *Global development policies*

Two conditions are essential for development programmes to be successful. First, they have to be focused on the education of the potential immigrants in the countries of origin and, second, they should create and promote permanent bridges between origin and destination societies. When these conditions are

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<sup>14</sup> See document prepared by United Nations as a contribution to assist states in migration policy-making which can be found at either of the following websites:  
<http://www.old.iom.int/DOCUMENTS/GOVERNING/EN/455593372734152471.pdf>  
[http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/policy\\_and\\_research/policy\\_documents/MCINF281.pdf](http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/policy_and_research/policy_documents/MCINF281.pdf)

met, state entities can, by means of transnational networks, come closer to the people's needs and establish contacts with transnational communities, to involve them in local development plans. This way, they will have the possibility of playing an important role in the development processes. This means that there is a possibility of optimising the functioning of transnational networks (trade, association, institutions) and of improving conditions in education, health services and agriculture.

One of the ways in which migration has been linked to education is through the use of remittances for educational purposes. In villages of Western and Nyanza provinces in Kenya, where 74 to 81 per cent of off-farm income derives from migration to Nairobi, and where investment in education is of particular importance for continued access to urban labour markets, nearly half of this income is used for school fees. (Gould, 1988: 4.1.49)

Collective action for improvement of education has also been reported among Senegal River Valley migrants in France, where members of the same community tend to form 'secondary villages' that maintain strong ties with the 'primary village' at home. In addition to their individual remittances, which are used for lumpy school fee payments among other purposes, these migrants participate in or have total responsibility for social undertakings in the home village, including building and furnishing schools. Migrant associations in France frequently organize subscriptions for such projects. (Russell, Jacobsen & Stanley, 1990a: 63-64)

Of course we are speaking of co-development which has the explicit intention of involving several social players in the process of local and national development. It calls for cooperation among the parties: the youth, women, children, successive generations, migrants, nuclear families, associations, civil and business corporations, local NGOs, universities, institutes of basic education, vocational training centres, government.

The co-development strategy was institutionalized in Europe in the second part of the last decade, soon after the leadership that Sami Nair provided it both in France ... and in the European parliament. At the present time, co-development is part of the official policy of the European Union. In general terms, *the concept emphasizes the necessity to include in the migration contribution, the people and the material resources and ideas that travel along the migratory circuits, to benefit the countries of origin.* [...] The different dimensions that this view contains have been collected in Pacheco (2002) [...] a concept that involves a determination to cooperate among diverse parties. (Escrivá & Ribas 2004, 44 & 33 (trans.))<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> For further information on the co-development dimensions, see note 20 in Escrivá & Ribas (2004: 44). These authors (2004: 44-47) also present an indicative analysis on co-development.

Similarly, policies should incorporate broadening the health services, as well as providing equal access to them:

A recent bank study on the demand for health care in rural Mali ... suggests that participation in migration may influence both the propensity to seek health care and the type of health services sought: the availability of remittance income was found to increase demand for health services and to exert a significant positive effect on the probability of seeking modern care. (Russell, Jacobsen & Stanley, 1990a: 73–74)

In this context, the Senegalese government's attitude needs to be collaborative rather than indifferent, since the emigration of its natives can be interpreted as a 'safety valve' due to internal unemployment and socio-economic uncertainties. Migratory movements constitute a way of escaping from these realities, and the political authorities not only do not take serious action to stop these migration flows but rather are indifferent to the phenomenon. In this sense, emigration is identified as an instrument for diverting civilians' attention away from the implications of internal economic and socio-political problems, at the same time creating an apathetic atmosphere and national indifference:

Migration often seems to work in a similar way as a safety valve to relieve the pressure of a pressing problem rather than to resolve it. When yesterday's elites use their power to lock in their position and thus to stifle innovation which can always be threatening, then the economy will stagnate and young people will not be able to find jobs that will utilise their skills and engage their ambitions. Migration provides the ambitious and skilled with individual exits. It helps to 'export' the unemployment problem. Overall, it relieves the pressure to change the structural barriers to improving the business climate. (Ellerman, 2003: 16)

Instead, the Senegalese government should develop real strategies that expand job opportunities, in order to reduce the emigration of their citizens: there is a need to promote development initiatives on the basis of job creation strategies in rural and urban areas, as a local alternative to international migration.

## Conclusions

This essay has explored migration policy in Senegal, which appears to be a rather new policy field. The situation of internal and international migration flows within or from Senegal has been considered, taking into account the fact that migrations constitute a channel for the loss of excellence in domestic productive forces. The dissertation has investigated the existing initiatives of the Senegalese government in response to some significant challenges resulting from the emigration of its nationals; that is, migration and development, illegal migration as a result of more restrictive policies in the destination countries, brain drain and/or brain gain, problems related to transit migration, and so on.

Indeed, Senegal has been developing advanced plans and responses to help promote a better understanding of the roles migrants can play in national and local development through regional and bi-regional partnerships. The governance of migration in Senegal has focused on the need for governments at local, provincial and national levels to improve the domestic investment environment, to help promote the productive use of remittances, the lowering the customs duty, taxes and fees on specific imported products and services, trying to improve information-sharing and management on migration (data building and access). However, some important issues have not yet been included in these agendas: for example multilateral partnerships, restrictive migration policies in destination countries, xenophobia, the feminisation of emigration, second generation immigrants, the human rights of citizens abroad (including aspects of reintegration of their nationals forced to return), proactive association of civil society and migration researchers in policymaking, and so on. On this point, we refer to Adepojou (2006: 10) who considers that: 'in the African context, bilateral relations should be forged between the countries sending and receiving migrants within and outside the region, *as well as multilateral arrangements* between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the European Union (EU), African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of countries, and so on.'

Next, the paper examines policies and reforms that would lead to increased development outcomes, and assesses the Senegalese government's capacity and political willingness to foster strategies addressing the control of migration flows, mainly the brain drain. Issues related to the contributions of migration in poverty reduction while causing brain drain in Senegal (brain gain for the host country and brain waste for Senegal) have also been considered. So we call for the Senegalese political authorities to make themselves more interested and engaged in the migratory phenomenon when they design policies for national development. Strengthening this attitude, with the integration of all social players, including the transnational networks will end up reinforcing authentic co-development processes.

The study has explored how sufficient and efficient are the existing initiatives in managing the positive aspects of migration and has stated that Senegal policy-making should:

- (1) boost productive activities through remittances;
- (2) train and give support to immigrants who wish to return;
- (3) involve immigrants in projects of cooperation with the Senegalese elite in the diaspora;
- (4) educate potential immigrants in Senegal;
- (5) create and support permanent bridges between people in the place of origin and in destination countries;

- (6) involve national and local governments, civil corporations, managers, universities, educational centres, training and culture organisations, and immigrants organisations;
- (7) create favourable conditions of life and work for potential migrant populations and returned migrants.

Finally, we believe that any policy approach to Senegalese migration should call for harmonisation and, especially, continuity of migration agendas. These requirements are essential to attain significant advantages in terms of global progress, and would have many direct benefits for the country, at both local and national levels.

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# International migration, national development and the role of governments: The case of Nigeria

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## Introduction

As Africa's demographic giant, Nigeria plays a key role in African migrations, but has surprisingly been ignored in the migration and development literature. Beyond the issue of trafficking, few empirical studies on Nigerian migration are available. With a few exceptions (Nwajiuba, 2005; Osili, 2004), studies on the development implications of Nigerian international migration are particularly rare.

Besides giving a brief overview of Nigerian international migration, this chapter aims to analyse the views and policies of Nigeria-based stakeholders with regard to migration and development linkages. This has been achieved through the study of available documentation (articles, reports, policy documents, undocumented notes) and interviews with twenty-two people representing eighteen institutions, ranging from Nigerian ministries and agencies, NGOs, European and African foreign embassies to several multilat-



eral organisations such as the IOM, ILO and ECOWAS. The interviews were conducted from 26 to 30 June 2006 in Abuja.

Due to the limited number of interviews, and the general lack of data and empirical studies, this chapter does not pretend to be comprehensive. Rather, it tries to throw light on the major migration trends and to identify the major policy issues and dilemmas from the perspective of the Nigerian interviewees. Unless reference is made to written sources, information in this chapter is based on the interviews. Because of limitations of space, the chapter will focus almost exclusively on international migration.

### Nigerian international migration

During the colonial era, parallel to rural-to-urban migration, and migration to and from other African countries, Nigerians migrated to the United Kingdom (UK), principally to pursue higher education. A significant proportion of them have stayed. After independence in 1960 this largely highly-skilled migration to the UK continued, although an increasing proportion of Nigerians also migrated to the United States (US) for study, business and work.

The 1973 oil crisis, with skyrocketing oil prices, caused a 350 per cent increase in oil revenues. The associated economic boom in oil-producing countries made Nigeria into a major migration destination within Africa. The rising incomes of the urban middle class and rapid industrialisation attracted a substantial number of West African labour migrants. However, the post-1981 decrease in oil prices heralded a long period of economic downturn along with sustained political repression and violence. In 1983 and 1985 Nigeria expelled large numbers of West African migrants, including about one million Ghanaians (Arthur, 1991: 74).

In fact, Nigeria has witnessed a 'reverse migration transition, transforming itself from a net immigration to a net emigration country (Black *et al.*, 2004: 11). Nigerians have increasingly emigrated to countries such as Ghana, Cameroon, and particularly the wealthy economies of Gabon, Botswana and South Africa (Adepoju, 2000). Since the advent of democracy in 1994, South Africa has developed as a major destination for migrants from various African countries, among which are numerous Nigerians. The skilled in particular have found the booming economy of South Africa to be a convenient alternative to Europe, the US and the Gulf States (Adepoju, 2000).

Although this migration of students, professionals and entrepreneurs to Anglo-Saxon countries has continued, there was also a diversification of extra-continental migration during the 1980s. An increasing number of Nigerians migrated to countries such as Germany, France, the Netherlands and Belgium as

well as to the Gulf states. In the 1990s, Spain, Italy and Ireland emerged as new major destinations of labour migrants from West Africa and Nigeria (Black *et al.*, 2004: 9). There has also been an increasing tendency of Nigerian migrants towards permanent settlement in these countries. Increasing restrictions and controls on immigration in Europe have not led to a decrease in Nigerian emigration. Rather, migrants are more often irregular and the itineraries tend to be longer and more perilous.

There is circumstantial evidence that these more recent migrants to continental European countries are, on average, less skilled, and that they more often work in the service (formal and, particularly in southern Europe, informal), trade and agricultural sectors of the economy. The UK and, in particular, the US (through student and professional migration as well as the Green Card lottery) continue to attract the more highly skilled workers (Hernandez-Coss *et al.*, 2007). The need to expand the UK National Health Service has for instance created new opportunities for professional health workers who, at home, were poorly paid and unmotivated. Universities in the UK have also embarked upon a recruitment drive to attract Nigerian students. The Gulf states, too, have attracted primarily the relatively highly skilled – at least until recently. Education has remained an important cause of Nigerian emigration, and labour migration from Nigeria has also become increasingly feminine (Adepoju, 2000: 386).

A significant number of Nigerians apply for refugee status in European countries. In 2004, Nigerians were the fifth largest group of asylum seekers in Europe (Carling, 2006). Because of its size and its current *relative* stability, Nigerians have less chance of obtaining asylum status than citizens from ECOWAS countries directly affected by civil war.

The issue of trafficking of female Nigerian sex workers to Italy and other European countries has received substantial attention (Carling, 2006). Most recruiting of future prostitutes takes place in the southern Edo state. The most important destination is Italy, where it is said that as many as 10 000 Nigerian prostitutes live. Secondary destinations are the Netherlands, Spain and a range of other countries (Carling, 2006). When Nigerians began migrating to Italy in the 1980s as a response to its high demand for low-skilled labour in agriculture and services, these women were only one of many groups that migrated. The first prostitutes tended to work independently, but in the early 1990s, immigration restrictions made prospective emigrants increasingly dependent on large loans in order to pay their journey, which provided an opportunity for traffickers (Carling, 2006).

A potential prostitute's initial contact with traffickers is often made through a relative, friend, or other familiar person, who puts her in contact with a

‘madam’ who organises and finances the journey. The costs may range from US\$40,000 to US\$100,000. The migrants and the madam conclude a ‘pact’, religiously sealed by a traditional priest, which obliges debt repayment in exchange for a safe passage to Europe. In Europe, the women are under the control of another madam, a counterpart of the madam in Nigeria. Most women realise that they are going to work as prostitutes, but do not necessarily know about the arduous conditions under which (street) prostitutes have to work, nor the size of their debt (Carling, 2006).

However, this work does offer some ‘career’ prospects. After repaying their migration debt in one to three years, women are essentially free, and it is fairly common for them to become a supervisor of other prostitutes and, eventually, a madam themselves. Carling (2006) stresses that this prospect of upward mobility is a incentive to comply with the pact, and that the strong element of reciprocity between traffickers and trafficked women makes it difficult to reduce this form of trafficking. According to a recent study, traffickers, especially in Kano state, successfully exploited the annual pilgrimage to Mecca to traffic children, men and women for different exploitative purposes, for example prostitution, begging and all forms of domestic work (Ehinderó *et al.*, 2006).

However, in light of the attention currently being given to trafficking, it is important to stress that, for Nigerian migration, trafficking seems the exception rather than the rule. The large majority of Nigerians migrate voluntarily, and even in the case of trafficking it is clear that the line between voluntary and forced migration is blurred.

It is also important to make a distinction between trafficking and smuggling. While many previously migrated on their own initiative, increasing restrictions have made more and more migrants dependent on the services of smugglers in crossing borders. Whereas until the 1990s migrants to Europe predominantly used air links, visa requirements and increasing immigration controls at air- and seaports, seem to have led to an increasing reliance on trans-Saharan, overland routes to the Maghreb countries, and in particular to Morocco, from where Nigerians and other sub-Saharan Africans attempt to cross the Mediterranean to southern Europe. Another now-popular route is via the Atlantic Ocean and the Canary Islands (de Haas, 2006).

Scattered evidence on the origin of Nigerian immigrants in Europe and the US strongly suggests that the majority originate from the relatively developed and densely populated southern provinces. The Ibo from the southeast and the Yoruba from the southwest, and, to a lesser extent the Edo and the Ogoni ethnic groups, seem to constitute the majority of Nigerian migrants in the UK (Hernandez-Coss *et al.*, 2007). The majority of Nigerians trafficked to Europe seem to originate from Edo state, and Benin City in particular. Edo and, to a

lesser extent, the Delta states are known as the main origin areas of sex workers. The Hausa and other northern groups seem relatively more oriented towards migration to the Gulf states. The predominantly Muslim character of the north as well as the position of the northern city of Kano as a major air hub in the *hadj* (the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca), might partially explain this connection.

Reliable data on Nigerian migration is lacking. Nigerian authorities do not register or estimate emigration, which presumably reflects a low interest in the issue. Also, receiving country statistics are incomplete, as many countries do not include naturalised and second-generation Nigerians in immigrant statistics, and because of the substantial presence of irregular migrants. Nigeria's 2005 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) estimated that more than 2 million Nigerians (mostly highly educated) have emigrated to Europe and the United States (NNPC, 2004), but the empirical basis for this claim remains unclear. According to some embassies, at least 1 million Nigerians are living in the US and the UK, and another 500,000 in Germany and Canada. Hernandez-Coss *et al.* (2007) even claim that 5 million Nigerians are currently living abroad. However, these estimates lack empirical underpinning.

A compilation of existing migration statistics shows that more than 300,000 first generation Nigerian migrants were legally living abroad at the beginning of the twenty-first century (see Table 8.1). Although the real number is certainly higher if we include second and third generations as well as irregular migrants, claims that 'millions' of Nigerians would live abroad appear to be unrealistic.

Table 8.1 Estimates of numbers of Nigerians living outside Africa

Country	Nigerians abroad		Arrival of asylum seekers (2004)
US	160,000	2004; country of birth	N/A
UK	88,380	2001; country of birth	1209
Germany	16,183	2002; nationality	N/A
Canada	10,425	2001; country of birth	589
Ireland	9,225	2002; country or birth	N/A
Netherlands	4,564	2003; country of birth	N/A
Italy	3,575	1989; nationality	N/A
Austria	2,913	2001; country of birth	1828
Greece	2,021	2001; nationality	N/A
Australia	1,783	2001; country of birth	N/A
Belgium	1,636	2004; nationality	N/A
France	1,425	1999; nationality	1572
<i>Total</i>	302,130		

Source: OECD 2006 and <http://www.migrationinformation.org>

Black *et al.* (2004: 19) refer to sources suggesting that nearly 15,000 Nigerians enter Europe and North America annually. The UK census in 2001 reported almost 87,000 Nigerians living in the UK, with about 80 per cent of them in greater London (Hernandez-Coss *et al.* 2007). Between 200,000 and 300,000 first and second generation Nigerians live in the US. According to the 2000 census, 90,000 of the 109,000 Nigerian-born immigrants in the US aged 25 or over were tertiary educated (Adams, 2003). According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) database on immigrants and expatriates, Nigerian emigrants living in OECD countries<sup>1</sup> represent 8.4 per cent of all Nigerians (including emigrants) with tertiary levels of education.

Nigeria has also remained a migration destination. Despite past expulsions and the economic decline after 1980, substantial communities of west-African migrants remain in Nigeria, though immigration has continued at more modest levels. Between 1984 and 1991, the numbers of migrants from Ghana in particular, and also from Mali declined, whereas the numbers of Togolese and Beninise seem to show an increasing trend (Arthur, 1991; 1991 National census). Although official figures underestimate the true numbers of migrants, census data suggest that migrants from Benin, Ghana, Mali, Togo and Niger form the largest groups, altogether comprising 305,000 registered migrants in Nigeria in 1991. Until the 2006 census results are released, it is difficult to assess the actual numbers of foreigners. According to recent UN estimates, over 971,000 immigrants live in Nigeria (UN, 2006). Nigeria hosts a relatively small number of refugees. Nigerian authorities and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimate that there are 19,000 refugees and asylum seekers; most refugees are from Liberia (about 7000), Sierra Leone (1700) and Chad (3200).

## Nigerian migration policies in regional and global contexts

### *Migration relations with European states: Control and re-admission*

Nigeria has largely pursued a *laissez faire* policy concerning the emigration of its citizens. It has actively intervened only in the case of anti-trafficking policies. However, since European countries started to put pressure on Nigeria to collaborate regarding the re-admission of irregular migrants, the Nigerian state seems to have embarked upon more active emigration policies through negotiating immigrant quota in exchange for collaboration with re-admission. Nigeria's own immigration policies are rather restrictive, except concerning

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<sup>1</sup> For a list of these (industrialised) countries, see <http://www.oecd.org>

ECOWAS (the Economic Community of West African States) citizens who have at least nominally the right to settle, work and do business. Most non-ECOWAS foreigners have to obtain a visa to enter Nigeria.

The focus of the migration policies of European states and their embassies and consulates in Nigeria is on immigration control, and restrictive visa policies are seen as the main instrument for such control. European states see visas as a major bargaining chip used in negotiations, and one that they do not want to give up. A major problem in this process is the widespread forgery of documents supporting visa applications, such as false bank statements and reference letters. This makes Nigerians particularly suspect in the eyes of immigration officials. Nigerians are also thought to be regularly involved in various forms of crime, such as the global trade in cocaine, financial fraud, money laundering and internet scams. Nigerian interviewees tended to complain that their migration is put in a negative light through the persistent association with trafficking, crime and fraud, even though the vast majority of Nigerian migrants are law-abiding.

In recent years, migration has clearly risen on the agenda in bilateral relations between Nigeria and European states, which specifically seek Nigeria's collaboration in the *readmission* of irregular migrants or rejected asylum seekers of Nigerian citizenship. Nigeria is known as one of the most 'cooperative' African states on this issue. Several European countries, such as Italy, Spain, Ireland and Switzerland, have signed re-admission agreements with Nigeria. Some countries are hesitant to concede to Nigerian demands for certain quotas of legal migrants in exchange for cooperation on re-admission. Although European embassies tend to describe Nigeria as relatively cooperative in border control and readmission policies, they argue that the main obstacles in migration control are the limited resources and organisational and infrastructural capacity on the Nigerian side. Also the sheer size of the country, with 147 overland border crossing points, makes it notoriously difficult to control migration.

Although expulsions from several European countries to Nigeria do take place, and plane loads of irregular migrants are sent back, the numbers returned are fairly small, and the interviewees did not tend to see them as a very effective way of limiting irregular migration. Several interviewees claimed that these repatriations are largely 'symbolic', to give the impression that policy makers are 'doing something'.

Although readmission agreements with European countries state that irregular migrants should be returned on a voluntary basis, some Nigerian interviewees saw these as having the character of deportations, in which irregular migrants were treated 'as criminals'. Irregular migrants apprehended in Europe

are imprisoned in detention centres before being deported, and aircrafts are full of police and security people.<sup>2</sup>

*ECOWAS: infringing on nominal freedom of movement*

Nigeria is a founding member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)<sup>3</sup> and hosts its headquarters in Abuja. The purpose of the ECOWAS is to have common trade, elimination of tariffs, and freedom of movement of people in the West African region. Freedom of movement is enshrined in the ECOWAS protocol of 29 May 1979 on the Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment. This protocol allows ECOWAS persons (1) to enter any ECOWAS state without a visa; (2) to reside in any ECOWAS country for up to 90 days; and (3) after 90 days, to apply for a permanent residence permit allowing them to start businesses, seek employment, and invest. An ECOWAS passport was established in 2000. National passports are gradually being phased out.

The implementation of the protocol on free movement nevertheless leaves much to be desired. A major obstacle is the frequent corruption of police, *gendarmarie* and border officials in all ECOWAS countries, which hinders free movement in practice. In Nigeria and throughout roads in the ECOWAS zone, several interviewees mentioned the presence of many unofficial road-blocks where police, *gendarmarie* and border officials take bribes as a form of unofficial toll. It was also reported that it is very difficult, if not impossible, for ECOWAS citizens to obtain residence permits, due to widespread corruption, bureaucracy and a general lack of awareness among migrants of their rights.

Migration issues have also become more important in EU-ECOWAS relations, presumably because of the increasingly visible presence of sub-Saharan migrants in North Africa and Europe, and the deaths and human suffering of West Africans attempting to enter the EU by making illegal sea crossings to Europe. It is seen as a problem by Nigerian and other ECOWAS stakeholders that most negotiations between ECOWAS and EU countries on issues such as migration (i.e. readmission) agreements are done on a bilateral, country-to-country level. ECOWAS would prefer to have block-to-block ECOWAS-EU negotiations.

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<sup>2</sup> Because deportees are officially not allowed to be handcuffed, the number of (military) police in an aircraft may well exceed the number of returnees.

<sup>3</sup> Current ECOWAS members are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

*Focus on trafficking*

So far, the focus of Nigerian migration policies has been on the prevention of trafficking of women and children to Western Europe and other African states. This partly reflects domestic concerns, and in particular those of the wife of the vice-president, but also the priorities of international donors. Nigeria has been under intense pressure particularly from the US to 'combat' trafficking. Trafficking is also seen as harmful for Nigeria's image abroad.

The Nigerian Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation (WOTCLEF) was one of the first Nigerian organisations to work on trafficking issues. Since its inception in 1999, six hundred women and children have used WOTCLEF's Abuja shelter. WOTCLEF activities focus on awareness-raising, through establishing volunteer clubs in each state, and by visiting schools, markets, and hair salons, as well as talking to local leaders, in order to raise awareness of trafficking. A WOTCLEF-sponsored TV programme on trafficking played for a number of years.

A national law prohibiting human trafficking was adopted in July 2003. The National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP) was created to implement this law. Its primary functions include investigation, the prosecution of traffickers, the rehabilitation of trafficked women, and the 'enlightenment' (awareness raising) of the general public and of institutions such as immigration, police, and justice departments. NAPTIP has a staff of approximately 250, located in six or seven offices around the country. Strategies to identify traffickers include working with paid informants in schools, motor parks, and hair salons in states where trafficking is prevalent. NAPTIP works with government agencies, WOTCLEF, UNICEF and IOM. There is a donor group on Child Trafficking headed by UNICEF.

Between February 2004 and April 2006, NAPTIP was involved in the return of 520 trafficked women. This included those apprehended en route to North Africa, and those deported from Europe in the context of re-admission agreements Nigeria has signed with several European countries, such as Italy and Spain. This number includes only the women and girls who admit to have been trafficked. The true number of returned trafficked women is believed to be much higher. It is estimated that of returned irregular migrants, only a small fraction (perhaps 5 out of 200) admit to have been trafficked, because of the negative stigma attached to female sex workers, and their presumed fear of being traced and punished by their traffickers.

Trafficked persons enter an 'oath of secrecy' with their madam in Europe. The belief in these oaths is said to be very strong and deters trafficked women from seeking police support or from admitting that they have been trafficked. Deportees include both traffickers (madams) and trafficked women. When the



Italian authorities do ‘sweeps’, the traffickers are included among the returned irregular migrants. Upon arrival in Nigeria, NAPTIP used to hold all these women in one room, which decreased the chances of trafficked women being willing to denounce the traffickers. NAPTIP therefore now interviews expelled girls and women upon re-entry in Nigeria, so that it becomes apparent who are the traffickers.

There is little evidence that Nigeria’s new anti-trafficking policies have led to a measurable decrease in trafficking, although most interviewees stated that Nigerians are ‘more aware’ of the dangers of trafficking. Some interviewees criticised the public awareness campaigns for having the character of general anti-migration manifestations which try to convince the youth that they should not migrate. As one interviewee said:

They simply say ‘East, west, home is best’. But this is the wrong message. You won’t stop people from going. You should instead inform people how to migrate legally so as to create a balanced opinion. Migration is not really a bad thing.

Several interviewees criticised the failure of European receiving countries, such as Italy, to identify the traffickers and to not deport them with the trafficked women. Currently, no such differentiation is made, and all irregular migrants are categorised as ‘illegals’.

The focus on improving Nigeria’s rather negative image abroad through anti-trafficking campaigns was the subject of criticism by several interviewees, because this coincides with an emphasis on repression and a lack of attention to the trafficked women themselves. As one interviewee said:

The Nigerian government wants to make a good show, laundering its international image, rather than protecting the rights of individuals. For instance, the preamble of the anti-trafficking law only mentions the bad image migrants are creating for Nigeria. It does not address the rights of the individuals.

Because trafficked women are not well protected in either Europe or Nigeria, they are generally not inclined to denounce traffickers, although it is seen as essential to addressing the issue effectively. One interviewee suggested that irregular migrants should be given temporary or permanent residency status if they identify a trafficker, instead of being deported straight away.

## Emergent links between migration and development policies?

### *Contested migration-development links*

In the first four decades after independence, international migration was hardly an issue in Nigerian politics, and until recently no connection whatsoever was made between international migration and national development strategies. In

comparison, the much more large-scale rural-to-urban internal migration has attracted far greater attention from Nigerian policy makers and development agencies, mostly with the aim of stemming rural-to-urban migration through development, rather than using this migration as a development force.

This policy-making was based on the assumption that migration impacts negatively on development processes. For example, in the few instances in which Nigeria's PRSP – in Nigeria better known as NEEDS (Nation Economic Empowerment Development Strategy, see NNPC, 2004) – mentions (internal) migration, it is generally seen as a force disrupting social cohesion and societal values in village societies, and causing urban crises. Migration is strongly associated with trafficking, forced child labour and prostitution. In addition, Nigeria's PRSP perceives internal migration as a force which potentially contributes to urban unemployment<sup>4</sup>, crime, conflict, failure in the maintenance of democracy, as well as urban pollution and waste management problems (NNPC, 2004: 12, 43, xix). Migration of the educated workforce to urban areas is also seen as increasing the ageing and deepening the poverty of rural populations (NNPC, 2004: 32). The perceived solution to these problems is to stem rural-urban migration through rural development schemes (NNPC, 2004: 70).

In as far as Nigerian policy makers have dealt with *international* migration, its positive contribution to development has so far been envisaged mainly in strong connection with *return* migration (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2004: 38). Emigrants have been seen as a drain on the country's resources rather than as a potentially positive force for national development, even when living abroad. In most policy circles, migration, whether internal or international, is still seen primarily as a development failure rather than as a constituent part of broader social and economic transformation processes.

In this context, it is relevant to assess what has been the actual contribution of internal and international migration to social and economic development. Because of the effects of remittances and possibly of newly-acquired skills, dominant policy discourses – such as voiced in the Nigerian PRSP – have put international migration into a more positive light than internal migration. However, there seems reason to question this assumption. Internal migration has been much more massive than international migration, and its contribution has possibly been more positive and redistributive.

International migration of the elite, although numerically not impressive, is widely associated with large-scale capital flight, in which significant amounts of

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<sup>4</sup> This notion is based on the assumption that labour demand is constant, and ignores the fact that migrants themselves are also consumers of services and products, and hence may increase the size of the urban economy.

the country's oil windfall are transferred to foreign bank accounts and invested abroad. However, the recent, often irregular, migration of people from more modest socio-economic backgrounds to southern Europe and elsewhere may have been more beneficial for national economic development.

There is also some evidence that international remittances might exacerbate regional inequality. Over the past years, there has been a remarkable increase in remittances. A recent study on the UK–Nigeria 'remittance corridor' concluded that Nigeria received about US\$2.26 billion in registered remittances in 2004, while in kind remittances (such as cars and electronic goods) were estimated at a level of US\$0.51 billion. Based on the assumption that fifty per cent of the remittances to Nigeria are unrecorded<sup>5</sup>, Hernandez-Coss *et al.* (2007) conclude that the real level of remittances must be around US\$5 billion.

Most UK remittances are destined for cities in the main origin areas of Nigerian migrants, that is in the relatively developed southwest and southeast regions (Hernandez-Coss *et al.*, 2007). Thus international remittances seem to exacerbate rather than level the income differentials between Nigerian states, and between urban and rural areas. *Internal* migration has probably contributed more to income redistribution from urban to rural areas, which might seem surprising in the light of the bad press it tends to receive in comparison with international migration. Back in the 1970s, on the basis of a survey conducted in rural Nigeria, Adepoju (1974) had already concluded that internal remittances enabled rural households to improve their livelihoods significantly, construct houses, and enable children's education. However, there is virtually no empirical evidence to assess the development impacts of internal and international migration more precisely.

#### *A nascent interest in migration and development policies*

In contrast with earlier 'non-policies' or migration prevention discourses, in recent years there seems to be a certain (re)-appreciation of the potentially positive contribution to national development of international migration and resulting remittances. There is also growing recognition that migrants are not to blame for the loss of resources, but rather the rather dismal economic, institutional and security conditions prevailing in Nigeria. As one interviewee said: 'Instead of pushing migrants not to migrate or to come back, the state should create the circumstances to lure them back.'

The formal re-introduction of democracy in Nigeria in 1999 and increasing freedom of speech was generally recognised as an important step forward in

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<sup>5</sup> The empirical basis of this assumption is not clear.

restoring trust in the Nigerian state among Nigerian migrants. Yet at the same time the high insecurity, violence and crime levels as well as the omnipresent corruption and the lack of economic reform were seen as massive obstacles. According to many interviewees, the low levels of security and the institutionalised corruption are among the main concerns of migrants who return either temporarily or permanently. In addition, many migrants are said to be attacked and robbed when they visit Nigeria, because of their alleged wealth. The NNVS agency (see below) is currently trying to address this problem by providing police protection for returning migrants, which demonstrates how worrying the security situation is.

Political change towards democratisation after 1999 also seems to have coincided with a shift to more positive attitudes regarding international migration and development. For instance, Nigeria's PRSP makes a clear connection between democratisation and economic growth on the one hand, and the role of emigrants and donors in national economic development on the other (NNPC, 2004: 13). The PRSP aims to

continue to actively strengthen links with Nigerians and other Africans in the diaspora to deepen technical and business ties with the rest of the world, and improve export market penetration, especially in textiles, food, and cultural artefacts. (NNPC, 2004: 83)

Strikingly, the PRSP also refers to attracting investments from *non-Nigerian* African migrants (NNPC, 2004: 116). It is also interesting to observe the contrast with internal migration, whose contribution to national development is still seen as negative.

The launch of the 'presidential dialogue with Nigerians abroad' in 2002 marked this shift in policies. The presidential dialogue aims at incorporating the Nigerian diaspora into national development policies. This also coincides with a stated willingness on the part of the government to establish and reinforce links with Nigerian migrants, as well as with the numerous associations they have established abroad.

A study on the contribution of UK-based diasporas to development and poverty reduction conducted by van Hear *et al.* (2004) highlights the diversity of Nigerians living in the UK and their organisations. It also showed that UK-based Nigerian diaspora organisations draw on a variety of constituencies, such as national or state-level interest groups, business associations, and associations of particular ethnic groups, whereas others are based on gender, religion, or political and cultural activities. Van Hear *et al.* (2004) also reported that, beyond such particular interest groups, Nigerians (and Ghanaians) in the UK figure prominently in pan-African diaspora development organisations, for

instance the London-based NGO the African Foundation for Development (AFFORD).

Van Hear *et al.* (2004) state that the Nigeria diaspora provides a substantial contribution, especially by way of remittances, to the homeland, and that, in addition to these transfers, members of Nigerian diasporas contribute to poverty reduction and development in Nigeria, through temporary or permanent return programmes for the highly-skilled and through numerous efforts to mobilise Nigerians for the social and political development of Nigeria (van Hear, 2004: 10–11).

It is not so much the engagement of diaspora groups that is new, but rather the interest of the Nigerian government in their potential contribution to national development. While the government has focused its hope on individual emigrants to invest, their associations are primarily ascribed a role in running and sustaining development projects. As part of the presidential dialogue with Nigerians abroad, the president had meetings with Nigerians living abroad in Atlanta and London.

The government has also established a Nigerians in the Diaspora Organization (NIDO), with an office based in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. NIDO has set up a network of branches in Nigerian embassies abroad as well as destination country-specific websites. The official aims of NIDO are fourfold: firstly, to encourage the participation of Nigerians in the diaspora in the affairs of their home country; secondly to provide to Nigerian international migrant organisations a forum for the exchange of views and experience; third, to enhance the image of Nigeria through networking; and, lastly, to build a database of Nigerians with professional skills, and make this database available for the benefit of government, the private sector and Nigeria's partners. The President has also appointed a Special Assistant to the President on Nigerians in the diaspora. Nigerians abroad are officially encouraged to organise themselves and to link up with NIDO branches.

The Nigeria National Volunteer Services (NNVS) is another government agency which was established to reinforce bonds with the Nigerian diaspora. NNVS attempts to mobilise Nigerian professionals living abroad for capacity building, through encouraging temporary visits, technical missions and sabbaticals to Nigerian institutions, or through giving summer courses. These contacts are partly established through linking up with Nigerian professional associations abroad. Unfortunately, it is unclear how NIDO and NNVS function in practice, as no independent evaluations are available.

*Remittances and remittance policies*

Until recently, Nigerian policy makers and banks paid scant attention to the issue of remittances. According to interviewees, the Nigerian government and banks gave the impression of being mainly interested in large money transfers and major investments by Nigerians living abroad. Small-scale person-to-person remittances appeared to be of little interest to them. Although the Nigerian Central Bank is part of the technical committee responsible for drafting a coherent migration policy, it is unclear to what extent the globally increased interest of donors in remittances is going to change the attitudes of the Nigerian government and banks.

At the 2004 G8 summit, countries agreed to engage in remittance partnerships. Nigeria is one of the countries with which the UK government wished to engage in such a partnership. Up till now, however, this has been obstructed by a general lack of information on remittances and migrants abroad, and also because very little interest has been shown by the Nigerian Central Bank in engaging in discussion.

A recent UK Department for International Development DFID (2004) study on the UK-Nigeria remittance corridor identified the weakened Nigerian banking structure as a major obstacle for facilitating remittances. Due to decades of economic crisis, the number of Nigerian banks that have branches abroad has decreased. For small remittance amounts, their fixed fees are higher than sending money through Western Union, the main money transfer agency in Nigeria, which is also quicker. In addition, money transfer agencies offer the option to pay out in US\$ instead of Nigerian Nairas, to avoid the official, low exchange rate. Informal systems of value transfer are common, particularly in Italy, where there are a high number of irregular Nigerian migrants who have difficulty accessing formal remittance channels (Hernandez-Coss *et al.*, 2007).

The main recommendation of the DFID report is to encourage the use of formal remittance systems, through four main methods. First, by increasing competition in the remittance market and facilitating the entry of more competitors, including the postal service and telecommunications providers, which can offer remittance products through mobile phone techniques. Secondly by making regulations affecting remittances more transparent and predictable; thirdly by encouraging banks to go beyond the role of being money-transfer agents and to become more proactive, by designing remittance products for the diaspora, and offering other products, such as mortgages. The last method is by building confidence in and capacity of formal financial institutions. The report also observed that, because banks are the only institutions authorised to pay remittances in Nigeria, the extensive national network of post offices is currently underutilised regarding the distribution of remittances.

It was also suggested in the DFID report that, in order to increase the development impact of remittances in Nigeria, the government could consider matching the collective remittances from diaspora associations (Hernandez-Coss *et al.*, 2007). This proposal is apparently inspired by the Mexican *Tres por Uno* programmes.

*Elements for a coherent policy on migration and development*

Policy coherence between migration and development policies is yet to be achieved. As is visible in Nigeria's PRSP, development policies are still based on the assumption that migration is associated with a *lack* of development and furthermore undermines development in its own right. This is somehow inconsistent with stated aims of creating a positive link between migration and development policies.

The Nigerian president has appointed a Special Assistant to the President on Migration and Humanitarian Affairs. Her office has established a technical committee of government ministries and agencies<sup>6</sup>, which in 2006 was discussing a coherent policy on migration and development. Civil society role-players do not seem to be actively involved. The process is facilitated by IOM Nigeria. By July 2006, the committee had met six times and intended to submit the draft policy paper to the Federal Council by November 2006, and in any case before the 2007 elections.

According to the Office of the Special Assistant to the President on Migration and Humanitarian Affairs, the main components of the migration policy are likely to be focused on mapping Nigerian migration and on identifying the most needed expatriates, how not to lose skilled labour, how to bring back the diaspora, and how to prevent irregular migration. It has also been mentioned that, as part of these new policies, migrants may be granted voting rights in the next elections<sup>7</sup>.

Several interviewees expressed a fair level of scepticism about these initiatives. According to one Nigerian interviewee, the government's policies still essentially boil down to anti-emigration policies:

The message is still 'do not migrate'. When the president talks to Nigerians living abroad he says 'come back to Nigeria and struggle it out in Nigeria'. This is unreal-

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<sup>6</sup> The committee consists of the ministries of Finance, Education, Justice, Science and Technology, Intergovernmental Affairs and Youth Matters, Women Affairs, Health, and Foreign Affairs. It also includes the following agencies: the Central Bank of Nigeria, the National Commission for Refugees, NAPTIP, the National Population Commission, Nigerian Labour Congress, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), the National Planning Commission, and the National Human Rights Commission (2007).

<sup>7</sup> Nigeria apparently does not have restrictions on dual citizenship.

istic if you take into account the enormous numbers of graduates without decent employment. They don't recognise the unattractive environment that Nigeria is. The government is not trying to regulate it through managing migration and protecting migrants. It is still seeing migrants as deviants. At the same time, ministers send their children to study and work abroad – but they don't call it migration.

This sceptical view seems to be based partly on doubts about the intentions of the government regarding the creation of a migration and development policy. One interviewee feared that, just as it has been the case with trafficking, the issue of migration and development is being imposed by the international donor community and that it is predominantly 'a fashion'.

The Nigerian interviewees tended to criticise EU migration policies for being focused solely on security issues and migration prevention. The feeling is often that these policies fail because governments cannot control migration since it is a result of, or is supported by, globalisation and new technologies. Probably more than other West Africans, Nigerians feel stigmatised and collectively treated as potential irregular migrants, criminals and traffickers. Even Nigerians with good jobs in Nigeria have difficulties securing a European visa.

The international image of Nigerian migration is dominated by issues around trafficking, although the large majority of Nigerian emigrants are often highly skilled and do not cause problems (Carling, 2006). For low-skilled workers, it was suggested that European states should give 'temporary stay' permits that enable individuals to work and acquire skills and income, and then support them in returning to their countries of origin.

## Conclusions

Although several hundreds of thousands of Nigerians live outside Africa, as a proportion of its total population of an estimated 130 million, this fraction is small compared to other African countries such as Ghana, Senegal, Egypt or Morocco. There is no data confirming that there is a 'massive outflow' of Nigerians. Likewise, remittances seem to be relatively low as a percentage of Nigerian GDP, certainly compared to oil revenues. In the same vein, claims on the supposedly harmful effects of the Nigerian 'brain drain' lack a sound empirical underpinning.

However, a general lack of quantitative and qualitative research precludes making any definite statements. Too many facts about the nature and magnitude of Nigerian migrations and their relations to broader development processes are simply unknown. It seems to be important to put the development potential of migration into an empirical perspective – and to develop policies based on knowledge and not on trends and fashions within the international development community or in academic discourses. So far, policy is too much guided by



unsubstantiated *assumptions* on migration–development linkages. Therefore, more empirical research on Nigerian migration as well its development implications is urgently needed in order to develop more informed policies on the issue.

On the basis of this exploratory study, we will try to formulate some hypotheses concerning policies put in place by Nigeria and European states that might maximise the positive development impact of migration while minimising its negative effects. Some targeted policy actions were mentioned by the interviewees which are seen as enhancing the development contribution of migration. These included granting voting rights to migrants and encouraging migrants to register at Nigerian embassies abroad – in order to reinforce links with Nigerian migrants and their organisations. With regard to remittances, there seems to be substantial scope for the Nigerian state, and banks, to decrease the costs of remitting money and to encourage the use of formal remittance systems through increasing competition and transparency, as well as offering remittance products through mobile phone techniques, encouraging banks to design remittance products for the diaspora, and building general confidence in and capacity of formal financial institutions.

However, it seems to be important to go beyond such targeted actions and to address more *general* issues related to improving the status and rights of migrants, restoring the trust of migrants in the Nigerian state, and, crucially, create a generally attractive socio-economic and political environment for migrants to invest in and return to. Without such general improvements, it is unlikely that targeted migration and development policies will have a significant impact.

First, the lack of rights of many (irregular) Nigerian emigrants make them vulnerable and easy to exploit. This obviously diminishes their own socio-economic mobility as well as their capacity to contribute to origin-country development. Most Nigerian interviewees stressed that a migration and development policy should therefore start by recognising and respecting the basic human rights of migrants. This seems to be a responsibility of both sending and receiving countries. Without such rights, migrants become extremely vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. The generally repressive (‘combating’) approaches towards trafficking and irregular migration have limited effects or are even counterproductive because they deprive migrants even further of such rights.

The interviewees said that European employers profit from cheap immigrant labour, and the often irregular status of migrants makes it easier to exploit them. Instead of targeting these employers, states punish and stigmatise migrants, while denying their rights. Instead of criminalising and stigmatising migrants, it

was said that European states should recognise the need for immigrant labour through giving access to legal channels of temporary or more long-term migration. Access to visas should also be made easier. Most Nigerian interviewees felt deeply uncomfortable with the fact that the focus on trafficking, crime and document forgery obscures the reality that the vast majority of Nigerian migrants are not criminals. In this context, interviewees suggested that the Nigerian government should engage in discussions with destination country governments to create more legitimate opportunities for migration.

Most Nigerian interviewees, in particular those in non-governmental positions also criticised the anti-trafficking policies of European states because they do not differentiate between traffickers and trafficked persons; instead all are collectively labelled as 'illegals' and subsequently expelled. They stressed that serious anti-trafficking policies should address trafficked men and women as victims and protect their rights. A blanket repressive approach works counter-productively by actually reinforcing the reciprocal relationship between traffickers and trafficked persons.

In the same vein, it was felt that the Nigerian state should liberalise its immigration policies and that Nigeria and other ECOWAS states should genuinely implement the ECOWAS protocol on the free movement of persons, the right of residence and establishment. Regional integration, both in economic and migratory terms, is seen as a powerful tool for national development.

Second, there seems to be a general feeling of distrust among migrants of the Nigerian state, which makes it difficult for the government to 'reach out' to diaspora groups. This seems to be the result of years of repression and neglect, and is unlikely to be changed overnight. This is evident in the NIDO initiative, which obviously lacks a firm connection with the already very active development associations of Nigerians abroad. Current initiatives of the Nigerian state (such as NIDO) seem to be rather top-down and this is perhaps an obstacle for their successful implementation. A more fruitful approach might be to link up with and build on the wealth of *existing* initiatives of Nigerian (and other West African) diaspora organisations

Not only European states, but also the Nigerian state was seen as failing to defend adequately the rights of Nigerian emigrants abroad, as well as immigrants in Nigeria. Emigrants have often been seen as deviants or even as traitors, and the Nigerian state has done little to protect their rights abroad, or those of forced and voluntary returnees. The Nigerians embassies are not (yet) seen as supporting irregular or even legal migrants. One interviewee described going to the embassy as 'the very last option' in case of trouble. It was felt that the Nigerian state would be successful in encouraging emigrants to register at Nigerian embassies abroad only if it assumes a more active role in assisting and

defending migrant rights. Granting migrants voting rights is also seen a factor that would contribute to restoring trust.

Third, the general lack of insecurity, the high prevalence of crime, high levels of corruption, and a generally unfavourable investment environment prevent Nigerian migrants from investing, circulating and returning. There was general agreement among the Nigerian interviewees that in order to enhance the development contribution of migrants, it is necessary to create a generally conducive environment for development and investment. Nigeria is still seen as too risky, and, apart from in the oil industry, few investments are being made which allow for a significant skills transfer. In the eyes of many interviewees, there are not enough assurances that entrepreneurs can invest, and make a profit on their investments.

It was similarly argued that the 'brain drain' cannot be prevented as long as general conditions in Nigeria do not improve substantially. In Nigeria, basic rights are not upheld and there is not a feeling that the government protects its citizens. Besides improving investment conditions, personal security needs to be addressed before the brain drain can be turned into a brain gain through increased remittances, transfer of knowledge and competencies, and even a reversal of capital flight. This exemplifies the need to pursue *general* economic and political reform in order to restore trust among migrants.

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## The migration debate in Kenya

Marcel Rutten & Koki Muli

### Introduction

Migration in the East African region is not a new phenomenon. The inhabitants of the area, mainly Bantus, Cushites and Nilotes have settled here from both northern (Sudan) and south-western parts of Africa since the seventeenth century. In 1895, the British government formally proclaimed authority over the territory. The 1896–1902 building of a railway connecting Mombasa and Lake Victoria promoted the arrival of European settlers and of Indian ‘coolies’, recruited in British India as labourers for the construction of the railway. Ugandans could be found in Nairobi as early as the 1920s engaged in clerical jobs and the media (Thuku, 1970).

Kenya was a leading refugee hosting state throughout the twentieth century. A major influx of refugees from Ethiopia occurred between 1936 and 1938. In 1959, Rwandan refugees crossed into Kenya; most of them integrated and became Kenyan citizens at independence in 1963. In 1966 waves of refugees arrived in Kenya from Uganda, escaping the authoritarian rule of Milton Obote. These were followed throughout the 1970s by others fleeing the reign of Idi Amin, and from 1979 to 1985 after Obote was reinstated. By 1988 there were approximately 12,000 refugees in Kenya, mainly Ugandans living in Nairobi. These refugees enjoyed full status rights, including the right to reside in urban centres and move freely throughout the country, the right to obtain a work

permit and access educational opportunities, and the right to apply for legal local integration.

Kenya experienced its largest influx of refugees from Somalia following the collapse of that country in 1990. Sudanese and Ethiopian refugees followed after the fall of the Mengistu regime. Others from DRC, Rwanda and Burundi who had come to Kenya from 1994 onwards still remain, mainly in urban centres, although some stay in camps, from where they hope to secure resettlement to Western countries. Although Kenya has long been a safe haven in this part of Africa, the collapse of the Somali state and the increased turmoil in southern Sudan have greatly undermined Kenya's capacity to deal with emergencies and refugee influxes, therefore relegating disaster and emergency responses to international agencies. There are also no clear policies on asylum and the provision of services to refugees. As a result, there are inadequate annual budgetary allocations to address the plight of refugees hosted in Kenya.

Kenya has also become a source, transit, and destination country for men, women and children trafficked for forced labour and sexual exploitation. Destinations are the Middle East, other African nations, Western Europe, and North America – for domestic servitude, enslavement in massage parlours and brothels, and manual labour. People trafficked into Kenya are principally Indians, Bangladeshi, and Nepalese, coerced into bonded labour in the construction and garment industries (US Department of State, 2004). In 2005 the Kenyan Ministry of Immigration developed draft legislation to criminalise the cross-border elements of human trafficking, and the Attorney General's Office collaborated with civil society and other ministries to develop draft comprehensive legislation and to support the establishment of a code of conduct against child sex tourism. Internal discussions are being held, migration conferences organised (IRIN, 2002b; IRIN, 2005) and efforts are underway to come up with a policy document. For example the Governance, Justice, Law and Order Sector Reform Programme (GJLOS) is a Kenyan government-led sector-wide reform programme launched in November 2003. The GJLOS programme aims at supporting the Ministry of Immigration in revising and reforming laws and legislation dealing with citizenship, immigration and the registration of aliens (GJLOS, 2005). The Ministry of Immigration also plans, through this programme of reforms, to introduce a new Passport Act, which will support a National Migration and Immigration Policy.

In this chapter the current state of Kenyan migration is discussed; in particular forced migration, transit migration and labour migration. There is a review of Kenyan policy plans and laws dealing with migration, and details are given of the opinions of stakeholders as given to the authors during a visit to the country in July-August 2006.

## Kenyan migration policy plans and immigration law

*The Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation 2003–2007* (MPND, 2003), a policy plan for economic recovery, hardly discusses issues of migration. In its 2006 Kenya Peer Review Report, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) urged the Kenyan government to enact and implement a clear policy on refugees and internally-displaced persons, and to streamline immigration screening procedures for the entry of refugees into the country (NEPAD, 2006). Although Kenya is a signatory to the international agreements on refugee protection, the country has no established national legal framework to handle refugee issues, including the management of their resettlement and integration in the country. Instead, the government has let the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) be at the forefront of managing the bulk of refugee affairs in the country. The UNHCR carries out Refugee Status Determination (RSD) under this mandate, while the Kenya government has suspended its RSD and involves itself only in registering those refugees who have been recognised by UNHCR. This is important because UNHCR provides assistance to recognised refugees, and this arrangement it makes it convenient for UNHCR to focus on genuine refugees and avoid assistance being abused by persons who are 'not of concern to UNHCR' administratively. Unfortunately UNHCR can only provide refugees with Mandate Letters; it cannot bestow the full Conventional Status that the government can. This much-coveted status enables refugees to enjoy the rights enshrined in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

Immigration law in Kenya today has its roots in the Immigration Ordinance of 1906, which dealt mainly with the restriction of immigration into the British colony of Kenya, especially the immigration of unemployed persons who were likely to be a liability to the colony.<sup>1</sup> The 1906 Ordinance was amended and reviewed at least eleven times. One of the significant amendments of 1938 aimed at increasing the amount of security deposit for immigration into the colony from £50 to £500, in order to restrict people fleeing from the events which were taking place in Central Europe at the time. In later years, e.g. in 1948, amendments contained a long list of prohibited immigrants. In 1964, the independent government of Kenya adopted the 1956 Ordinance with only a few minor changes.

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 62 of Colonial Ordinances, Ordinance Number 17, August 1906. All legislation passed in Kenya during the colonial period was known as Ordinances. After independence, Legal Notice Number 2 of 1964 made all legislation 'Acts of Parliament'.

The provisions regarding prohibited immigrants and requirements for permits were adopted and enhanced in the current Immigration Act<sup>2</sup> for the purposes of controlling immigration into the country, around the period when there was an influx of aliens and refugees from Uganda (1972). The government enacted the 1990 NGO Coordination Act legislation in an attempt to coordinate the relief and emergency activities of the humanitarian organisations and NGOs which had responded to the 1990 Somali and subsequent Sudanese crises. The government's actual participation in assistance and resolution of the refugee crises was therefore minimal, and was limited to oversight, the provision of user rights of the land where these activities were taking place, and security operations. Since 1990 attempts have been made by the government to enact Refugee Specific Legislation, and on 26 May 2006 revised draft legislation was published in the Kenya Gazette Supplement and introduced in parliament, which finally passed the Refugees Bill (with a number of amendments) on 29 November 2006. The Bill calls for the government to create an inter-ministerial RSD Committee to adjudicate asylum applications under the Commissioner for Refugees Affairs. The office of the attorney-general was due to fine-tune the amendments to the bill, before it is signed into law by President Kibaki.

## Stakeholder views on migration in Kenya

### *Forced migration: Kenya's burden*

Kenya hosted 420,000 refugees at the height of the Somalia crisis in 1992. This figure fell fairly steadily to about 220,000 by the end of 2003, but new violence in the region, notably in Ethiopia and Somalia, led to a new rise, to an estimated total of 315,000 by the end of 2005 (see Figure 9.1).

With no programmes for their permanent resettlement and integration within Kenya, a majority of refugees in the country are confined to camps in geographically remote areas such as Dadaab in north-eastern Kenya, and Kakuma in the north-west. The UNHCR's figures of October 2006 indicate that Dadaab had nearly 137,000 refugees—and Kakuma well over 92,000.<sup>3</sup> In addition there

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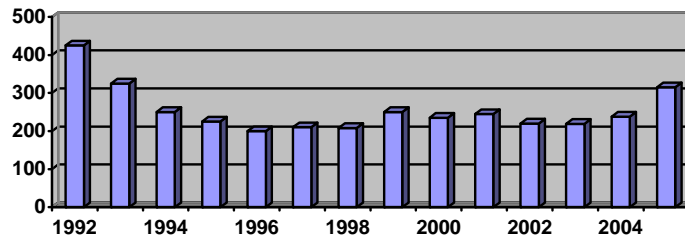
<sup>2</sup> Chapter 172 of the Laws of Kenya, Number 25 of 1967 and Number 6 of 1972 (revised).

<sup>3</sup> The main areas of Kenyan settlement in the US include Washington, DC (where 50 per cent of Kenyan Americans can be found), Texas, California, and the midwest. A number of Kenyans have also settled in Georgia and North Carolina, two states with important technological centres. The high value that Kenyan Americans place on education and their fluency in English has allowed them to find skilled positions, especially in technology and nursing. The vast majority of Kenyans become naturalised US citizens; less than two per cent return to Kenya. See [www.everyculture.com/multi/Ha-La/Kenyan-Americans.html](http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Ha-La/Kenyan-Americans.html).



are some 2100 convention refugees<sup>4</sup> and an unknown number of urban refugees, estimated to be between 50,000 and 100,000.

*Figure 9.1* Number of refugees and asylum seekers ('000), Kenya, 1992-2005



Source: World Refugee Survey, US Committee on Refugees, 1992 to 2005

Although forced migration has been a recurrent concern for both colonial and postcolonial governments in Kenya, according to the Ministry of Immigration, ‘there is no coordinated approach to the issue of immigration’.<sup>5</sup> It is noteworthy that the government and UNHCR have played different roles since 1992. The government, claiming a lack of resources, has been providing land and physical security in the camps, and has also been registering all the refugees in Kenya, while the UNHCR – which is better resourced – and its partners have been providing all the other services. As of now, refugees in Kenya either have full status (pre-1992 cases, recognised by the government), or they possess a UNHCR Mandate Letter (post-1992 cases, recognised by UNHCR).

Kenyan officials interviewed indicated that the Kenyan attitude towards refugees from neighbouring countries has always been positive: ‘They are our brothers and sisters, how can we refuse them?’, and ‘We in Kenya accommodate foreigners. It is African to be hospitable.’<sup>6</sup> However, when asked if immigration (in general) was a problem to Kenya, negative aspects were also mentioned, in particular the fact that Kenya was not able to control the influx of foreigners because of its porous borders.

<sup>4</sup> A ‘convention refugee’ is a person who is outside of their own country and is unable or unwilling to return to that country because of a well-founded fear of persecution.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Mr E. Kisome, permanent secretary Ministry of Immigration and Registration of Persons, 4 August 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Ministry of Immigration and Registration of Persons officials.

Issues of disease, crime, and cultural erosion were mentioned as drawbacks of immigration. In Nairobi, Somalis have gone into businesses such as taxis, housing and supermarkets, thus not only presenting real competition but in some cases pushing (mainly Asian) Kenyans out of business. If the pre-1992 refugee regime in Kenya can be characterised as generous and hospitable, with emphasis on local integration, the post-1992 regime has been inhospitable, characterised by growing levels of xenophobia, denial of basic refugee rights and few opportunities for local integration. The attitude seems to be most negative towards Somali refugees. The Ministry of Planning indicated that 'the threat of international terrorism has also recently impacted on Kenyan attitudes and policies towards refugees' (MPND, 2006: 7).

It cannot be ruled out that part of the apparent change towards refugees within Kenyan government circles has been triggered from outside, notably foreign pressure to deal with terrorists. Kenya has been the scene of several terrorist attacks in the last decade, notably the 7 August 1998 bomb attack on the US embassy in Nairobi, which killed 291 and wounded over 5000, and the 28 November 2002 bombing of an Israeli-owned hotel near Mombasa and the (failed) attempt to shoot down an Israeli plane that same day. Twelve Kenyans and three Israelis were murdered by two suicide bombers in the hotel attack. All of these attacks were claimed by Al-Qaeda (Rutten, 2004). These threats resulted in the drafting of a highly contested Suppression of Terrorism Bill (2003), increased security measures in Kenya's airports and the rounding up of Somalis in Nairobi. In May 2002 hundreds of people, including children, were arrested in the Nairobi estate of Eastleigh, in a police crackdown on illegal foreigners. Police arrested over 843 aliens, mostly from Somalia and Ethiopia, and recovered powerful sophisticated communications equipment used to communicate with relatives in their respective countries (IRIN, 2002a).

Kenyan Muslims have also felt harassed by their own authorities. In their view the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit is operating illegally and should be disbanded (ABC News Online, 2006). Although Kenya redrafted the Suppression of Terrorism Bill, it has not yet been tabled in Parliament. Immigration officials, however, indicated that terrorist issues will be put into the Migration Act, so that even without the Terrorism Bill legal tools will be available to address this matter.

On 1 March 2006, the government of Kenya embarked on an ambitious exercise registering illegal aliens in Eastleigh. The exercise was completed by July. According to the Ministry of Immigration, 51 000 people were registered in Eastleigh. Urban refugees across the country were also encouraged to register. The government had three main objectives: to conduct a baseline survey to find out the actual number of refugees in urban areas; to identify refugees capable of working and doing business in Kenya and give them legal

status, that is, 'Class H' permits. (These permits cost Ksh60 000 – about €650. Licenses would weed out illegal aliens involved in business and provide revenue. Those holding this type of permit are also required to pay taxes.) The last objective was to determine for security purposes the number of refugees residing in the country.

The UNHCR aims to return to the position prior to 1991 through capacity-building of the Department of Refugees within the Ministry of Immigration and Registration of Persons. The Ministry has three departments: the Registrar of Persons; Immigration; and Refugees. Once there is a commissioner in charge of refugees, there should be a budget line from the Ministry of Finance to support the department fully. At present this is UNHCR budget, aided by international organisations such as the World Food Programme and various NGOs. Donors support the capacity-building of the Refugee Department. Its staff is currently sixteen, with five administrative officers, and in July 2006 the UNHCR, through assistance from the Danish government, trained them for the first time. Lack of funds and of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) within the Ministry have, however, created a major bottleneck. Systems are too manual (e.g. at airports and borders). Better equipment and more personnel are needed.

### Transit migration: Pointing fingers in the human trafficking debate

According to immigration officials, Kenya is a transit country for Ethiopians, Rwandans, Somalis, Eritreans and Asians. Harboursing foreigners is a big problem leading to trafficking, but it was also indicated that 'transit [human trafficking] is a peripheral issue for us'.<sup>7</sup> This statement was linked to the fact that the effective tackling of this problem is an impossible job, given Kenya's geographical and financial position which simply does not allow for an illegal-entrance-proof border control.

Our borders are porous and that makes it easy to sneak in and out of the country. One should realise that most people do not move through Jomo Kenyatta airport, although it is the hub for East Africa and beyond. They simply pass overland towards the border and leave by public or private transport some five kilometres before the border town. With the help of agents they cross the border, and in this way they can go as far as South Africa. Somalis in particular follow this route. Our

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<sup>7</sup> Interviews with (a) Mr Joseph Ndathi, principal immigration officer, and three officers: Mr Omar Ndathe (refugee department), Mr Joseph Ngetich (refugee department), Ms Jane Oyaro, (immigration department), 4 August 2006, (b) Hon. Peter Anyang' Nyong'o, MP for Kisumu Town West and former Minister for Planning and National Development, 31 July 2006, and (c) Dr Isaiah Akunga Onyango, Director, International Jobs Office, 2 August 2006.

legal framework also does not cater for human trafficking. The fines are not prohibitive enough.<sup>8</sup>

The Labour Ministry pointed at Kenya being a transit for labour migrants, mainly from Somalia, who enter Kenya as refugees and leave as ‘Kenyan’ migrant workers. Labour officials called for awareness campaigns on labour migration and human trafficking which are considered critical for both the migrant and their families, and those remaining at the home place.

Migration officials interviewed by the authors stated that lately many illegal transit migrants have been of Asian origin. The rate of success in detecting illegal entrants went up after the Netherlands Embassy facilitated equipment and training to detect forged passports. IOM also provides training on detecting trafficking. In spite of this support, Kenyan migration officials blamed foreign embassies for handing out visas for family reunion. This triggers human trafficking into Kenya, and people cannot be prosecuted since this is too costly, as people would have to stay longer in Kenya – at the expense of aid organisations – and in addition would not be able to use tickets home that would have already been arranged by these international agencies.<sup>9</sup>

### Labour migration: Golden opportunity or a threat?

Current discussion about migration is pointing more towards the apparent positive aspects of international labour mobility. It was reported by the UN (2006: 12, 54) that in 2005 some 191 million people were living outside their home countries, remitting an estimated US\$232 billion back home. This is more than double the estimate of a decade earlier.

In Kenyan government circles the debate on remittances is also gaining momentum, although the issue of migrant labour is not new. Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda used to exchange migrant labour during the heyday of the first thirty-year East African economic union (1948–1977). The open borders stimulated both documented and unauthorised migration. For nearly two decades of the first East African economic union, all the East African Community (EAC) countries allowed their citizens to move freely from one country to another.

When Uganda came under military rule, Kenya and Tanzania adopted a ‘help-the-neighbour’ attitude, allowing an inflow of Ugandan refugees as well as job-seekers. This resulted in strained relations between Uganda and its two neighbours. Between 1984 and 1987 the Kenyan authorities, grappling with

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<sup>8</sup> Interview with Ministry of Labour officials.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Mr Tom Amolo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2 August 2006.

negative economic factors, expelled Ugandans irrespective of their residence status in Kenya. These events brought the longstanding free movement of East Africans to a halt until the second EAC Federation was established in 1999, which should result in the adoption of a common passport, a relaxing of emigration/immigration formalities for their citizens, as well as a political federation (Oucho, 2006; Sander, 2003).

In the past, Kenyans who migrated outside Africa mostly did so for reasons of education and further training, mainly at British institutions. Many later returned to Kenya and emerged as the elite in the struggle for independence, and as leaders in crucial government and private sector management positions immediately after the British handed over power in 1963. In subsequent years many Kenyans, backed by government-financed scholarships and guaranteed jobs on return, left for higher education both in the West (mainly the UK and USA) and the East (the Soviet Union, and India). Among African countries, Kenya led in terms of numbers of students going to the USA, with 7097 in 2001/02, ahead of Nigeria (3820), Ghana (2672), Egypt (2409), and South Africa (2232).

In the year 2001, about 47,000 Kenyan immigrants were living in the USA, 15,000 in the United Kingdom, and 1300 were in Sweden (Okoth, 2003). Figure 9.2 indicates the trend of Kenyan immigrants to the two major destinations (USA and UK), from 1991 to 2001, and Figure 9.3 shows the number of Kenyan immigrants in six Western countries in 2001. Kenyan schoolteachers were recruited throughout the 1990s in the Seychelles, Rwanda, Burundi and the Congo. The Kenyan government has not yet established standards to ensure the adequate training and protection of these workers before their departure and during their stints abroad. Many Kenyans also began pursuing opportunities in low-skilled positions such as bus drivers, domestic servants, cruise ship attendants, and security guards in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. The wave of African migrants to Spain has hit world headlines, and estimates are that some 20,000 Somalis made similarly perilous journeys across the Gulf of Aden to the Middle East – about 1000 people are thought to have died in this attempt. It might well be that (Muslim) Kenyans, from the coast and the north-eastern region, have joined this route.<sup>10</sup>

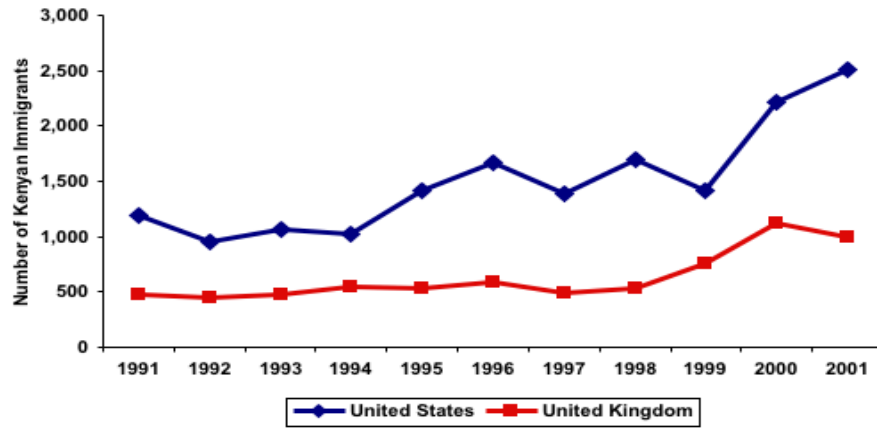
The total figure of Kenyan external migrants will be hard to establish for several reasons, such as unwillingness or inability to register with a Kenyan mission. According to one migration official, Kenyan authorities do not have reliable and up-to-date figures. He said that this was because, for example,

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<sup>10</sup> X. Rice. 'Washed up on the beach'. *Drum*, August 2006: 60–61.

Figure 9.2

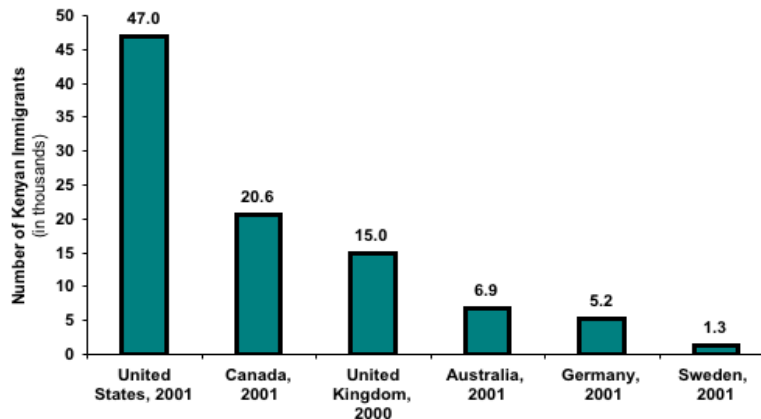
**Inflow of Immigrants from Kenya to the United States and the United Kingdom, 1991 to 2001**



Source: Migration Information Source, Global Data Center (cited in MPND, 2006; Okoth, 2003)

Figure 9.3

**Stock of Kenyan Immigrants for Selected Countries**



Source: Migration Information Source, Global Data Center (cited in MPND, 2006; Okoth, 2003)

someone might 'go to a brother for a visit and subsequently "disappear" for ten years, working abroad.' However, a total of some 200,000 to 300,000 Kenyan migrants might be a conservative estimate, so that the neighbouring countries as well as countries in southern Africa and the Middle East will account for most of those Kenyans who did not move to the industrialised North. Besides looking for educational and training opportunities, a whole range of push and pull factors were identified by the Ministry of Planning and National Development explaining out-migration by Kenyans.

### Push and pull factors

As well as the 'push' factors affecting migrant choices for leaving their place of residence – low and eroding wages and salaries; unsatisfactory living conditions, lack of transport, housing, etc.; under-utilisation of qualified personnel; lack of freedom; discrimination in appointments and promotions; lack of research and other facilities, including support staff; declining quality of educational systems and perceived prestige of 'foreign training'; social unrest, political conflicts and wars – there are a myriad of 'pull' factors characterising the new location of settlement – better working conditions; job opportunities and professional development; higher wages and income; higher standard of living; substantial funds for research, advanced technology, modern facilities, support staff; political stability; meritocracy, transparency; and intellectual freedom.

In 2002, President Kibaki called on Kenyans, especially intellectuals who had opted to go abroad for political reasons during the long rule of President Moi, to return home. At the same time the new government announced its intention to create 500,000 jobs annually. Estimates are that only some 50,000 jobs were created in the first half year after Kibaki came to power. Kenya, apparently, was not yet in a position to welcome home its community abroad. Moreover, there was a growing realisation that the Kenyan diaspora was becoming a significant player in Kenya's economic development through the remittances sent home. After being installed as the Minister for Planning and National Development, Peter Anyang' Nyong'o paid a visit to the Kenyan diaspora. He met Frank Mwaniki, the then President of the Kenyan Community Abroad (KCA) (founded 1997), to talk about remittances. They discussed the Ghanaian example of diaspora support and agreed to look for ways to remit money for investment through the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK). The CBK was interested in channelling these funds, in accordance with the Banking Act. The director (Dr Andrew Mulei) was very cooperative. The idea was to look into specific areas for investment, mortgage facilities and treasury bonds. However, the Ministry of Finance was slow and did not seem to be very interested. 'They are more of an accounting institution and less of a strategic

investment entity.<sup>11</sup> Discussions were also held between the KCA and the Ministry of Planning with the Kenya Commercial Bank (with Western Union), Postbank and City Bank.

The financial benefit of remittances seems for many observers to overshadow the negative aspects of migration. In particular the Kenyan government's promise to create half a million new jobs annually seems to have triggered new initiatives to proactively support Kenyans in finding jobs abroad. The Kenyan Cabinet (Minute 126/03, 18/12/2003) authorised the setting up of an International Jobs Office (IJO) under the Cabinet Office to carry out international market research, in close liaison with the Kenyan embassies and UN agencies, to identify suitable job opportunities for Kenyan professionals within international agencies, to identify new employment opportunities in the international market, and to re-advertise such jobs in the local media.

The description of the IJO functions suggests that finding jobs in the free international labour market was the IJO's key target. However, the IJO's director himself indicated that initial efforts were directed mainly towards supporting Kenyans in acquiring high-ranking positions in the offices of the United Nations, especially at senior levels – where Kenya is outnumbered by other African countries such as Ghana, Senegal, Nigeria and South Africa. The IJO is compiling a database of Kenyans working in international organisations, to monitor when their contracts expire, and it lobbies for a similar or larger number of Kenyans to be employed in those organisations. Between April 2005 and April 2006, Kenyan staff at the UNHCR increased from 19 to 33. An average of 120 vacancies in various UN organisations are advertised weekly on notice boards placed in strategic government buildings in Nairobi. At a later stage IJO did broaden its activities and put more effort into streamlining hunting for international jobs for Kenyan professionals in the private sector, because Kenyan society cannot absorb the human resources available. To fulfil this objective, the IJO acts as a facilitator for foreign governments or recruitment officers who come to interview professionals, and also conducts visits to countries in Europe, southern Africa and the Middle East.<sup>12</sup> Other Kenyan government offices claim that the IJO has gone beyond its mandate by looking for private jobs in the international market. It was concluded that in particular

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<sup>11</sup> Interview Hon. Peter Anyang' Nyong'o, MP for Kisumu Town West and former Minister for Planning and National Development (2003–November 2005), 31 July 2006.

<sup>12</sup> A first mission (in mid-2005) visited seven Kenyan embassies in Europe and the Middle East, eleven UN organisations, a private organisation responsible for placement of skilled personnel in the public and private sectors and two government departments. A year later another mission visited Kenyan embassies in the Middle East (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Lebanon and United Arab Emirates) and southern Africa (Namibia and Botswana).



southern Africa and the Middle East are the key destinations and best opportunities for 'quick wins'.<sup>13</sup> A local newspaper reported that 20,000 Kenyans had secured jobs in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates through the IJO (*The Standard*, 28 July 2006). Another 10,000 were reported to be working in southern Africa.

Most governments in the Middle East have a very sophisticated network of recruitment agencies. In 1991 Parliament was presented with a bill allowing foreign employment agencies to operate in Kenya. This bill, however, never became law. Recently a survey was conducted among the foreign agencies and 68 of these organisations were counted. The Ministry of Labour developed a code of conduct for foreign agents. It also stated the need for pre-departure orientation schemes for migrant workers regarding the culture, and social and political conditions of the host countries. Awareness campaigns on labour migration and trafficking in persons are also critical. Whether these efforts will be sufficient and able to prevent bad practices remains to be seen. In this respect lessons should also be learned from, for example, the experiences of Asian migrants. The government of Kenya countersigns the contracts signed by Kenyan migrant workers. But having countersigned contracts might be useless in cases where on arrival these are replaced with new ones with less favourable conditions.<sup>14</sup> Likewise the idea that Kenyans are very welcome should be questioned. Recent reports for the Gulf region indicate that the growing presence of foreign labour worries these countries, especially concerning some workers' rights (for example wages, education and health rights) demanded in negotiations during the free trade agreements.<sup>15</sup> This might mean opportunities for Kenyans, but only if they agree to certain unfavourable conditions. Unfavourable stories have appeared in the press concerning Kenyan teachers in the Seychelles. Former Minister Anyang' Nyong'o referred to the situation of

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<sup>13</sup> The IJO has been instrumental in finding job opportunities for engineers and architects in Namibia. In Saudi Arabia 23 doctors, nurses and medical technicians were offered jobs through ALMACO a recruitment agency in Riyadh (IJO, 2006). Fifty positions for Kenyans as veterinary doctors and lab technicians were secured with ALAMARAI, a dairy products company in Saudi Arabia. In trying to promote Kenyan professionals, the IJO mission also spoke to an umbrella organisation, Waleed Al-Swaidan, which manages 382 recruitment offices in Saudi Arabia. Most of these recruitment agencies had limited information on Kenya and tended to focus on South-East Asian countries when recruiting. In the United Arab Emirates, 208 jobs (contractors, welders, etc.) were offered in construction companies (Grand Hayat, DANADA), and 200 jobs with Emirates Airlines.

<sup>14</sup> See <http://www.smc.org.ph/amnews/amn060815/middleast/bahrain060815.htm> on high rates of suicide among Indian migrants in the Gulf region, mostly because of financial problems, or from loneliness.

<sup>15</sup> See <http://www.smc.org.ph/amnews/amn060815/middleast/middleast060815.htm>.

Kenyan nurses in the UK, which he called appalling: 'Long hours for little pay; it is slavery.'

### Remittances from Kenyans in the diaspora

Remittances have been associated with significant declines in poverty. In addition, they help households maintain consumption levels through economic shocks. Remittances are put to use by means of investment, education, health and increased entrepreneurship. The 2006 World Bank report estimated that remittances reduced the number of people living in absolute poverty (below US\$1 per day) in Kenya by some 2 per cent (World Bank 2006: 128–9). In recent years there has been a great deal of interest in remittances as an instrument for reducing poverty and promoting growth. The IJO and the Ministry of Planning and National Development also refer to remittances as a major source of Kenya's foreign exchange (together with direct investment and donor funds). The September 2005 IJO report of the mission on placement of Kenyans in international jobs said 'It is not surprising, therefore, that the Kenyan economy has continued to survive despite the freezing of Donor Funding over the last decade.'

It has been difficult to measure the impact of remittances by Kenyans in the diaspora because of a lack of reliable data. However, there are four channels through which remittances are likely to enter the country. These are:

- transfers through Western Union and MoneyGram
- remittances to bank accounts in Kenya by Kenyans working abroad
- remittances brought in by returning Kenyans and sold for Kenyan shillings at forex bureaus
- remittances brought in by returning Kenyans and sold for shillings at commercial banks.

A study by the Central Bureau of Statistics in Nairobi has estimated that total inward remittances through Western Union rose from around Ksh5 billion in 2000 to about Ksh10 billion in 2005. In the case of MoneyGram, the amounts for inward remittances are much smaller, being in the order of Ksh50 million in 2005. The study also estimates that, given some assumptions, remittances received by forex bureaus are to the amount of Ksh3 billion, while remittances through other media are estimated at Ksh22 billion, making a total of Ksh48 billion in 2005, as shown in Table 9.1.

Monica Nyamwange (2005), from William Paterson University, conducted a survey among five hundred Kenyans in New Jersey. She reports that four main categories could be found among the Kenyan immigrants: students, workers,

*Table 9.1* Estimates for workers remittances to Kenya in 2005

Medium	Amount (Ksh millions)
Western Union and MoneyGram	10,050
Transfers to bank accounts	12,514
Receipts by forex bureaux	3,094
Receipts by banks	22,500
<i>Total</i>	<i>48,158</i>

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Nairobi, cited in MPND, 2006)

refugees and green card lottery winners, and that 43.7 per cent of them sent money home regularly. Of that group, 40 per cent sent over US\$2000 a year. Money is mainly used for daily consumption (72.5% of receivers), school fees (64.9%), investment (59%), and debt payment (17.5%). From her observations, Nyamwange concludes that villages in Kenya with foreign connections are better off than those without international remittances. This last statement is corroborated by Black (2004), for a village in Makueni district, where half of the households surveyed had access to migrant income, which was larger and more secure than local labour income.

Figures reported for remittances received in Kenya from migrants abroad vary from Ksh4 billion from all Kenyan migrant workers, to Ksh58 billion sent by Kenyans in the US through Western Union alone (*The Standard*, 28 July 2006).<sup>16</sup> Planning Minister Henry Obwocha illustrated the importance of remittances by pointing to the initial public offer (IPO) for KenGen (Kenya Electricity Generating Company Ltd): out of the US\$366 million invested, some US\$100 million was believed to have come from the Kenyan community abroad.<sup>17</sup> The Minister also pointed to another phenomenon, namely Kenyans abroad grouping together in a company and investing directly in Kenya. Mr Frank Mwaniki, former president of the Kenyan Community Abroad (KCA), indicated that the KCA has been collaborating with the Kenya Investment

<sup>16</sup> The Ministry of Labour gave an annual figure for remittances of US\$56 million (about Ksh4 billion). But the World Bank mentions a 2004 figure of about US\$464 million (about Ksh34.8 billion). Kenyans in the diaspora are said to contribute 3.8 per cent of national income through remittances. This overshadows the FDI (US\$50.4 million), and the net ODA of about US\$200 million. Remittances through unofficial channels could add at least 50 per cent to official figures. In 2005, the conservative estimate of Frank Mwaniki, former president of the influential Kenyan Community Abroad, stood at about US\$600 million annually. The Central Bank of Kenya indicated it likely to be between US\$1.2 billion and US\$1.3 billion, leaving aside informal channels of remittance.

<sup>17</sup> According to the *East African Weekly*, 15th May 2006, the IPO realised Ksh26.4 billion (US\$366 million) for a period of 27 days.

Authority in trying to identify areas in which pooled resources can be invested. The Ministry of Planning and National Development is coordinating an informal committee looking into the issue of remittances. Its mandate is based on a Cabinet Memo on diaspora issues. The newly-inaugurated Kenya Diaspora Remittance Facilitation Working Committee is attended by representatives from the CBK, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Planning and National Development, the Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development, Africa's Brain Gain, the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA), the Postal Corporation of Kenya, and the Investment Promotion Council (IPC). Consultations were held between the Committee and financial institutions.<sup>18</sup>

The KCA, through Mr Frank Mwaniki, reported that there would be two kinds of remittance: regular investment remittances, and transaction remittances. By pooling regular remittances in a huge fund for investment, transfer fees would be eliminated and a flat transfer fee for ad hoc transactions can be negotiated, regardless of amount. The so-called Kenyans Abroad Investment Fund (KAIF) should allow groups of Kenyans to band together to carry out projects that they normally would not be able to participate in individually (Muraguri, 2005). Secondly, it would be easier to predict the level of foreign exchange coming into the country, since currently most remittances of large sums enter via the informal route. If a premium could be guaranteed over the going buying/selling rates, people would be convinced that this was the best way to remit money to Kenya. The amalgamated fund gives the government of Kenya, and the CBK specifically, leverage in controlling not only foreign exchange flows but also the value of the Kenyan shilling on the international market.

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<sup>18</sup> The IJO stated that it is encouraging people to return remittances to Kenya through a channelled structure (interview with Dr Onyango, Director, IJO, 2 August 2006).

### Brain drain: Different opinions

Whereas remittances are seen as a positive aspect of international migration, the loss of skilled labour in specific fields such as health, education and engineering is considered a serious setback. According to the Ministry of Planning and National Development, Kenya has had to replace these professionals with expatriates from developed countries – at a very high cost (MPND, 2006). Kenya continues to fund the education of its nationals, only to see them end up contributing to the growth of rich countries, with little or no return on their investment. To show the magnitude of the problem, it costs about US\$40,000 to US\$50,000 to train a doctor, and around US\$25,000 to train a nurse. Gideon Konchella (NDN, 2004), Assistant Minister for Health, estimates the loss to society of an emigrant doctor to be almost US\$518,000 per doctor and about US\$340,000 for a nurse (Kirigia *et al*, 2006). Ann Veneman of UNICEF said that the brain drain of medical professionals is threatening the very existence of sub-Saharan Africa's health services, with the 'push factor' being the underlying cause of the malaise (IRIN, 2006). The Ministry estimates that the country loses on average twenty medical doctors each month.

In sum, the following are the positive and negative effects of brain drain on Kenya's economy: on the negative side, brain drain reduces the already low numbers of skilled people available and needed for development; it reduces the number of innovative people, whether entrepreneurs or academics; it increases dependence on foreign technical assistance; it slows the transfer of technology and widens the gap between Kenya and the industrialised countries of the north; it negatively affects the country's scientific output, and results in a loss of income tax revenue and potential contributions to the GDP. The positive aspects relate to contribution of new skills when migrants return; and remittances from skilled migrants boosting household welfare and supporting the balance of payments.

The Ministry of Planning intends to put in place policies to structure migration – not just to tap remittances but also to address the issue of brain drain, especially with regard to the '2030 vision' and the need for manpower. 'But of now we do not have a specific policy on migration. This ministry should be the coordinating force but it is not. A department of foreign employment looking into human trafficking and agencies would be a good idea.'<sup>19</sup> The Ministry of Labour officials also claim that their department should take the lead in coordinating issues of labour migration. In their view the current situation is one primarily of brain drain and wastage. Kenya lacks a policy for labour migration.

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<sup>19</sup> Interview Ministry of Labour officials, 2 August 2006.

The Ministry of Labour is supposed to vet the terms of employment of Kenyan migrant workers or those in any foreign employment. According to Ministry of Labour officials, this is now being done by the IJO – without reference to the ministry.

The Ministry of Labour is concerned about the negative aspects of out-migration and indicated that they would like to manage this process, to turn it into a ‘brain gain’. In particular, the even temporary return of Kenyan migrants as consultants (‘brain circulation’) was seen to be a promising option. But officials said that it would first be necessary to establish in more detail which sectors in Kenya’s labour force are in deficit. Manpower surveys were last conducted over twenty years ago. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also of the opinion that there is a need for an audit of skilled and unskilled labour in Kenya, to address the gaps and surpluses.

The Ministries of Migration, Planning and Labour all claimed that Kenya does not have any bilateral arrangements with receiving countries, nor any co-development programme that includes Kenyan returnees. The IJO, by contrast, explained that it is trying to secure agreements with Namibia and Sudan.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs blames the lack of a coordinated policy partly on the cross-cutting character of migration. There is need for a mechanism which brings in stakeholders from the government of Kenya, civil society, the private sector and international organisations to deal with the issue.<sup>20</sup> There was also a clear understanding of the limited ability – and, perhaps, the limited will – of the Kenyan authorities to act in this respect. In fact, as mentioned by the Ministry for Immigration officials, ‘the brain drain is not a major government concern, if you get opportunities abroad then just head for these greener pastures, no need to involve the government of Kenya.’ A similar opinion – albeit in a more extreme degree – was aired by the director of the IJO. ‘The word “brain drain” is not in our vocabulary. We do not want to hear about it. We have to create 500,000 jobs per year but these are simply not here. The solution is to go beyond our own borders, especially to the Middle East and southern Africa.’ The IJO claims that brain drain will continue because of better working conditions and pay.

Another advantage of the brain drain, according to IJO, is that employers will be forced to improve working conditions in Kenya. At present Kenya retires its civil servants at 55 years. There are countries that want such civil servants – which reduces the problem of retirees who have no retirement benefits. Expertise that Kenya does not want to lose is contained through the condition put to the applicants to bring along a letter from their Kenyan

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<sup>20</sup> Interview Mr Tom Amolo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 3 August 2006.

employer. This acts as an assurance that the person is of good character, and also allows IJO to deliberately discriminate in the selection if certain qualified persons should not leave the country (see advertisement for jobs in Saudi Arabia for Kenyan medical personnel and quality inspectors, *The Standard* July 31, 2006: 25). Labour officials stated:

IJO does not address labour deficits and only has a focus on exporting surplus labour. There is no integrated approach or coordination of identifying surplus labour, and balancing this with the concern of brain drain. The private sector needs to come together and look for an integrated approach and coordination of labour migration. International organisations also push their own interests and bring their agenda to the table. We also have no policy framework to facilitate compensation for taking away skilled labour from developing countries.

In view of the current state of the Kenyan economy and the high rate of unemployment, the Ministry of Planning does not expect an immediate return of Kenyans abroad.

It may actually be that many more talented, qualified and unemployed Kenyans willing to migrate will continue to seek opportunities abroad, and contribute to nation-building through direct financial remittances or other forms of brain gain. Hopefully, a robust private-public framework that can facilitate productive linkages between Kenyan academics, researchers, artists and investors at home and in the diaspora will emerge to consolidate the political and economic changes taking place in Kenya, as has been the case elsewhere' (MPND, 2006).

### From brain drain to brain gain (the diaspora option)

According to the ECA, strategies attempting to reverse the brain drain include the retention and return of skilled migrants to their countries of origin. However, many African countries have acknowledged that these efforts are not always well organised or effective. For example, the IOM programme to bring back Kenyans was a top-down programme brought to the East African Community when Ugandans (though not many Kenyans and Tanzanians) wanted to return home. 'IOM brings the agenda; we dance their tune'.<sup>21</sup> The diaspora option (as the ECA calls it), which encourages highly-skilled expatriates to contribute their experience to the development of their country without necessarily physically relocating, emerged in the early 1990s as a more realistic strategy to alleviate the consequences of brain drain. There are some forty-one formal expatriate knowledge networks in the world, six of them African, including the Association of Kenyans Abroad.

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<sup>21</sup> Interview Ministry of Labour officials, 2 August 2006.

In February 2003, the African Union called for the diaspora to be considered the sixth region of Africa, after North, South, East, West and Central Africa, while NEPAD wants the establishment of a database to determine the magnitude of brain drain and promote collaboration between Africans abroad and at home. NEPAD has an arrangement to top up salaries of doctors and engineers (Mutume, 2003).

The Ministry of Planning and the Jomo Kenyatta University for Agriculture and Technology organised a conference in 2005 on the topic of brain gain. Among the recommendations put forward was the promotion of circular migration, that is encouraging those living abroad to come back to work for a short period to conduct research and/or support their community. Another way to link with the diaspora is to provide them with the right to vote in their country of origin. Calls have recently again been made to the Kenyan Parliament for this purpose and a positive response is expected. However, according to Ministry of Migration officials, 'If you want to facilitate the return of migrants, build the capacity of countries of origin or transit, to stem movement: facilitate economic empowerment and democracy, democratic institutions and peace.' Ministry of Labour personnel aired similar views: 'The EU holds open arms towards skilled labour from abroad. But unless the root cause is addressed [poverty], you will not stop out-migration. People go to Europe because there are jobs available; otherwise they would not go.'

## Conclusion

Until quite recently, Kenyan government policy documents hardly addressed the issue of migration. At best a few remarks were made regarding the refugee situation of some 250 000 forced migrants who have settled in two main camps in the country. This encampment policy, implemented by UNHCR, was recently relaxed by recognising the status of urban refugees. New legislation concerning refugees in the country, which has been under consideration since the early 1990s, finally seems to be in the making. The growing importance of the migration debate in the country is also illustrated in the recent establishment of a Ministry for Immigration and a new Refugee Department.

Apart from forced migration, attention to issues of brain drain and remittances has recently been increasing. The introduction of an International Jobs Office and new mechanisms to transfer remittances from the Kenyan diaspora back home should be mentioned in this respect. Kenyan officials stressed the necessity to have an institutional and policy framework dealing with migration issues. Nevertheless policymakers have not yet agreed on which policy to implement, in some cases effectively opposing each other, as in the field of out-migration. In particular, qualified people in the fields of education, health and



engineering are needed but are being lost to foreign countries. Kenya will need to deal with this issue as a top priority and harmonise its migration policies, both at home and in collaboration with other countries in the region and beyond.

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 Mr Frank Mwaniki, former chairman Kenya Community Abroad, interview by e-mail, August 9, 2006.  
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 Mrs Grace Otieno, Director Employment, Ministry of Labour and 5 team members, August 2, 2006.  
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## Migration and development in the Philippines

Fabio Baggio

### Introduction

The 2006 UN High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, which engaged ministerial or highest level officials of member states, has greatly contributed to raising international attention regarding the linkage between migration and development in the globalised world. Studies and conferences have proliferated highlighting gaps, identifying best practices, unmasking myths, and uncovering new realities. The aim of this chapter is to assess the development impact of the massive international labour migration in the Philippines. However, before going into further discussion, the author considers it opportune to define the terms of reference: migration, and development.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines migration as ‘A process of moving, either across an international border, or within a state. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, uprooted people, and economic migrants.’ (IOM, 2004: 41). For the purpose of this chapter, the analysis will be limited to international labour migration and emigration for permanent settlement.

Over the last five decades, the definition of development has been the object of vigorous interdisciplinary debate, resulting in a variety of feasible approaches generated by different methodologies and conceptual frameworks in various disciplines: anthropology, economics, political science, and sociology (Trujillo-Mendoza, 2001). The United Nations adopted the definition of development offered by the influential Pakistani economist, Mahbub ul Haq<sup>1</sup>, who was one of the founders of human development theory. According to him:

The basic purpose of development is to enlarge people's choices. In principle, these choices can be infinite and can change over time. People often value achievements that do not show up at all, or not immediately, in income or growth figures: greater access to knowledge, better nutrition and health services, more secure livelihoods, security against crime and physical violence, satisfying leisure hours, political and cultural freedoms and sense of participation in community activities. The objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives. (Haq, <http://hdr.undp.org/hd/>)

Going beyond mere economic understanding of the concept, human development is about enlarging people's choices by means of building human capabilities. This can be achieved by assuring people of the following ideals: 'to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living and to be able to participate in the life of the community.'<sup>2</sup> In this chapter, the author accepts the UN definition of development, stressing its connection with the eight Millennium Development Goals adopted at the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000:

- eradicating extreme hunger and poverty
- achieving universal primary education
- promoting gender equality and empowering women
- reducing child mortality
- improving maternal health
- combating HIV/Aids, malaria and other diseases
- ensuring environmental sustainability
- developing a global partnership for development.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For further information about Mahbub ul Haq see [http://www.un.org.pk/hdc/Tribute per cent20Page.htm](http://www.un.org.pk/hdc/Tribute%20Page.htm).

<sup>2</sup> *What is HD*, at <http://hdr.undp.org/hd/>, accessed 8 August 2006.

<sup>3</sup> See Millennium Project, at <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/goals02.htm#goal1>, accessed 8 August 2006.

### Filipino international migration and permanent settlement

In 2006 the Philippine celebrated a century of international labour migration. It was on 20 December 1906 when the first batch of Filipinos arrived in Honolulu, Hawaii to work in local plantations. However, it was only in the 1970s, due mainly to the impact of the 1973 oil crisis, that the Philippines launched a more organised approach to labour migration (Asis, 2006c). Over the past thirty-five years, millions of Filipinos have left the country to seek greener pastures overseas. Although it is not possible to have precise figures of the stock of the Filipino diaspora, in December 2005 the Commission for Filipinos Overseas (CFO) estimated that 7,924,188 Filipino nationals were living overseas. This figure is slightly less than the 8.1 million estimated in 2004, but it still represents nearly 10 per cent of the national population. Among the major destination countries, the United States led with over 2.5 million Filipino immigrants, followed by Saudi Arabia with almost a million overseas Filipino workers (OFWs). To have a clearer picture of the Filipino diaspora in the world, Table 10.1 offers a breakdown by continent, classifying the overseas Filipino population into three different categories: permanent, temporary and irregular.

*Table 10.1* Stock estimate of overseas Filipinos as at December 2005

Region / Country	Permanent	Temporary	Irregular	Total
World total	3,391,338	3,651,727	881,123	7,924,188
Africa	318	61,525	17,160	79,003
Asia, east & south	186,906	891,088	238,238	1,316,232
Asia, west	2,330	1,565,726	112,750	1,680,806
Europe	211,351	523,442	123,282	858,075
Americas	2,758,067	304,547	357,923	3,420,537
Oceania	232,366	57,692	31,770	321,828
Sea-based workers		247,707		247,707

Source: <http://www.poea.gov.ph/html/statistics.html>

Turning to flow statistics: the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) registered 981,677 Filipinos deployed abroad as legal migrant workers from January to December 2005; but processed employment contracts were over 1.2 million, exceeding the targeted one million by 20.5 per cent (POEA, 2006). Table 10.2 presents the major countries of destination of land-based Filipino workers legally deployed in 2005.

*Table 10.2* Major destinations of land-based overseas Filipino workers, 2005

Country	OFWs	Country	OFWs
Saudi Arabia	193,991	Kuwait	40,248
Hong Kong	94,553	Qatar	31,418
UAE	81,707	Singapore	27,599
Taiwan	46,714	Italy	21,261
Japan	42,586	United Kingdom	16,799

Source: <http://www.poea.gov.ph/html/statistics.html>

Despite the fact that permanent emigrants represent almost 43 per cent of the estimated stock of the overseas Filipinos, in recent years the main outflow has been constituted by migrant workers engaged in the so-called ‘contract worker system’. The 2005 estimate of 881,123 irregular Filipino migrants represents a positive sign considering that the POEA 2004 estimate was over 1.3 million. Nonetheless, it highlights a worrisome phenomenon. Because of their unauthorised situation, irregular migrants are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation (Battistella & Asis, 2003).

Since the 1990s, the Filipino exodus has been more and more marked by the presence of women, who in 2004 constituted 72.1 per cent of all new hires among land-based workers (POEA, 2005). In 2005, 247,707 Filipino seamen were deployed on ships throughout the world, accounting for 25 per cent of all crewmembers working in international vessels. Many more registered Filipino seafarers – some 300,000 – remain unemployed on shore (Bernardi, 2006). As to the occupational distribution of Filipino workers deployed in 2005, the POEA data reveals that 47 per cent of new hires are ultimately employed in skilled sectors, particularly in construction work and factories, while the household sector absorbed 30 per cent of new hires. Professional and technical workers declined by 32 per cent compared with 2004; however, they still represent 22 per cent of the total new hires. Table 10.3 offers a breakdown of the new hires among the Filipino workers deployed in 2005, by selected occupational groups.

### The economic impact of remittances

The economic impact of the Filipino diaspora in terms of remittances cannot be ignored. In 2005, overseas Filipinos remitted through legal channels about 10.7 billion US dollars, which stimulated the country’s economic growth for the period. This figure marked an increase of 25 per cent over the \$8.6 billion recorded in 2004. The top ten sources of remittances in 2005 were: United

*Table 10.3* Deployed overseas Filipino workers – new hires\* – by selected occupation groups, 2005

Occupational groups	2005	2004	% change
<i>Professional and technical related workers</i>	63,941	94,147	-32.1
Teachers	789	542	45.6
Nursing Personnel	674	323	108.7
Engineers Civil	625	492	27.0
Others	61,853	92,790	-33.4
<i>Skilled Workers</i>	133,420	123,525	8.0
Construction workers	30,078	22,039	36.5
Factory Workers	39,477	25,486	54.9
Others	63,865	76,000	-16.0
<i>Household and related workers</i>	85,088	62,890	32.3
<i>Other skills</i>	1,836	1,250	46.9
<b>Total new hires</b>	<b>284,285**</b>	<b>281,812</b>	<b>0.9</b>

Source: POEA, 2006

\* Data does not include workers who exited through international exit points in the regions (i.e. outside Metro Manila).

\*\* Data includes workers who exited through employment-based immigration schemes.

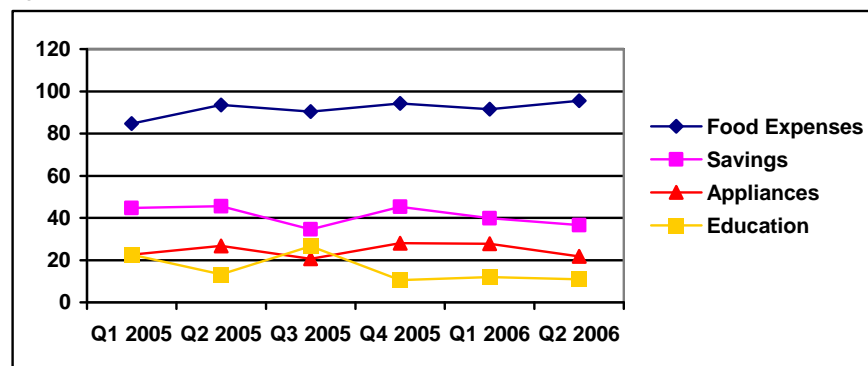
States (US\$6.42 billion), Saudi Arabia (US\$949.37 million), Italy (US\$430.07 million), Japan (US\$356.66 million), Hong Kong (US\$338.89 million), United Kingdom (US\$300.72 million), United Arab Emirates (US\$257.43 million), Singapore (US\$240.15 million), Germany (US\$134.80 million) and Canada (US\$117.06 million). In past years, it was generally assumed that 50 per cent of overseas Filipino remittances were conveyed through informal channels. However, a recent study revealed that 80 per cent of Filipino migrants use now formal channels to send their remittances (ADB, 2004). While one should recognise the substantial role remittances play in propping up the gross national product (GNP) in the Philippines, it seems that there is no concrete evidence that such huge inflows have significantly improved the domestic economy in recent years.

A report presented to the Economic Planning Office of the Senate of the Philippines at the end of 2005 stated that remittances have huge development potential for the national economy (Canlas, 2005). According to this report, remittances may contribute to the balance of payments, raise the national income, increase the country's credit-worthiness, enhance access to international capital markets, multiply opportunities for greater savings mobilisation (if conveyed through legal channels), help improve the domestic economy (if invested in the home country), increase household incomes and welfare, improve the per capita gross domestic product (GDP), and reduce poverty. On the other hand, the report acknowledged the risks of a remittance-dependent economy. Firstly, such an economy may develop a culture of dependence

among families left behind. Moreover, it may incline the national government to complacency in instituting fiscal and trade policies. Also, while inflows of foreign currencies may strengthen the local currency, they may also jeopardise earnings from the export of goods, which would appear more expensive to overseas buyers. Concerns were raised also regarding the use of overseas-earned money by migrant families, based on perceptions that only a small portion of remittances seems to be saved or invested properly. The report finally questioned the overall gains of labour migration since it is not clear if the economic benefits compensate for investments in human capital formation.

At the microeconomic level, the positive effects of remittances on the financial situations and welfare of families left behind cannot be denied. Recent studies have highlighted that overseas-earned money is instrumental in improving the material conditions of migrant families, particularly concerning the ownership of houses and consumer durables (Asis, 2006a). Yang's (2004) research on the impact of remittances on migrants' households in the Philippines found that the recipients learned used these resources for crucial investments such as education and entrepreneurial activities. Such optimism is, however, not fully confirmed by the Consumer Expectations Survey undertaken by the *Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas* (Central Bank of the Philippines) in Metro Manila for the second quarter of 2006. The findings of this survey showed that migrant families spent their remittances primarily on food and other household needs. Nonetheless, 40 per cent of households indicated that they had allotted part of the remittances for savings. According to the survey, only 10.9 per cent of migrant families used overseas-earned money in education and the same percentage assigned some portion of remittances to 'productive' investment (BSP, 2006). Figure 10.1 indicates how migrant households in Metro Manila

Figure 10.1 Household utilisation of overseas remittances: Q1 2005 – Q2 2006



Source: Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), Consumers' Outlook Improves in the Second Quarter of 2006 and One Year Ahead, 2006



used remittances for the period January 2005 to June 2006. One of the much-debated issues about remittances is the extent to which they are used for 'productive investments,' which are typically viewed in terms of allocations for economic purposes such as purchasing stocks and setting up or investing in business enterprises.

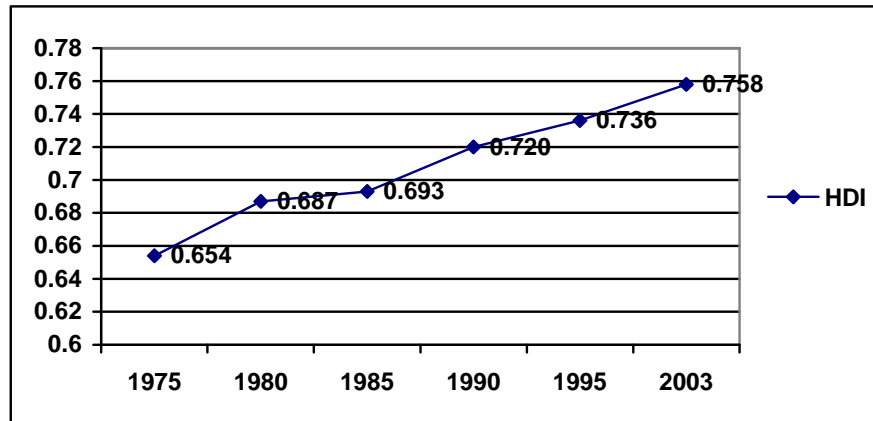
It is also important to consider what migrant families perceive as investment. Well-rooted in the Filipino cultural tradition, house construction and the education of children are considered productive investments by migrants and their families (Asis, 2006b). Measuring remittances must also take into account the investments that migrants and their families pour into the migration project. Going abroad to work entails expenses; particularly the placement or transaction fees that migrants must pay to recruitment agencies and/or brokers. Findings from studies and surveys have not yet identified what portion of remittances migrants actually allot to pay loans and debts contracted before their deployment, but rough empirical data lead the author to assume that Filipino migrants have, at least initially, a hard time paying back the money they borrowed from banks or from relatives to pay the exorbitant recruitment fees and other expenses related to their deployment. This is indeed another crucial element to be considered in future researches on the impact of remittances on migrants' families.

### Human development in the Philippines

The assessment of the development impact of migration in the Philippines should start from the consideration of various development indicators. To fulfil this task, the author made use of the Human Development Index (HDI) elaborated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and other complementary indicators. The HDI is a universal tool for measuring the overall achievements of a nation-state in three basic dimensions of human development: longevity (life expectancy), knowledge (educational attainment) and 'decent standard of living' (adjusted per capita income in purchasing power parity in US dollars). In the latest *Human Development Report* published by the UNDP in 2005, the Philippines ranked 84<sup>th</sup> among 177 countries, an honourable middle position in the international scenario, but still far from the 'medium human development', fixed in the 57<sup>th</sup> position (UNDP, 2005). In 2003, the Philippine HDI was 0.758, marking a slow but steady improvement since 1975 (0.654). Nonetheless, one should note that the Philippines had slipped from the 2001 HDI ranking of 70<sup>th</sup> out of 162 (UNDP, 2001).

The contributions of the three components to the 2003 HDI were not even. While the Philippines was 66<sup>th</sup> in terms of education index, it ranked 103<sup>rd</sup> in the

Figure 10.2 Philippine HDI, 1975-2003



Source: UNDP, 2005: 224

GDP index. Between 1997 and 2000, real per capita income in the Philippines declined from P27,896 to P26,881, and recovered slightly to P27,442 in 2003 (Human Development Network, 2005). In effect, this slight improvement concerned only forty Philippine provinces, while thirty-seven other provinces registered a deterioration in the GDP index. Metro Manila's per capita income declined 14.4 per cent from 2000 to 2003. In the special sorting referring to Gender-related Development Index (GDI), the Philippines ranked 63<sup>rd</sup> with a value of 0.755, marking a minimal improvement from the value of 0.746 registered in 2001.

Turning to other complementary indicators, the poverty incidence in the Philippines went up from 25.1 per cent in 1997 to 27.5 per cent in 2000, before declining to 25.7 per cent in 2003. The recent improvement affected only forty-five provinces, while the poverty incidence increased in thirty-two provinces (Human Development Network, 2005). According to the Philippine Labor Force Survey (LFS) undertaken by the National Statistical Office (NSO) in January 2006, the unemployment rate was 8.1 per cent, marking a noticeable improvement compared with the 11.3 per cent registered in January 2005. Nonetheless, the 2006 figure is still higher than the 7.7 per cent recorded in January 1997. The same survey recorded the January 2006 underemployment rate at 21.4, marking a significant increase compared with the 16.1 per cent for the same month in 2005. Nonetheless, the 2006 rate is very similar to the 21.1 per cent registered in 1997 (NSO, 2006). It should be noted that in 2003 a major change in the LFS calculation methodology was implemented; therefore, the

2004, 2005 and 2006 findings are not easily comparable with the previous ones.<sup>4</sup> Recent surveys applying the Gini ratio<sup>5</sup> to measure income inequality revealed that in the Philippines the gap increased progressively from 42.7 in 1997 to 42.9 in 2000, and to 43.8 in 2003. Other analysis adopting different indicators confirmed this trend (Human Development Network, 2005). In conclusion, the slight progress in human development achieved by the Philippines in recent years cannot be considered satisfactory.

As far as the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals is concerned, the performance of the Philippines has been adjudged outstanding in the realms of universal primary education, the promotion of gender equality, the empowerment of women, the reduction of child mortality and the fight against HIV/Aids, malaria and other diseases. As regards the eradication of extreme hunger and poverty and the improvement of maternal health, the Philippines is far from attaining its targets, and is slipping backwards in the area of environmental sustainability (ESCAP, 2005).

Looking at the reality within the Philippines, most of the indicators highlighted disparities between the provinces, which appeared to be a chronic national problem. In 2003, the provinces of Luzon (National Capital Region, Benguet, Laguna, Batanes, Rizal, Cavite, Nueva Vizcaya, Pampanga and Bulacan) were the front runners in the HDI rankings. In contrast, seven provinces in Mindanao (Sulu, Maguindanao, Tawi Tawi, Basilan, Zamboanga del Norte, Sarangani and Lanao del Sur of the Mindanao region) and three in the Visayas (Masbate, Western Samar, Eastern Samar) registered the lowest HDI rankings. To cite an example, Metro Manila's HDI of 0.793 is twice as high as Sulu's 0.301 (Human Development Network, 2005).

Over the more than thirty years of massive labour migration, it appears, generally, that the different indicators of development do not show marked improvements. The data presented do not allow us to make conclusions about a causal link between labour migration and development. They may, however, suggest some possible associations between the two. For example, the invest-

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<sup>4</sup> 'Starting [with the] July 2003 round of the Labor Force Survey (LFS), the generation of the labor force and employment statistics has adopted the 2003 Master Sample (MS) Design. Using this new master sample design, the number of samples increased from 41,000 to around 51,000 sample households. Careful evaluation must be made in comparing the results of the 2003 and 2004 LFS with other LFS results prior to the implementation of the new MS design.'

<http://www.census.gov.ph/data/pressrelease/2005/of04tx.html>

<sup>5</sup> Formulated by the Italian statistician Corrado Gini in 1912, the Gini coefficient is the ratio of the area between a Lorenz curve and the 45-degree line to the area of the triangle below the 45-degree line. The ratio '0' represents perfect equality. See <http://www.foldvary.net/works/ineq.html>.

ment of migrant families in health and education might have contributed to the slight improvement in the life expectancy and education attainment indexes. The almost unchanged rate of unemployment – from 1997 to 2006 – reveals that overseas employment has not notably contributed to improving the country's employment rate. Related to this, it should be mentioned that over sixty per cent of the 2005 land-based deployments were re-hires, i.e. migrant workers who were on their second (or higher) contracts (POEA, 2006). Also, many of those who leave for overseas employment are employed at home before they leave.

Though remittances buoy up the economic growth, the billions of dollars poured into the country have not clearly increased productivity. They have enhanced the purchasing power of migrant households, but have not contributed to improving the per capita income, reducing poverty incidence, or narrowing income inequality at the national level. A 2002 study concluded that migration even enhanced inequality in the country (Go, 2002). On the negative side, migration might have added to the chronic disparity among regions, since, according to the 2000 census, over 60 per cent of Filipino migrants originated from Luzon provinces (Ericta, 2003) and it is likely that their remittances would favour their home localities.

### Enhancing the benefits: Best practices and gaps

The development impact of international migration can and should be mobilised through the participation of all stakeholders, namely the Philippine government, international organisations and civil society. Some good examples have already been set and deserve special mention. From the government side, the Commission for Filipinos Overseas (CFO) is the agency mandated to assist the executive and legislative departments in the formulation of national migration policies. The Commission, established in 1980, is also committed to nurturing ties with overseas Filipino communities. To foster the sense of national belonging in the younger generations of overseas Filipinos, CFO has, since 1983, implemented a special programme titled *Lakbay Aral* (Travel Study). A similar programme, *Lakbayan sa Pilipinas* (Travel in the Philippines), is offered to adults. The Commission is also actively involved in promoting the sharing of resources by Filipinos overseas, especially in terms of knowledge, technology and capital transfer. To further this aim, CFO has, since 1989, developed a programme called LINKAPIL or *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* (Service to Fellow Filipinos). Details of this programme are offered on CFO's website:

The *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* (LINKAPIL) Programme or Link for Philippine Development seeks a broader and deeper partnership between overseas Filipinos and Filipinos on the home country, based on a common desire to promote the collective good of people and contribute to national development. Conceptualised by CFO in

1989, LINKAPIL was developed as a mechanism to tap the potentials of overseas Filipinos to support education, health and welfare, livelihood, and small-infrastructure projects. Assistance through the LINKAPIL Programme may be monetary or in-kind, in the form of donations, grants or subsidies. (<http://www.cfo.gov.ph/linkapil.htm>)

To support LINKAPIL, CFO developed another programme, PHILNEED or *Philippine Sectoral Development and Needs Profiling System*. This programme features various projects from provincial and local government units and NGOs in response to identified Minimum Basic Needs (MBN), and offers them to overseas donors. In 2004, LINKAPIL and PHILNEED were able to raise 2.5 million US dollars for local projects. The Washington-based Filipino charity Feed the Hungry was the top donor in the same year (Powers, 2006). With the aim of promoting the investment of overseas Filipinos' capital in the Philippines, in 2004 CFO published the *Investment and Business Guide for Overseas Filipinos*.<sup>6</sup>

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), established in 1977, is the government agency tasked with upholding the interests and welfare of Filipino migrant workers and their families; it implements special assistance programmes both in the Philippines and abroad. OWWA is the main agency responsible for the development of reintegration programmes for returnees. In recent years, the focus of such programmes has been the social reintegration of returned OFWs, providing them with assistance in coping with psychological difficulties they may encounter on their return home. The programmes are implemented in coordination with local governments and NGOs. There are also two other programmes aiming to support OFWs and their families in their entrepreneurial spirit: the OFW Grocery Programme, which offers loans of up to 50,000 Philippine pesos to start a grocery store or a drugstore, and the Livelihood Development Programme for OFWs, with loanable amounts from 200,000 to 1 million Philippine pesos for entrepreneurial initiatives promoted by OWWA's members or their families. However, a complex application process and strict eligibility rules have jeopardised the success of both initiatives. New positive developments have, however, been prompted by the recent massive repatriation of OFWs from Lebanon.<sup>7</sup>

From the civil society side, the Ayala Foundation USA, established in 2000, provides a mechanism for US-based Filipino migrants to fund projects in their home country. Like CFO, the Foundation is committed to matching offers of assistance by overseas Filipinos and to projects that need resources in the

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<sup>6</sup> See *Filipino Ties*, May-August 2004, Vol. XI, No. 2: 1.

<sup>7</sup> See *PGMA outlines reintegration plan for returning OFWs from Lebanon*, at <http://www.gov.ph/news/?i=15803>, accessed 14 August 2006.

Philippines. The Foundation also provides continuous monitoring of these projects and regularly updates donors regarding developments. In 2005, the Ayala Foundation USA disbursed almost half a million US dollars' worth of projects in the Philippines (Powers, 2006). According to the Philippine Diaspora Portal ([www.filipinodiyoragiving.org](http://www.filipinodiyoragiving.org)), there are at least 129 overseas organisations involved in so-called diaspora philanthropy in the Philippines. The great majority of them are based in North America.

Some Philippine NGOs actively promote migrants' savings and investment to support small enterprises: among others the Unlad Kabayan Migrant Services Foundation, Atikha, and the Economic Resource Center for Overseas Filipinos (ERCOF) (Asis, 2006a). The Episcopal Commission for Migrants and Itinerant People (ECMI) of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines recently initiated two programmes to promote financial literacy among migrant families and to give reintegration assistance to returned migrants. The Development Action for Women Network (DAWN) runs a programme which provides alternative livelihoods to Philippine women who have worked as entertainers in Japan.<sup>8</sup>

There are supposedly some thousands of Filipino migrants' associations all over the world, spanning a variety of purposes and objectives. Their solidarity with Philippine concerns is highly visible in times of natural disaster or during critical periods in the Philippines. Initial studies that have been done on the general subject of overseas Filipinos engagement with the home country suggest that many more may be involved in supporting development projects. Some of these organisations have formed regional and national networks such as the Solidarity Philippines Australia Network (<http://cpcabrisbane.org/>) and the Philippine European Solidarity Centre (<http://www.philsol.nl/>).

As regards knowledge exchange, the Philippine government does not have a policy of encouraging knowledge exchange from skilled migrants, but a few initiatives have been initiated by professional associations or individuals (ADB, 2005). For example, the Brain Gain Network, started in 1992, is an online facility which aims to involve talented professionals and students in the Philippines and overseas in increasing the global competitiveness of the Philippine high-technology economy (<http://www.bgn.org/bgn/>).

To date, there are still many gaps in enhancing the beneficial impact of migration on development in the Philippines. From the government side, the programmes implemented by the various agencies are very limited, not inter-linked, difficult to access, and mostly focused on solidarity contributions

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<sup>8</sup> See *Alternative Livelihood*, at <http://www.dawnphil.org/livelihood.htm>, accessed 14 August 2006.

proceeding from overseas Filipino communities. The development potential of remittances and the advantages of knowledge exchange do not seem to be a priority on the Philippine government agenda.

International organisations dealing with migration issues (IOM, ILO, UNDP, etc.) have not been very visible in promoting discussion on the migration-development nexus in the Philippines. The UN High Level Dialogue invited attention to this topic, and will hopefully produce some good results in the near future. From the civil society side, a lack of resources and coordination seem to constitute the main gaps. Moreover, the positive impact of diaspora philanthropy is limited to some provinces (migrants' provinces) which can contribute to overall disparity among regions. There is a need for more research and further studies on the migration-development nexus – a deeper involvement of academe in the field.

### Minimising costs: Best practices and gaps

Another way of enhancing the benefits of international labour migration is to minimise its costs. It should be recognised that many sectors of Philippine society have contributed to this objective, some of which we now discuss.

The Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995 was passed with its aim being 'to institute the policies of overseas employment and establish a higher standard of protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers, their families and overseas Filipinos in distress' (Republic Act 8042). In 2003, the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act was passed, aiming to eradicate trafficking in persons (especially women and children), to penalise all violations and to grant protection and support to trafficked persons (see Republic Act 9208). To enhance the active participation of overseas Filipinos in domestic politics, the Overseas Absentee Voting Act (Republic Act 9189) and the Citizenship Retention and Re-acquisition Act of 2003 (Republic Act 9225) were passed in 2003. Moreover, the Philippines has signed and ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, and signed ILO conventions C97 and C143.

On the implementation side, four specific government offices are mandated to promote the welfare of Filipino migrants. POEA is actively engaged in monitoring respect of national labour standards, and curbing illegal recruitment. OWWA organises pre-departure orientation seminars (PDOS) and offers special assistance programmes to families left behind. CFO tenders education and counselling programmes for immigrants and Filipinos marrying foreign nationals. The fourth is the Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs (OUMWA), established within the Department of Foreign Affairs, to provide legal assistance to Filipino migrants.

International organisations are also contributing their share. The IOM has produced some educational resources for migrants. IOM Philippines also assists Filipino immigrants bound for Canada and Australia with special orientation programmes ([www.iom.org.ph/](http://www.iom.org.ph/)). The International Labour Organization (ILO) has been instrumental in the ratification of the above-mentioned ILO conventions on migrant workers. Moreover, over the last two years, the ILO Manila Office has engaged in a special project aiming to uphold the protection of the household sector – both in the Philippines and overseas.

In the Philippines, civil society groups have traditionally been very proactive in minimising the costs of migrations. In recent years, three big networks of different inspirations have been actively campaigning for migrants' rights: the Philippines Migrants Rights Watch, the Migrant Forum in Asia, and Migrante. More than fifty Philippine foundations and NGOs are devoted primarily to the welfare of Filipino migrants and their families, implementing a vast range of direct-service programmes. Several religious groups have also engaged in assisting troubled migrants, and children and spouses left behind. The Catholic Church has set up a network of 'migrant desks' nationwide to inform, assist, educate and protect migrants and aspiring migrants and their families. It should be noted that there is a tradition of fruitful partnership between the Philippine government and civil society groups in the provision of many of the services mentioned above. Based on the initiative of some NGOs, in 2001 the Consultative Council on Overseas Filipino Workers (CCOFW) was officially established. It is a forum of government and migrant advocates who discuss and clarify policy issues and concerns of OFWs and their families. After a promising start, there were some problems because of disagreements between the NGO community and government agencies over some policy questions. Hopefully, this impasse will be resolved soon.

Despite the array of initiatives from the different sectors, there are significant gaps to consider. The Philippine legal framework for the protection of migrant workers is indeed one of the best in Asia, but there are chronic problems at the implementation level, since the rule of law is generally fragile. Illegal recruitment, irregularities, exploitation, abuses and even human trafficking are still part of the daily experience of many overseas Filipino workers. The Philippine government's strong reliance on foreign employment has frequently led it to concede to the labour conditions imposed by receiving countries – at the expense of migrants' rights. The admirable initiatives undertaken by the different agencies are seldom coordinated, resulting in avoidable overlapping of activities and endeavours. Moreover, such initiatives are rarely based on scientific research. A comprehensive and empirically-based assessment of the social costs of migration in the Philippines has yet to be undertaken.



The response to the brain drain phenomenon and to the increasing exodus of professionals (especially in the health sector) is largely inadequate. The evident loss of human resources for sustainable nation-building should be effectively addressed. In minimising the costs of migration, the role of international organisations is vital, since they are engaged in promoting a regional and global understanding of the phenomenon. In this regard, there is not much insistence on the need for transnational co-responsibility in the governance of international migration. Moreover, international organisations are not very proactive in advancing cooperation among the different stakeholders. As to civil society sector, a quick assessment of the many good initiatives shows a lack of coordination and sometimes ‘competition’ in service provision. Inspired by different ideologies, NGOs have to overcome partisanship to cooperate and work together.

### Some policy recommendations

To conclude the discussion, the author would like to highlight the lessons for African countries which can be drawn from the Philippine experience. There are indeed some feasible policy recommendations addressed to the different stakeholders in the countries of origin.

#### *To policy makers:*

- As Asis (2006b) noted recently, the examples of Taiwan and the Republic of Korea may help the Philippines in shaping its development policies. Despite significant outflows of people before the 1980s, remittances have not been a major driver in the home country’s economic development. While there could be economic benefits from international labour migration, to generate real and sustainable development, the policy makers of the countries of origin should focus on building a strong and vibrant domestic economy.
- The Philippine emigration policy is often proposed as an effective model to other countries of origin, including African countries. Nevertheless, the author is convinced that an international labour deployment strategy cannot substitute for a long term plan to reduce unemployment through the generation of domestic jobs. Within such a plan, remittances and skills of overseas workers, if properly valued and channelled, could contribute to increasing job opportunities in the country. The government has a critical role to play in creating a sound economic and political environment.
- Despite the increasing interest of professional researchers on the matter, the long-term impact of Philippine international labour migration, as far as benefits and costs are concerned, is still uncertain. In Africa, such assessment has not yet begun. Policy makers should seek the cooperation of

academe in developing better and more proactive migration policies and in promoting (as well as supporting) more research and further studies on the different migration-related issues. The constitution of a permanent think-tank could be a fruitful initiative.

- The establishment of four government agencies to assist, support and protect Filipino migrants and their families reveals the real concern of Philippine policy-makers towards the current exodus of nationals. While the author emphasises that more coordination among the various Philippine government agencies dealing with migrants is strongly required – through the establishment of an inter-agency committee responsible for designing and implementing good migration policies – the good example of the Philippines should be followed by other countries of migrant origin.
- The idea of offering PDOS to departing migrants is undoubtedly opportune and wise. It has to be recognised that the Philippine government took an enlightened decision in initiating such a project in the 1970s, and in involving NGOs as PDOS providers. The partnership between Philippine government agencies and NGOs in PDOS provision should be catalogued as a ‘best practice’ which can be presented as a model for other sending countries.
- At the institutional level, the CCOFW represents a natural venue for the government agencies and NGOs committed to the welfare of migrants and their families, to shape and assess the implementation of the different programmes. Similar mechanisms assuring regular cooperation between governments and NGOs should be enacted by all countries of origin.

*To international organisations:*

- International organisations should be more proactive in their essential role as mediators or bridge-builders among nation-states, in the pursuit of co-responsibility in the governance of migration, and in building transnational solidarity in promoting sustainable development and the welfare of migrant workers. They should also assist national governments in the formulation of good migration policies and denounce human rights’ violations abuses.
- International organisations should promote dialogue between government, academe and civil society for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of migration, and for developing more effective responses to the opportunities and dilemmas that it poses. They should also provide support for facilitating the exchange of knowledge, training and resources to enhance the benefits and minimise the costs of international labour migration.

*To civil society:*

- In addition to responding to gaps in services and in the protection of migrants’ rights, NGOs should never lose sight of the long-term responses to

the challenges posed by the complex migration-development nexus. The elimination of the root causes of migration and the promotion of human development should be always part of their agenda.

- Going beyond their ideological divide, civil society groups should better coordinate their advocacy and service provision among themselves, with government agencies, and with other relevant organisations. To ground their endeavours with evidence-based analysis, they should foster links with academe. Regional and international networking may be the key to success.

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## The new heroes and heroines of North America: Remittances and local development in Mexico

Marianne Marchand

### Introduction

In this chapter<sup>1</sup> I wish to focus on the complexities of migration and how it is a highly gendered process and related to development, or – to speak in an out-dated language of the 1970s – ‘maldevelopment or underdevelopment’. What I intend to present is the ways, often contradictory, in which migrants are being portrayed and the discrepancies with the everyday realities of migrants and their families.

As the topic is highly politicised, especially in the United States and Europe, and – in reality – not less so in Mexico, I want to define from the outset what

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter has been written as part of the research project Apizaco y Huamantla: Estudio comparativo entre comunidades expulsoras de migrantes. Modelo para el análisis de las causas e implicaciones de los flujos migratorios para solucionar la falta de desarrollo sustentable social en la región Apizaco and Huamantla: A comparative study of migrant sending communities. A model for the analysis of the causes and implications of migrant flows in order to remedy the lack of socially sustainable development in the region, financed by el Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (CONACYT) and the state government of Tlaxcala.

the scope of this chapter will be. I am less interested in current debates on migrants in the US, which tend to focus on issues such as the attempt to construct a wall all along the southern border of the US, the portrayal of migrants as possible terrorists, and discussions around a ‘guest worker’ agreement. I have commented on these issues in other contexts. The main argument presented here is that the government of Mexico – in its role as a sending state – and the international community, have constructed a discourse about migrants and their potential role in (local) development which is problematic and contradictory.

Some of the information for this chapter has been taken from my ongoing research project about the implications of migration for one of the non-traditional sending regions of Mexico. The project focuses on the implications of migration for local or community level development and incorporates a gender perspective.

I focus here on a few key concepts or terms: migration-development nexus, transnational communities, and remittances. The chapter is divided into three parts: background, i.e. migration and (lack of) development; the state, and changing discourses on migrants, and related discourses by international organisations on remittances and development; and, finally, lived realities in local communities.

### Migration and (lack of) development

Mexico is a country that for a long time has been sending migrants to the United States, a practice that can be traced back to the nineteenth century. The Mexican–US border reflects a very interesting but complex set of interrelationships. One defining moment in the construction of this border was the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) through which Mexico ceded half of its territory to the United States. From that moment onward Mexicans living in the ceded territories<sup>2</sup> automatically became American subjects and in most cases US citizens. However, despite the Mexican-American war which preceded the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, no border controls were enforced until much later – in the 1920s. And very few statistics are available to provide reliable information about the extent of Mexican migration to the United States during this early period.

The US government’s relative neglect of its southern border changed with the Great Depression. As Joseph Nevins comments:

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<sup>2</sup> In particular, Mexicans living in what have since become the states of California, New Mexico and Texas. Arizona was mostly populated by American Indians.

The onset of the Great Depression of 1929 greatly changed the parameters of the debate as restrictionist sentiment further intensified, with organizations ranging from the American Federation of Labour to the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars leading the charge. Mass deportations of people of Mexican origin ensued, often using methods that even a 1932 U.S. government commission characterized as ‘unconstitutional, tyrannic and oppressive.’ According to one study, U.S. authorities forcibly expelled an estimated 415,000 Mexicans between 1929 and 1935, with another 85,000 leaving ‘voluntarily,’ usually under intense pressure from local authorities. (2002: 33)

After these massive deportations, Mexican migration to the US reduced significantly. It was not until the introduction of the famous *bracero* (manual labourer) programme in 1942 that a steady flow of Mexican migrants started up again. The *bracero* programme was initiated because of the increased need of American employers, mostly in the agricultural sector, for manual labour. As many young Americans were being drafted into the army and sent abroad as part of the war effort, manual labour was really scarce. The *bracero* programme was terminated in 1964, in part because of increasing opposition from organised labour and from religious groups, and also because mechanisation in the agricultural sector had decreased the need for pickers (Nevins, 2002). According to Jorge Durand and Douglas Massey, the *bracero* programme can be seen as the first contemporary period of Mexican migration to the US. After it ended we see a second period of – undocumented – migration which ended with the adoption of the Simpson-Rodini Act in 1986 (Durand & Massey, 2003).

Both through the *bracero* programme and as undocumented workers, many Mexicans, primarily male, from the north-western part of the country (Jalisco, Guanajuato, Zacatecas, Michoacan) came to the US as temporary workers, to be employed in agriculture. And, although the *bracero* programme was terminated, Mexican workers kept on going to the US, because of the ever-increasing demand for cheap labour, continuing developmental problems in the Mexican countryside and, increasingly, because migration was becoming a way of living. Much of the migration was circular: people would return home after while to see their family, celebrate the community’s patron saint or to work their land back home. After a while they would return to work in the US. However, from the 1970s onward, people also start to settle in the US – which has brought an increasing flow of women migrants and children, for reasons of family reunification

Reliable statistics about the extent of Mexican migration to the US are difficult to find, in part because so many Mexicans cross the border undocumented and are therefore not registered by the immigration authorities. In addition, many undocumented Mexicans lie about their status when census authorities interview them. However, academics in both Mexico and the US

have done extensive research into migration flows since the late 1960s, their composition, origin, changes and continuities.<sup>3</sup>

Table 11.1 presents some data concerning Mexican migration to the US. It should be noted that the information for the first five periods has been taken from Durand *et al.* (2001) and for the year 2000 from Durand & Massey (2003), which explains some of the discrepancies. The most important information that can be gleaned from these statistics is the change in region of origin, especially between 1992 and 2000 (rather than percentage changes). It is important to note that the surveys asked Mexican migrants whether they were going to the US in order to work. This therefore does not take into consideration those people, mostly women, who intended to cross for reasons of family reunification.

*Table 11.1* Mexicans migrating to look for work in the United States, by region and sex (%)

Year of departure	1970-1974	1975-1979	1980-1984	1985-1989	1990-1992	2000
Region of origin						
Historic	47.8	57.4	56.1	49.5	48.8	50.5
Border	33.7	26.3	27.4	24.8	29.7	10.8
Centre	17.0	13.8	15.2	24.6	19.8	31.7
Periphery (SE)	1.5	2.4	1.3	1.3	1.1	7.09
Sex						
Male	77.3	81.7	81.7	82.3	87.4	n/a
Female	22.7	18.3	18.3	17.7	12.6	n/a

Sources: Durand *et al.*, 2001; Durand & Massey, 2003

According to the United States census of 2000, about nine million Mexicans, born in Mexico, are living in the US, and about 20 million Hispanics in the US are of Mexican descent, which is 58.5 per cent of all Hispanics in the country (Durand & Massey, 2003: 56). This makes Hispanics of Mexican origin or descent the largest minority in the US.

With the 1986 Simpson-Rodini Act (commonly known as the Immigration Reform and Control Act, or IRCA), the tendency toward family reunification has only been reinforced – many Mexicans take advantage of the amnesty provision under IRCA to regulate their status in the US and have family members join them.

However, around the same time – and one could argue that the Simpson-Rodini Act is an exponent of this – US policy toward its southern border started

<sup>3</sup> Two extensive academic projects are the Encuesta sobre Migración a la Frontera Norte (EMIF) administered by the Colegio de Frontera Norte, Tijuana, and the bi-national Mexican Migration Project, under the co-directorship of Jorge Durand (Universidad de Guadalajara) and Douglas Massey (Princeton University). See Durand & Massey (2003) for more information about the problems related to statistics on Mexican migration (63–70).



to become stricter. From the mid 1980s onward, and especially since the early 1990s, increased attention has been focused on keeping migrants out: Operation Gatekeeper (San Diego area) and Operation Hold the Line (El Paso area) are two well known examples. Both were initiatives by local authorities to stem the tide of migrants flooding across the border. In the face of what the media tended to portray as a crisis of illegal Mexicans coming into the US, the Border Patrol in the El Paso area (Texas) reacted in 1993 with a policy of blocking people from crossing the border – through increased deployment of border patrol officers and the use of high tech surveillance equipment – instead of apprehending them once they had crossed the Rio Grande. This example was followed a year later in the San Diego area (California), where local authorities started with the construction of a wall<sup>4</sup> along the border and, as in Texas, the installation of high tech surveillance equipment (Nevins, 2002: 63-94). Taken together, these measures implied a securitisation of the border, with several negative side effects.

What these increased controls accomplished was not so much reducing the flow of Mexican migrants entering the US, but rather ensuring that once they crossed they would stay for extended periods of time, because circular migration would increasingly become too costly and too risky. In addition, the hardening of the border also meant that more and more migrants needed to rely on *polleros* (traffickers) or *coyotes* (smugglers) in order to cross the border. This is when we can witness the onset of an increasingly professionalised ‘migration industry’ (Castles & Miller 2003: 114-115). According to Castles & Miller ‘this term embraces the many people who earn their livelihood by organising migratory movements as travel agents, labour recruiters, brokers, interpreters, and housing agents’ (114).

In other words, measures to keep migrants out are not necessarily stopping the northward flow of migrants. Such flows are rather the result of a set of related macro-structures (structural forces) or so-called push and pull factors: an increasing demand for cheap labour on the pull side, and economic crisis and concomitant structural adjustment policies on the push side. However, as already mentioned, migration is a complex phenomenon and structural explanations alone do not provide the entire picture. Other factors influencing the nature of migration flows – their direction, composition and so on – include the existence of transnational social networks, a culture of migration, and expectations among migrants and their families in both sending and receiving states regarding the future as far as living conditions are concerned.

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<sup>4</sup> Most of the materials used for the construction of the wall were recycled from the first Gulf War.

Since the mid-1990s significant changes have occurred in patterns of Mexican migration to the US, in part due to the peso crisis of 1995, and also to the effects of trade liberalisation on the Mexican countryside. The restructuring of the Mexican political economy started with the introduction of structural adjustment policies to deal with Mexico's debt crisis of 1982. The implementation of neoliberal economic policies and the concomitant deregulation, privatisation and liberalisation of its economy culminated in the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994. In part, this economic restructuring has seriously affected small farmers in Mexico, who are unable to compete with products imported from the US, such as beans and corn (maize), which have been their traditional staples.

As a result to the profound economic crisis, non-traditional sending regions, such as the states of Hidalgo, Puebla, Tlaxcala, and Veracruz, and metropolitan areas, in particular Mexico City, have, since the mid-1990s, started to see a significant part of their population migrating to the United States. And, because of changes in the US economy, migrants not only found jobs in the agricultural sector, but also in the service sector, in the construction and meat-packing industries, as well as in gardening and landscaping. At the same time the average level of education of migrants was increasing, especially among migrants from urban areas.

Since the early 1990s a global transformation has been taking place, which is reflected in Mexican migration flows to the US. It concerns the feminisation of migration. In addition to these specific changes in Mexican-US migration, (Ramírez, Domínguez & Morais, 2005). According to a recent INSTRAW<sup>5</sup> report by Ramírez *et al.*, entitled *Crossing Borders: Remittances, Gender and Development* (2005), the feminisation of migration can be traced to a crisis in the reproductive model in both sending and receiving states. Sending states have tended to suffer from structural adjustment policies affecting the livelihoods of poor families, which has not only brought about a decline in small and medium businesses (the source of many jobs) but has also caused unemployment for many men who could no longer perform the role of 'breadwinner'. Many of these men have, however, shied away from their reproductive responsibilities<sup>6</sup> rather than take on non-remunerated reproductive tasks, thus leaving women to provide for the family and take on the role of de facto household head (Ramírez *et al.*, 2005).

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<sup>5</sup> United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, located in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

<sup>6</sup> Responsibilities which encompass so-called care tasks aimed at ensuring the continuing and future existence of households and communities.

In receiving states another reproductive crisis has occurred, due to several factors: an aging population, women joining the labour market, and insufficient public provision for the care of dependents. This has resulted in what sometimes is referred to as the 'transfer of care', with

those households with more resources contracting women, who are probably migrants, in order to externalize part of the work. Unresolved gender tensions within developed countries are thus being addressed through the transfer of gender and ethnic inequalities between women. (Ramírez *et al.*, 2005: 9)

The ones who are losing most by the existence of the 'global care chain'<sup>7</sup> are the children of migrant women who are left in the care of aunts and grandmothers (Ehrenreich & Hochschild 2003; Sørensen 2005).

It is estimated that about half of all migrants worldwide are now women<sup>8</sup> and that their percentage is increasing more rapidly than that of men. In the Mexican-US context this is also the case; and, although evidence is scarce, the percentage of women who are migrating independently is on the rise as well.

Clearly, migration is a development issue as mal-development (or under-development) is one of the major reasons for households deciding that one or more of its members need to migrate as part of a survival strategy. However, it should also be emphasised that migrants tend not to come from the most vulnerable or marginalised sectors of society: one needs substantial resources in order to migrate, especially to pay for the journey (Andreas, 2000: 109; Nevins, 2002: 124). It is in this context that migrant social networks are invaluable: they tend to reduce costs and risks, and help migrants getting settled and finding a job.

### The state, international organisations, remittances and local development

Over the years, the Mexican government's discourse on migrants has changed significantly. For a long time, migration was an issue not discussed openly (no formal public policies) by Mexican governments, although the exodus of Mexicans northwards was seen as an important 'safety valve' to alleviate possible social tensions because of a lack of economic development – in particular the lack of sufficient jobs to accommodate a young and increasing population.

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<sup>7</sup> A series of personal links between people across the globe, based on the paid (or sometimes unpaid) work of caring for the children of other people.

<sup>8</sup> In the case of Mexican women, the gap between numbers of male and female migrants started to close with the implementation of IRCA, mostly because of family reunification. However, in the case of migrants coming from non-traditional sending regions, migration is still dominantly male. There are some suggestions (not yet substantiated) that one of the effects of the changes in US migration policies since 9–11 is a reduction in female migration.

Formally, however respective governments did not broach the issue with their counterparts in the United States. At the same time, migrants were seen by the government and by a large portion of the public in general, as ‘traitors of the nation’. This portrayal was based on the nationalistic idea that migrants were not fully supporting the (developmental) project of nation-state building, and that they were choosing instead to join the US, Mexico’s ‘enemy’ since 1848.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the attitude of the Mexican government started to change. Firstly, various politicians began to look north for political support. The first Mexican politician to approach Mexican migrants in the US was Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas. As the most important opposition presidential candidate, Cárdenas understood the need to look for political support outside Mexico’s PRI-dominated<sup>9</sup> authoritarian system. Campaigning in the US among the Mexican community assured him of many votes<sup>10</sup> during the elections of 1988. Even today many people believe that he received more votes than the PRI candidate, and that Carlos Salinas de Gortari became president as result of electoral fraud. With subsequent elections, the practice of campaigning in the US became ever more widespread. One could argue that this was the beginning of a ‘rapprochement’ between Mexican political elites and migrants living ‘*al otro lado*’ (on the other side).

From the early to mid-1990s such practices were copied by the government when it embarked upon a relatively coordinated strategy – known as ‘transnationalism from above’ – for reaching migrant communities and organisations in the US (Portes *et al.*, 2003). For example, president Ernesto Zedillo followed in the footsteps of his predecessor Carlos Salinas and adopted legislation permitting Mexicans to hold dual nationality, which was intended to strengthen and formalise ties of belonging to the Mexican nation for those living in the US.

The interest in migrants and migrant communities culminated with the presidency of Vicente Fox (2000–2006), who called migrants ‘heroes’ in his inaugural address. Under his presidency the State has been most active and systematic in its attempts to establish close relations with Mexicans abroad. Initiatives by the Fox government have included a range of measures, for instance the Secretary of Foreign Relations created El Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior (IME – the Institute for Mexicans Abroad) in order to have a formal, institutional structure to stay connected to Mexican hometown associations (HTAs).

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<sup>9</sup> Partido Revolucionario Institucional, the ‘Institutional Revolutionary Party’, which was in power – under a succession of names – for seventy years, until its defeat in 2000.

<sup>10</sup> The strategy was to convince Mexicans in the US that they should contact their family members back in Mexico and persuade them to vote for Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas. The idea behind this strategy was that Mexicans living in the US would be much more critical of the PRI and remain outside of its cooptation practices.

The general format used is that HTAs are represented in the IME and provide a sounding board for policies of possible interest to them, for instance, the IME helped to pave the way for adopting legislation allowing Mexicans abroad to vote in the presidential elections of July 2006. This legislation was adopted in the face of strong opposition by the three main parties which feared that migrants' electoral preferences would differ significantly from those of the general population. As the 2006 presidential elections demonstrated, very few migrants took the trouble of registering and casting their vote, especially since bureaucratic procedures were extremely cumbersome and time-consuming.

Another measure was the establishment of the now famous *Programa Ciudadana 3 × 1* (*3 × 1 Programme*) to channel collective remittances into infrastructural projects. This programme was started in the early 1990s as a state-level initiative in Zacatecas, as the *2 × 1 (Dos por Uno)* programme. The general tenet of the *3 × 1 (Tres por Uno)* programme is that the three levels of government (local, state and federal) will match dollars collectively remitted for a local development project. The next section discusses in more detail the effects of the *3 × 1* programme on local communities.

Finally, the Mexican State has been active in trying to improve conditions for migrants sending remittances home to their family members. One such measure was the adoption and improvement of the '*matricula consular*' (consular ID), so that undocumented Mexicans in the US would have some form of identification. This is now being accepted by an increasing number of banks in the US for opening an account. In addition, the state has exerted pressure on the banking system to lower transfer costs related to remittances. The result of these two measures is an increasing number of migrants using the formal banking system to remit their dollars.

The question one might ask here is why this change in attitude by the Mexican government or, rather, its representatives? Without going into depth, it can be said that there are two main reasons: one political and one economic. Starting with Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas in 1988, Mexican political leaders became aware of the political potential of migrants – primarily in terms of their influence on family members still living in Mexico and their negative attitude toward the ruling party, the PRI. It is, therefore, opposition politicians in particular who seek migrants' political support, at both federal and state levels.

Migrants also became economically interesting to the government because their remittances constitute a major source of foreign currency, and because they represent a potential outlet for (national) products – the so-called nostalgic market. It is this economic dimension which has received much attention in recent years from the international community. An important galvanising point for this was the Monterrey Consensus of March 2002.

During the International Conference on Financing for Development (Monterrey 18–22 March 2002) it was established that remittances by migrants could be (and should therefore be targeted as an important source of development financing. Although the Monterrey Consensus suggests the facilitation of migrant workers' remittances as just one measure among many, in its aftermath a record number of international organisations, government agencies and international non-governmental organisations have identified remittances as potentially one of the most important alternatives for financing development.<sup>11</sup> To this end, numerous studies, workshops, expert meetings and conferences have been organised to consider the development potential of migrant workers' remittances.<sup>12</sup> When one takes a closer look, there are a number of commonalities among the different reports by international organisations such as the World Bank, IMF, IADB, ILO, and OECD (see footnote). In other words, a discursive consensus appears to have been constructed around some central tenets, which in the case of Mexico strengthens the state's discourse.

The central tenets of this discursive consensus on remittances are as follows:

- remittances help to stabilise and improve the macro-economic situation of the receiving country, for example by increasing national income and foreign currency reserves, helping stabilise the balance of payments, supporting entrepreneurial activities, stimulating savings, and creating more demand for local goods and services (Ratha, 2003; Ramírez *et al.*, 2005: 16);
- remittances are more stable than other sources of external financing such as foreign direct investment (FDI) and official development assistance (ODA), in particular because they are counter-cyclical (Ramírez *et al.*, 2005);
- remittances have become the second most important source of development financing for many countries;
- remittances are a very efficient form of poverty reduction as they reach the poor directly and help to circumvent corrupt government officials.

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<sup>11</sup> These include international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the International Monetary Fund; organisations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM); various United Nations sections such as INSTRAW and Sistema Economico and Latinoamericano (SELA); governmental organisations (USAID, DFID, NORAD), and INGOs such as the Inter-American Dialogue. For a good cross section of organisations interested in migrant remittances, see participants at the International Conference on Migrant Remittances held in London in October 2003 ([http://www.livelihoods.org/hot\\_topics/docs/RemitConfFinal](http://www.livelihoods.org/hot_topics/docs/RemitConfFinal)).

<sup>12</sup> To get an idea of the amount of information available on remittances: a Google search for the term remittances yields approximately 1,980,000 results (February 2006).

Next to these positive dimensions of remittances most analyses do recognise the complexities involved, as well as their potentially negative impact. Remittances are said to increase the demand for and consumption of imported goods, to cause inflation, increase inequality, raise the costs of land and housing, provoke dependency, and to discourage the search for other income-generating activities. It is also said that international migration drains the available labour force, an instability that consequently discourages foreign investment (Ramírez *et al.*, 2005: 16-17).

In general, the discourses of sending states – and now increasingly also receiving states interested in codevelopment schemes – and those of the international community (particularly of international organisations) have tended to reinforce one another in two ways: in the identification of migrants' remittances as an important, stable and alternative source for financing development, and in terms of economistic bias. Such discourses have become a very powerful source for defining policies on the topic and delimiting their scope. As their focus tends to be narrowly economic and financial, critiques have started to emerge suggesting that remittances involve a complicated set of interpersonal relationships and are not merely economic in nature. In other words, non-monetary social remittances, including ideas, images and discourses have tended, until recently, to be ignored (Ramírez *et al.*, 2005: 22-23).

Another critique suggests that gender dimensions have so far mostly been absent in discussions about remittances. The earlier-mentioned INSTRAW report suggests that current policies on remittances tend to be gender-blind. As the authors of the report suggest, remittances are 'inserted into social, economic and political contexts that are rooted in patriarchal ideology and organised around the sexual division of labour. Therefore, each one of these elements influences and is influenced by the different roles that each society attributes to men and women' (2005: 28). One possible reason for this oversight is that discourses on remittances have emanated primarily from those sectors of the international community – international financial institutions (IFIs) in particular, as well as economic and financial ministries – which tend to be concerned with economic and financial issues and have been notoriously resistant to incorporating a gender-sensitive approach (O'Brien *et al.*, 2000).

So, despite an extensive body of literature on gender and development, in discussions about the nexus between remittances and development, there has been almost complete silence on the gender dimensions of development. Recently this gap has been challenged by civil society and international organisations focusing on gender issues (Suárez & Zapata Martelo, 2004; Ramírez *et al.*, 2005). Their contributions reveal that adopting a gender perspective involves asking a set of questions which reveal the social embeddedness of remittances and their 'gender differences operating at the macro and micro-

structural levels' (Ramírez *et al.*, 2005: 21). Issues which need to be raised include:

- who is sending and who receiving remittances?
- with what frequency are remittances received?
- what amount is received?
- how is this affecting household and gender dynamics at sending and receiving ends?
- what are the transnational family dynamics and how are remittances affecting those?
- who decides on 'spending patterns' or the use of remittances?

These are questions that may reveal the gender-related nature of remittances and their differential gender impact. However, these questions focus primarily on so-called familial remittances, which indeed constitute over ninety per cent of remittances sent by migrants. They do not address the gendered dimensions of collective (including productive) remittances which, as we have seen, are strongly promoted by governments and international organisations alike. As part of our research project into the effects of remittances on local communities and their (lack of) development, we have included the gendered dimensions of the nexus between micro and macro-structures, in particular the (discursive) framing of who is the migrant, who receives the money, and how decisions about how remittances are to be used are being made – at both intra-household and collective levels. In the next section I provide some preliminary research results.

### Discursive framing of remittances' development potential versus lived realities

The state of Tlaxcala is, together with Nayarit, one of the smallest states in Mexico. It has about one million inhabitants and is located in the central-eastern part of the country. Tlaxcala is in the bottom third of the nation in terms of GDP per capita, inequality and poverty. In terms of its Human Development Index (HDI) and its Gender-related Development Index (GDI), Tlaxcala is ranked between 20 and 25 out of 32 states, although its performance on the HDI is better than its GDP. Huamantla and Apizaco, the two municipalities in which we have been doing field research, by and large reflect these statistics. These *municipios* were chosen because of their respectively more rural and more urban character, which permits a comparison with respect to the migration-development nexus.

In terms of international migration, Tlaxcala is one of the recent-sending states. It has, however, been a sending state for internal migration since the



1950s: both men and women migrated to Mexico City, and to other relatively nearby urban areas such as Puebla. Women, especially those residing in the western part of the state have been involved in migration on a daily or multiple day migration since the early 1970s – mostly to sell food in Mexico City or San Martín Texmelucan (a large regional market, located on the border between Puebla and Tlaxcala). Also, Tlaxcala has been one of the states which have sent most temporary workers to Canada. Since 1996 Tlaxcaltecas have made up between 18 and 23 per cent of Mexican temporary workers in Canada (Vanegas García, 2004: 12).

Although Tlaxcala follows the general pattern of most sending states, there are a few ways in which it departs from the norm. Most important in this respect is the dispersion of migration flows: Tlaxcaltecas are migrating to a large number of different states in the US, although there are marked concentrations: in particular from Pilares to the Los Angeles area, and from Morelos to Houston, as people take advantage of established social networks. Because international migration from Mexico is still rather recent, the ratio of male to female migrants is high, although women are now migrating with their partners, or to join them – as part of family reunification strategy – as well as independently. Another important difference has already been mentioned: Tlaxcala is still one of the top three states sending migrants to Canada.

We have also found, from our field research, that within the same *municipio* there can be significant differences in disposition to migrate – one can find one community with a high incidence of migration, and an adjacent one with barely any. It appears that some of the reasons for this can include the economic specialisation of the community in question, as well as how it may have been affected by recent politico-economic changes – in particular globalisation, and the effects of NAFTA on the Mexican countryside.

While most people interviewed indicated that their family members migrated for economic reasons, the surveys done at some of the secondary schools also show the onset of a culture of migration (Kandel & Massey, 2002). A minority of students indicated that they were interested in migrating because they wanted to get to know other countries (both the US and various European countries were mentioned), or for the ‘adventure’. The majority suggested, however, that their decision to migrate in the future would be related to economic reasons: to provide for their family, to build a house, or to buy certain luxury goods. Overall, girls tended to be more hesitant about migrating than boys were, in particular because they perceived it to be a hazardous enterprise.

The remittances that migrants from Tlaxcala send home vary, but it appears that most families receive between 50 and 150 US dollars per month, with peak periods around Mother’s Day and during the December holiday. People interviewed also suggested that these remittances constitute around 15 per cent of

the household income, and that (as part of the household income) most of the remittances help to pay primarily for sustenance (31%), health (19%), home construction or maintenance (19%) and education (15%).

In response to the question of whether or not migration is beneficial for the family, many of the people interviewed suggested that it is both beneficial and harmful: beneficial because the family tends to be better off economically due to the remittances they are receiving, and harmful because the family is being broken up. Quite a few mothers suggested that their children were showing signs of depression<sup>13</sup> or profound sadness with their fathers being away for long periods of time. This scenario is obviously worse for children whose parents have both migrated to the United States.

The effects of migration on local communities go beyond separated families and psychological effects on both migrants and family members who stay behind. Our research confirms the existence of social problems found in other studies of migrant-sending communities (Smith, 2006 ; Marchand, 2006). These include the creation of so-called ghost-towns where only children, women and senior citizens are living. Moreover, the inequality between families with migrants and those without is a serious problem and a source of tension within communities. As most migrants and their families tend to invest in the construction or improvement of their homes, the difference between haves and have-nots is translated to the physical environment and made very visible (Binford *et al.*, 2004; Cordero Díaz, 2006).

All the factors mentioned briefly above seriously affect the possibility of using remittances for local development projects. First of all, many migrants are really only interested in helping their own families, and the sacrifices they and their families make are done in order to improve their living conditions. In other words, migrants and their family members are in general not interested in making such sacrifices for the entire community. Moreover, social tensions within local communities created because of migration tend to prevent the development of social capital. (The question here is what comes first: lack of social capital as a stimulus for migration, or vice versa?) At any rate, our research has shown that most migrants and their families are not very interested in collective remittances, and if they were to spend some of their remittances on collective projects most of it would go to the local church.

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<sup>13</sup> This is of course not a clinical diagnosis.

### The 3 × 1 Programme and lived realities in local communities

As suggested earlier, there has been significant publicity around the development potential of remittances, in particular since the Monterrey summit of 2002. As far as remittances are concerned, the Mexican government has been a prominent and active player, as well as a frontrunner among sending states in developing co-financing or co-development schemes.<sup>14</sup> As has already been explained, in 2001, under the presidency of Vicente Fox, the Mexican government appropriated a co-financing scheme which had already been implemented at the local level in Zacatecas State (as *Programa 2 × 1*), and started *Programa Ciudadana 3 × 1*. This co-financing or co-development programme entails a matching funds scheme under which, for each dollar invested by migrants, the local municipality, the state, and the federal government, each invest one dollar as well.

The 3 × 1 Programme is generally praised for its innovativeness and is used as an example which should be followed by other sending states. However, a closer look reveals that some fundamental issues need to be resolved. These range from social and ethical concerns to the economic viability of using remittances to finance development projects.

As suggested earlier, very little consideration has been given to non-economic remittances. This is also true for *Programa 3 × 1*. The focus of the programme is on financing infrastructural projects, while other dimensions of development are neglected. However, for the programme to work well, more attention needs to be paid to these non-economic issues. There are, however, some serious ethical problems that the Mexican government needs to overcome. One of the comments made by people we interviewed is that they distrust the authorities and are not very interested in cooperating with the government. In the next excerpt, which contains many colloquial expressions, a migrant is complaining about the attitude of migration officials at the border who are looking for a bribe:

With all that, I tell you, the authorities in Ciudad Juárez a border town, across from El Paso, when one crosses the border over there – with your permission – what assholes! And it makes me sad and angry at the same time because we are among Mexicans. As I told them, well if you treat me like this, while being a *paisano* a Mexican living abroad and visiting the country, imagine how they treat a person from El Salvador, how you treat a Guatamalan? What kind of money they will take from him? ...

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<sup>14</sup> Most discussions about co-development concentrate on projects which are co-financed between receiving states and migrant organisations. Examples include Spain and France. In the Mexican-US context, the US government has not shown any interest in co-development schemes, although the Mexican State has.

But you can be assured that if I, for example, because I like a dress for the virgin over there in the US, when I cross the border they are going to say to me: 'Hey, why are you bringing that?' 'Well, I am bringing it for myself.' 'Well, you know that will cost you so much in taxes?' So, how are we going to do it organise? How are we going to unite, eh? Too bad we are the United States of Mexico, it is really the other way around he is referring to the 'Disunited States of Mexico'. How are we going to unite? Really, all the borders are like that (Marchand, 2006: 71, our own translation).

This mistrust is the result of repeated experiences in dealing with corrupt and paternalistic officials, but is also related to a more fundamental problem: people are angry with the state because it has failed to provide the necessary means, or create a supportive environment, for them to build a decent life in their communities in Mexico. For that reason migrants are very reluctant to enter into co-financing projects with the government. In the state of Zacatecas where the 3 × 1 Programme is supposed to work successfully, just over 1 per cent of total remittances are being spent on community projects. The remainder is still familial in nature.

Another issue is that most discourses on migration and remittances are still gender-biased. This is also the case for the 3 × 1 Programme. Although its objectives stipulate the inclusion of a gender-sensitive focus, in practice this is not the case. From the agenda-setting stage to the formulation and implementation stage there is very little, if any, evidence of gender-mainstreaming. No attempt is being made to include gender experts in the process or to distinguish between possible target groups (women and men; male and female adolescents). Moreover, priorities for 3 × 1 projects are being set by the government, and primarily involve infrastructural works such as installing a water pump, paving roads, and building a clinic or school. In the formulation of these projects no attention is given to future maintenance (who is responsible, and who pays?— including who is to pay for medical personnel or teachers), nor is it made clear to the people in the community that they will – for example – have to pay for water and electricity once a pump has been installed. This tendency by the state to prioritise infrastructural projects raises another ethical issue: should the state not be held responsible for infrastructure? And, if so, is the use of migrants' remittances not unethical (Marchand, 2006)?

A third problem with the 3 × 1 Programme is that it does not necessarily correspond either with the needs of people in the community or with the objectives of migrant organisations based in the US. A number of the people we interviewed were interested in productive projects which would help them increase their household income. And, although there are now some productive projects funded by the 3 × 1 Programme, they are still a minority and, even when geared toward income-generating projects, mostly tend to increase substantially the workload of those involved, who are primarily women.

Finally, there are some fundamental economic issues to consider. It has been argued that remittances are counter-cyclical and a reliable, long-term source for financing development. However, this assumption presupposes that migrants continue to be willing to send remittances to their communities of origin and that this willingness will be transferred to second generation migrants. This assumption is untenable, as many reports and scholarly contributions have shown: second generation migrants are interested in building their lives in the receiving country and are hence reluctant to engage in a long-term commitment toward the communities of origin of their parents (Portes, 2004). Thus, for remittances to be a reliable long-term source for financing development projects, a continuing flow of migrants from countries in the South is needed. And this is precisely what receiving countries are trying to curb, through co-development schemes!

Another economic problem is that, as part of the ‘remittance hype’, sending states have started to use remittances as collateral for loans on international capital markets – a practice accepted by these markets. The idea is that if the sending state defaults, remittance flows can be used to partially cover the interest (and principal) payments. Of course, this would entail the implementation of restrictive monetary and convertibility policies, to allow the channelling of remittances toward such purposes. Something that is not being taken into consideration, however, is that remittances are in origin *private* funds, controlled by citizens residing outside the country. Therefore, any policy negatively affecting the transfer of money through formal channels, such as banks and money transfer agencies, will very likely result in a deviation of the remitting of such funds into informal channels. This was the practice of many migrants until a few years ago and involved sending money back with a family member or a trusted member of the community, or bringing it themselves when visiting the family during patron saint’s fiestas or holidays.

## Conclusions

To put things into perspective: remittances have become a survival strategy for many households in poor countries and are likely to be an important form of poverty alleviation for individual households in the foreseeable future. However, any long-term planning in terms of development financing by sending or receiving states will have to take into consideration the economic, political and social dimensions of remittances, as well as their ethical and economic limitations. In the end we are talking about migrants’ hard-earned money for which they and their families have made many sacrifices.

What lessons then can be learned from the analysis in this chapter? First of all it is important to understand the multidimensionality and complexities of the

migration-development nexus. When significant migration flows are starting to emerge, as in the case of Tlaxcala, people tend to migrate due to a lack of opportunity – usually generated by mal- or under-development. Later on such flows may persist due to the evolution of a culture of migration, when it has become part of peoples' life cycles, especially in the case of young men. Clearly the different conditions under which people decide to migrate require different policy interventions by governments.

In the case of migration being a household survival strategy, remittances become a very important element in improving the socio-economic situation of family members who stay behind. As our research shows, a significant part of remittances is being used for consumption, and a lesser amount for construction or home improvement. If migrants are successful enough to send large amounts of money home, people will consider additional options, such as savings, setting up a small business, or organising fiestas for the local church's patron saint.

Given this situation, to what extent can remittances be used to finance local development projects, as sending states (as well, sometimes, as receiving states) and international financial organisations are suggesting? As the chapter has revealed, this will not be easy. For one thing, remittances are private funds earned by migrants and they will use them according to their own priorities – in which providing for the family takes first place. Additionally, states and international organisations tend to have priorities different from those of migrants, sometimes resulting in a situation where migrants increasingly mistrust state authorities whom they fear will 'steal' their hard-earned money.

States and international organisations will need to face these realities and deal with them in a transparent and inclusive manner. For instance, migrants and their families in sending communities need to be involved in all stages of the formulation of development projects and have a real say, or even a veto, in the matter. It should also be made transparent, through a clear identification and involvement of all stakeholders, whose priorities will be honoured in each case, and how compromises could be forged. Mexico's 3 × 1 Programme does not comply with such basic requirements since it still gives preference to state priorities and provides very little space to negotiate any compromise which might incorporate, at least partially, the priorities of the migrants, their families or other stakeholders in the communities of origin. The programme's non-inclusion of differentiated priorities according to gender affects in particular the stakeholders in the country of origin, most of whom are women.

Many migrants use part of their remittances to set up a small shop, restaurant or a workshop when they return to their community of origin. Unfortunately, such investments are often not very profitable and many of these little micro- or small enterprises end up being closed down, thus resulting in the loss of the money invested. It is precisely in this area that the state can (and should) play a

key role, through providing technical advice and support in terms of how to formulate, design and implement a viable, productive project. Such a role may be more modest than envisioned by the authorities, but may well result in a better or more efficient use of remittances and foster practicable small-scale local development.

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# Migration, diaspora and development: The case of the People's Republic of China

Maggi Leung

## Introduction

Since China adopted its reform and opening up policy in the late 1970s, overseas Chinese and foreigners of Chinese origin have played an *irreplaceable* role in China's efforts to exchange and cooperate with foreign countries, introduce large amounts of overseas funds, enter the international market, and sell home-made goods to different parts of the world.

Li Ruihuan, former Chairman of the 9th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, made the above remarks in 2001 to welcome delegations from the overseas Chinese communities. Indeed, no observer would argue against the fact that overseas Chinese investment in the People's Republic of China (hereafter 'China') has been one of the most crucial impetuses for its breathtaking economic growth over the past three decades. This chapter provides a discussion on the contribution of 'overseas Chinese' in the economic development in China over this time period. An analysis of this development – sometimes referred to as 'diaspora-led development' – illustrates the importance of the Chinese state in shaping the nature and pattern of the development process.

The chapter begins by giving the historical background of Chinese international migration, and the relationship between the Chinese state and the diaspora. An analysis of the magnitude and pattern of investment by overseas Chinese in recent decades follows. Illustrations highlight the role of the state as an active agent in wooing the financial, social and human capital ‘stored in the diaspora’. The chapter concludes with some policy suggestions that might help in tackling the challenges of out-migration.

### International migration of Chinese people

Chinese people have been involved in international migration for centuries.<sup>1</sup> As early as the tenth century, maritime traders began to settle in the outlying posts of their trade empire throughout Southeast Asia. The Chinese diaspora is composed of individuals, families, and whole communities who have decided, or have been compelled, to move to other places, for a wide variety of reasons. These movements are estimated to have involved some 36 million persons (Government Information Office, Republic of China, 2004). It is however necessary to note that a significant proportion of the Chinese diaspora are people who were born outside China and Taiwan – members of families which have been established overseas, often for several generations. They are therefore, strictly speaking, not Chinese migrants.

Migration from China has been a geographically diverse phenomenon. The coastal provinces Guangdong, Fujian and Zhejiang have been the major sources of Chinese migrants, though out-migration has also become more common from other provinces in recent years. Spatial concentration is again found in some counties and villages in these provinces, which are known as *qiaoxiang*, literally ‘sojourner’s villages’ – a Chinese term denoting areas where a substantial number of inhabitants either have had experiences of migrating abroad or have family members overseas. In the Chinese case, the geography of out-migration has had a great impact on the geography of diaspora-led development; I shall return to this point in a latter section in the chapter.

It was not until the mid-nineteenth century, when European influence intensified in China, that Chinese people began to move overseas in large numbers. Between 1868 and 1939, some 6.3 million Chinese were estimated to have departed from Hong Kong alone, and considerable numbers also began their journey in Xiamen (in Fujian) and Shantou (in Guangdong). These migrants were predominately men going overseas to work as indentured labourers or so-

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<sup>1</sup> My discussion here focuses on the migration of Chinese people from China. For a more detailed account of the migration of ethnic Chinese people from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Southeast Asia, refer to Pan (1999).

called coolies. Others migrated more independently to seek their fortunes in the gold mines on the west coast of North America, as well as in Australia and New Zealand. When the Communist Party rose to power, over a million people, mainly supporters of the defeated Nationalist Party, fled to Taiwan. Also during that period about the same number of migrants went to Hong Kong, followed by a continuous flow over the subsequent three decades. Out-migration was, however, strictly controlled soon after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949.

With the onset of economic reform in China in the late 1970s, control over population movement was also relaxed. From the mid-1990s, significant numbers of Chinese have migrated to different parts of the world, for various purposes and for different lengths of time. The movement of low-skilled migrants on short-term labour contracts continues to be important in the migration system. Such labour movement is mostly regulated by central or provincial government units. By the middle of 2005, some 547,000 Chinese workers were working on contracts overseas. And over the previous two decades, 3345 million Chinese workers had served in well over a hundred countries or economies. According to the Ministry of Commerce, China's foreign labour cooperation had generated a turnover of US\$2.85 billion in the first eight months of 2005, representing an annual increase of 31.6 per cent.

The major destinations for Chinese contract workers have been Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Macau, Hong Kong and Taiwan, Algeria, Russia, Mauritius, Jordan, Israel and the United Arab Emirates. These workers are mainly engaged in the manufacturing, construction, farming, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery, communications and transportation sectors, as well as in catering and service (People's Daily Online, 2005).

As regards non-contract based migration, the contemporary migration system displays a new spatial pattern. Southeast Asia has ceased to be popular; the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and, increasingly, Europe have become the preferred destinations. In addition, current Chinese migration is demographically characterised by a more balanced sex ratio. Students and skilled workers represent an increasingly important subset of migrants from China. Depending on immigration policies and job market situations in the destination countries, some of these students and guest workers might eventually become longer-term or permanent migrants.

Some Chinese migrants also move in irregular conditions. These migrants are either smuggled into the destination country or overstay after the expiry of valid temporary visas. The majority of those smuggled are young men, and a high proportion of these irregular migrants come from Fujian. The province's long tradition of migration, the availability of information and networks, and the

ability of its residents to pay the substantial fees charged by smugglers help explain the prevalence of the phenomenon in this area (Skeldon, 2000).

### The Chinese state and the diaspora

The relationship between the Chinese motherland and the diaspora has changed tremendously over the past two centuries. In the nineteenth century, migrants were officially considered to be deserters, traitors, rebels and conspirators. Nevertheless, by the end of the century, imperial Qing administrators recognised the potential economic and technological potential of 'modern Westernised' overseas Chinese, thus granting them a more favourable position. Towards the end of the imperial era, political actors from different backgrounds competed for the support of China's overseas communities. The importance of financial and moral support from overseas Chinese in ending the imperial era prompted Sun Yat-sen, 'Father of the modern China', to dub them 'Mother of the 1911 Revolution'. Overseas Chinese invested and donated significant sums in post-1911 China, both in their ancestral areas (mainly in south-eastern China) and in urban centres such as Shanghai. Overseas Chinese nationalism and transfer of investment and other financial support reached its climax during the Japanese invasion of China in the 1930s and 1940s.

The establishment of the People's Republic in 1949 brought some drastic changes to the relationship between the Chinese homeland and its diaspora. On the one hand, continuity remained in Taiwan where the nationalist government sustained its overseas Chinese policy; on the other hand, the Communist government was less consistent in its views on the diaspora. The Anti-Rightist Campaign in 1957 marked the beginning of the prosecution of individuals with overseas contacts, who were viewed as bourgeoisie and agents of imperialism, thus class enemies. Returned overseas Chinese were considered as traitors linked to foreign conspiracies and were harshly discriminated against during the Cultural Revolution. Overseas Chinese relations officially came to a halt at the end of the 1960s.

The adoption of economic reform in 1978 marked a new era for comradeship between the Chinese state and the diaspora. Deng Xiaoping was forward-looking in recognising that overseas Chinese represented a 'unique opportunity' for China's development and therefore gave instructions that they be invited to invest in the country. Deng particularly welcomed and trusted overseas Chinese investors as they were now perceived as patriots who wished to contribute to the development of the socialist motherland, as opposed to investors from non-Chinese backgrounds, who were seen as only profit-seeking (Deng, 1983). Subsequent Chinese leaders have maintained this positive attitude towards overseas Chinese capitalists and professionals. Current President Hu Jintao

reiterated the importance of overseas Chinese in China's modernisation and reunification processes (Xinhua, 2004).

### Diaspora and development in China

As is the case in many other diasporas, the Chinese diaspora has contributed to the national development of China by bringing in financial, human and social capital for various development efforts of their home communities or of the national economy at large.<sup>2</sup> This chapter focuses on diaspora-led or diaspora-enhanced economic development in China, providing a more comprehensive discussion on the financial capital offered by overseas Chinese. It is however important to note that the different types of capital are often mutually constitutive and should not be considered as unrelated. I shall now discuss the contribution made by overseas Chinese to various aspects of the economy, namely (i) financial capital (ii) trade partners (iii) input for economic reform and (iv) functioning as bridges and 'cultural adaptors'.

#### *Financial capital*

Capital flow can be broadly divided into remittances and investment. It is, however, often difficult to separate the two clearly, since remittances can also be used for investment. Remittance has been an important means of livelihood for migrants' families and communities ever since Chinese people began to work overseas. This is especially true for the *qiaoxiang*. Even during the Cold War, the flow of remittances from overseas Chinese continued, and financed the bulk of the trade deficit experienced by the new communist China. Nowadays, remittances remain an important and most reliable source of income for many families in the traditional migrant-sending communities in Fujian, Guangdong and Zhejiang Provinces, and increasingly in Jilin, Liaoning, Heilongjiang, Shandong and Hebei Provinces, and in Tianjin. According to the World Bank (2006), China received US\$21.3 billion in remittances in 2004, making it the second-highest receiver of remittances in the world after India (US\$21.7 billion). While it is difficult to generalise the impact of remittances, for many migrant families they are crucial in sending children to school, paying for health care and meeting basic consumption needs – similar to the cases in many other developing countries. For better-off households, remittances may provide capital for small businesses and entrepreneurial activities. In addition to remittances directly transferred to families and kin, overseas Chinese have also been

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<sup>2</sup> Diasporas also contribute to the political and cultural changes in their homeland. It is, however, beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss these aspects in any detail.

important an source of funds for disaster relief and for social development in regions outside of the migrants' ancestral villages.

In addition to sending remittances, overseas Chinese have also long been investors in China. Between the nineteenth century and 1949, overseas Chinese contributed to a total financial flow of about US\$128.74 million (based on the US dollar value in 1937) (Lin, 1988: 53). Guangdong and Fujian (the two main migrant-sending provinces) and Shanghai (not a notable source of migrants but an attractive location for foreign investment) were the destinations of the largest volume of such investment. Even during the early years of communist China, the Chinese state did not cut the ties with these potential 'patriotic investors'. Overseas Chinese Investment Corporations were established in the 1950s to draw their investment. Although the corporations guaranteed annual dividends, China's communist political orientation put off most investors (Pan 1999) – a good example of how overseas Chinese do not invest in China simply because of their ethnicity. It was not until the adoption of the Open Door Policy that the political-economic environment became conducive to the 'patriotic' act of investment 'back home'.

Foreign investment has been important for China's economic reform, to overcome the shortage of domestic funds, especially at the beginning of the reform period. In addition, such investment is valued as a means of readjusting China's management practice, improving the economy's productivity and competitiveness, creating job opportunities, and increasing exports in exchange for foreign currencies. Overseas Chinese capitalists were among the pioneer foreign investors venturing into China.

The exact amount of overseas Chinese investment is however not known. Estimations can vary considerably, depending on how investments from Hong Kong are categorised, and the assumptions made regarding the magnitude of 'round-tripping' of Chinese capital (the return of capital that had 'gone abroad' to escape foreign exchange controls). Cheng (2004) estimates that 70 to 80 per cent of foreign direct investment (FDI) to China since 1978 originated from overseas Chinese investors (including investment from Hong Kong). According to the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (2006), among all the overseas-funded projects registered in China by the end of 2005, 45.9 per cent were tied to Hong Kong interests. Utilised capital inflow from Hong Kong amounted to US\$259.5 billion, accounting for 41.7 per cent of the national total.

Table 12.1 shows the major origins of cumulative FDI in China from 1979 to 2005. The data are, however, difficult to interpret. For example, much of the financial capital coming into the country from the Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands and Western Samoa tax havens is believed to have originated mainly from investors in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Southeast Asia – and increasingly so. Similarly, the overwhelming dominance of Hong Kong as a source of FDI in

China is also exaggerated since a portion of the FDI coming nominally from Hong Kong in fact originates from other sources. Many investors, including overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia and non-Chinese investors, have used Hong Kong and, to a lesser degree Taiwan and Macau, as springboards for investing in China, especially at the beginning of the reform period. This exaggerates the amount of 'patriotic capital'.

*Table 12.1* Major foreign investors in China: 1979-2005 (US\$ billions and % of total)

Country	Cumulative utilised FDI: 1979-2005		Utilised FDI in 2005	
	Amount (US\$ billions)	% of total	Amount (US\$ billions)	% of total
Total	632.8	100.0	72.4	100.0
Hong Kong	259.5	41.8	17.9	29.7
Japan	53.3	8.6	6.5	10.8
United States	51.1	8.2	3.1	5.1
British Virgin Islands	45.9	7.4	9.0	14.9
Taiwan	41.8	6.7	2.2	3.3
South Korea	31.1	5.0	5.2	8.6

Source: Ministry of Commerce of PRC

'Round-tripping' of Chinese capital poses another complication in data analysis. According to the World Bank (2006), as much as half of recent Hong Kong investment is actually 'recycled' money from mainland China, while others have estimated it to be as low as 20 per cent (Smart & Hsu, 2004: 549). Nevertheless, the overwhelming dominance of overseas Chinese investment cannot be disputed, justifying the state's honouring of these investors as 'engines in the motherland's efforts to build a modern and affluent society' (Chinadaily, 2003). Though to a much lesser extent, overseas Chinese from Southeast Asia have also been an important source of capital, as well as providing technology and trading experience for China. Their investments are estimated to have made up about 15 per cent of all FDI in the 1990s (Tefft, 1994) and, according to data from 2002, they contributed an average of some eight per cent of all FDI to China, making up US\$7 billion each year (Phar, 2004).

Table 12.2 summarises the sectoral distribution of FDI in China. Reflecting the comparative advantage of the Chinese economy, investments from overseas Chinese have hitherto been concentrated in labour-intensive manufacturing industries (e.g. clothing, furniture, stationery, sports goods, leather, fur etc.), real estate, hotels and infrastructure. Upon closer examination, FDI from overseas Chinese can also be seen to display noticeable changes. Hong Kong investment has increasingly moved from traditional low-technology manufacturing to large-scale infrastructure and real estate projects (Smart & Hsu, 2004).

Among Taiwanese investors there has been a change from footwear, toys and light consumer goods manufacturing to higher technology and yet labour-intensive and price-sensitive assembly of personal computer power supply units, keyboards and scanners in 1990s, and more recently to higher value-added activities such as the production of motherboards, video cards and even laptop computers (Saxenian, 2005).

*Table 12.2* Distribution of foreign direct investment by aggregated sector, 2002–2004

Year	Aggregated sector	Actually utilised value (billion US\$)	% of total
2002	<i>Total</i>	52,743	100
	Primary sector	1,028	1.95
	Secondary sector	39,465	74.83
	Tertiary sector	12,250	23.23
2003	<i>Total</i>	53,505	100
	Primary sector	1,008	1.87
	Secondary sector	39,710	74.22
	Tertiary sector	12,794	23.91
2004	<i>Total</i>	60,63	100
	Primary sector	1,114	1.84
	Secondary sector	45,463	74.98
	Tertiary sector	14,053	23.18

Source: China Commerce Yearbook, 2005

### *Trade partners*

Overseas Chinese have been China's most important trading partners, again especially during the earlier years of the reform. Hong Kong has been China's third largest trading partner after Japan and the USA, accounting for 9.6 per cent of its total trade (US\$136.7 billion) in 2005. In addition, Hong Kong is the most important *entrepôt*<sup>3</sup> for China. It is important to note that China's trade with Hong Kong is to a great extent related to the outward processing activities of Hong Kong firms. According to Hong Kong statistics, more than 80 per cent of Hong Kong manufacturers have set up factories in China, contributing to the high level of 'imports' and 'exports' of materials and goods between the two economies. In 2005, 38.4 per cent of Hong Kong's total exports to China were related to outward processing activities. Meanwhile 65.9 per cent of Hong Kong's imports and 79.3 per cent of Hong Kong's re-exports from China to other countries were related to outward processing (Hong Kong Trade

<sup>3</sup> A centre where merchandise can be imported and exported without paying import duties.



Development Council, 2006). Though sharing a sensitive political relationship, China and Taiwan have also been close trading partners. According to customs statistics from Taiwan, indirect trade between China and Taiwan increased over 100 times between 1984 and 2004 – from somewhat more than US\$500 million to over US\$ 61.6 billion.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Input for economic reform*

As China implemented the Open Door Policy in the late 1970s there was a lack of well-functioning market institutions and a business culture – both necessary for its growing connection with the world market. Chinese reformers, led by Deng Xiaoping, looked upon the economic success of Hong Kong and Singapore as models, and established many of the market institutions practised in these economies. As Zhang (2000) concludes, overseas Chinese have provided crucial institutional substitutes for many of the deficiencies in China, including those in laws and regulations, trading networks, managerial skills, and business culture. In Zhang's words, the overseas Chinese have been important actors in this process of 'organic assimilation of Western market institutions in China' (Zhang, 2000: 77).

Overseas Chinese have also been invited to manage new projects in China. Many of the Economic and Technological Development Zones, for instance, have been developed and managed by joint ventures between domestic business and partners from Hong Kong and Singapore. Furthermore, overseas Chinese entrepreneurs, scholars and officials have also served as consultants for policies and projects. Overseas Chinese economists are more able to provide useful advice to the Chinese state than are non-Chinese economists. Last but not least, overseas Chinese press, media and other archives offer the Chinese state vast amounts of information about the world economy in the Chinese language.

#### *Diaspora as bridge and cultural adaptor*

The diaspora has historically served as bridges between China and the rest of the world, the linkages being economic, political, social or cultural. Many foreign firms hire overseas Chinese, who are considered to be more appropriate 'cultural adaptors', as managers for their operations in China. More recently, overseas Chinese business networks have also served as channels for Chinese firms to invest in foreign countries, and for raising funds on the Hong Kong or US stock exchanges.

The input from overseas Chinese in the recent rapid development in China is indisputable. How can one explain this phenomenon? Is this a sign of patriot-

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<sup>4</sup> Actual figures: from US\$553.3 million to US\$ 6,639.1 million.

ism, or capitalism? Cultural affinity undoubtedly plays a role. Many overseas Chinese investors retain a cultural and emotional attachment to the country, as well as having contacts with their ancestral communities. Such affection is translated to investment in their birthplace or the birthplace of their ancestors. Shared language, customs and familial ties also became cultural and social capital that facilitates smooth operation in business. But the political-economic framework also plays an important role. In my opinion, perhaps more important for most overseas Chinese investors than love of their homeland are the competitive production costs and the expanding domestic market in China. As Lever-Tracy *et al.* (1996) argue, there is an economic synergy between the parties. In order to navigate in a reforming economy that is yet to mature, overseas Chinese capitalists transform their cultural capital (such as cultural and language skills) into social capital (networks) and consequently into economic benefit.

The importance of these informal methods and personal relationships in economic transactions has inspired scholars and analysts to study the nature and functioning of what is seen as a peculiarly Chinese way of doing business (though I do not see it as that) through personal relationship networks, the ‘*guanxi* economy’<sup>5</sup> (see, for example, Chu and Ngan, 2000: 231-256; Haley *et al.*, 1998; Mitchell, 1995; Smart, 1993, 1998, 2000; Yang, 1994), making use of the so-called bamboo networks (Weidenbaum & Huges, 1996; Phar, 2004) to create a kind of ‘Chinese empire’.

Personal relationships and informal practices are particularly important in any society if the national legal infrastructure for guarantees is fluid and lacks transparency. Compared to foreign investors of non-Chinese ethnic backgrounds, overseas Chinese capitalists are more equipped for gaining vital information on how to operate a successful business in China, for speeding up bureaucratic procedures and for avoiding paying official fees – often by conducting corrupt practices.

By highlighting the fact overseas Chinese investors make use of their social capital to reap benefits in China, I do not intend to imply that they cannot be patriotic. Rather, I would like to debunk the often over-romanticised, cultural-deterministic arguments that Chinese people are more patriotic than other ethnic groups, and are thus more ‘willing’ to return to, invest in or trade with China. Being patriotic is particularly feasible and attractive when economic benefits are to be reaped at the same time.

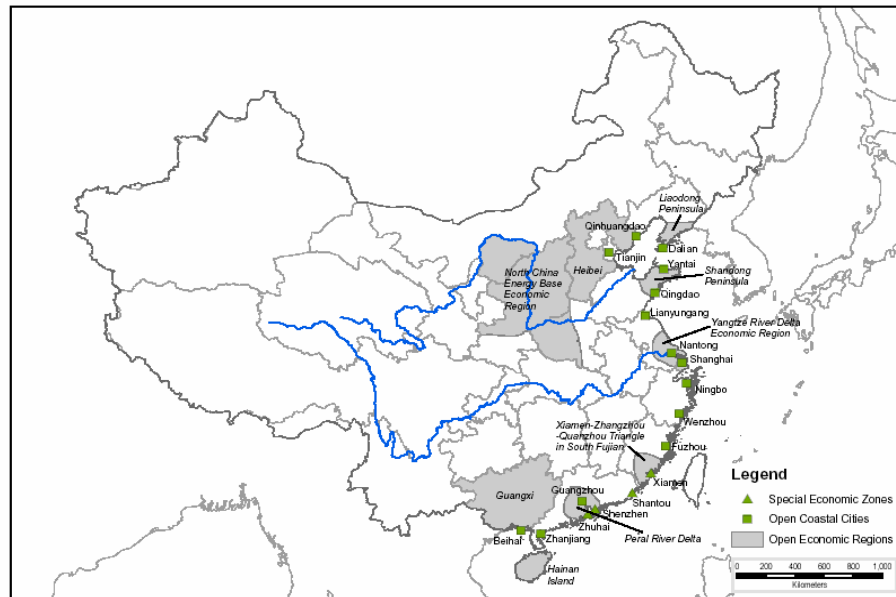
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<sup>5</sup> ‘Guanxi’ are personal ties.

### The role of the state in diaspora-led development

Far from simply being led by the diaspora, the Chinese state has played an active role in orchestrating the nature, extent and geography of overseas Chinese investment in the country. As mentioned before, Deng Xiaoping particularly welcomed overseas Chinese when he first orchestrated economic reform. Having recognised the power of relational ties between the diaspora and migrant-sending regions, in 1980 Deng tactically identified four places as initial Special Economic Zones (SEZs) (Figure 12.1). These include Shenzhen, the border city adjacent to Hong Kong; Zhuhai, the area next to Macau; Xiamen, across from the strait from Taiwan; and Shantou, the (ancestral) home of many overseas Chinese. In addition, Deng also implemented an array of policies to court those who had left because they feared the communist regime. These included returning properties that had been confiscated after the 1949 revolution and installing various tax and regulatory advantages to ethnic Chinese investors, particularly those from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan.

*Figure 12.1* Special Economic Zones, open coastal cities and open economic regions in China



Source: Author

Smart (2000) also considers the political significance of Deng's plan. According to him, these SEZs were strategically positioned, not only to facilitate the mobilisation of the resources of the overseas Chinese, but also to serve the goals of the eventual reunification of Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau with the mainland.

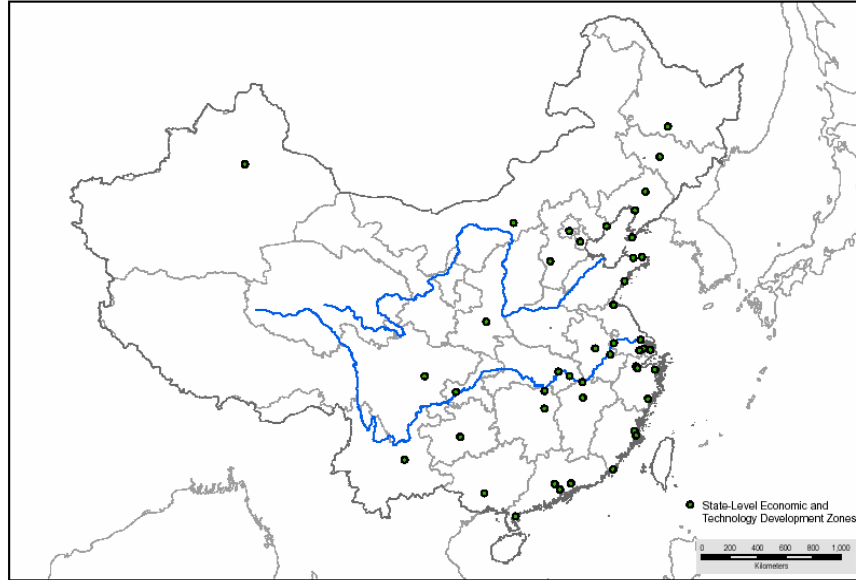
Figure 12.2 Industrial zones in China



Source: Author

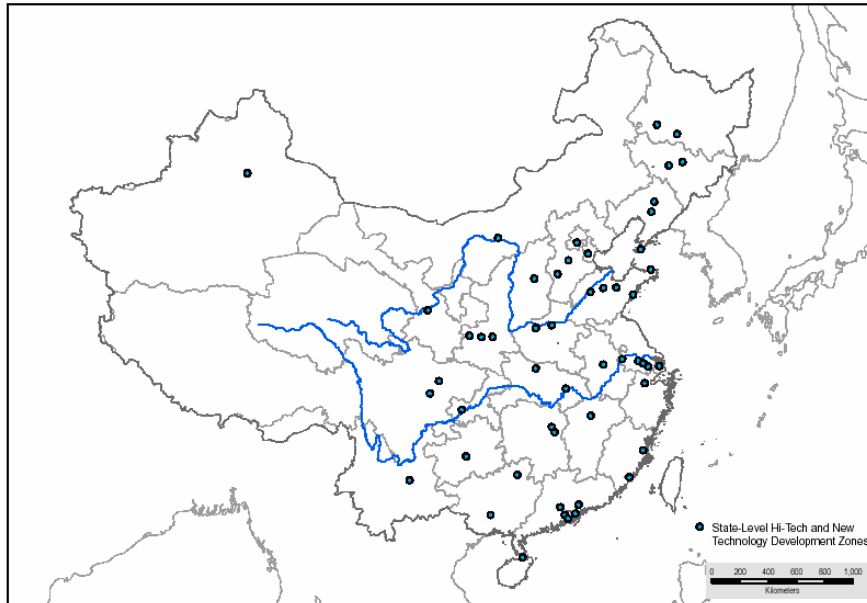
The success of the initial SEZs encouraged the central government to proceed in the opening up of the economy. An additional fourteen coastal ports were allocated for foreign investment in 1984, and three open economic regions designated in 1985. These were the Yangtze River Delta Economic Region (centred around Shanghai), the Pearl River Delta Economic Region (centred around Guangzhou), and the Minnan Delta Economic Region (centred around Xiamen). The establishment of these open regions spread the benefits of economic growth to the areas surrounding the ports or SEZs. As the reform progressed, the central government set up further economic zones of various natures to attract and guide investments in different regions. These include the Industrial Zones (Figure 12.2), Economic and Technology Development Zones (Figure 12.3), and the Hi-Tech and New Technology Development Zones (Fig-

Figure 12.3 State-level Economic and Technology Development Zones



Source: Author

Figure 12.4 State-level Hi-Tech and New Technology Development Zones



Source: Author

ure 12.4). As shown on the maps, the industrial zones are still geographically very concentrated, but it is apparent that the newer technology development zones are spatially more dispersed, reflecting the state's intention of steering investment into the interior regions of the country. The importance of such state-level planning cannot be underestimated, as investment often tends to be concentrated in areas where infrastructure is already available, thus creating further imbalance in the geography of development.

The state's 'go-west' policy also fits in with the needs of many foreign investors who have been finding production costs in the older development zones too high. Indeed, many traditional low-technology manufacturing industries have recently moved northward and westward. While the coastal provinces are still well in the lead in absolute terms, the increase in land, labour and living costs in these areas, and the potential domestic consumer market in the inland regions provide good reasons for foreign investors to set up their production and sales operations in the interior provinces.

As the Chinese state proceeds to diversify its industrial base, it has been increasingly proactive in encouraging foreign investors to venture into the new and high-tech industries. In this effort, the state has continued its usual practice of initiating special programmes to encourage Chinese scientists and professionals to be involved in the development. Top-level political leaders have branded returnees as 'irreplaceable' and as playing an 'outstanding historical role' in China's technological development. Despite such blandishments, the return rate of Chinese trained overseas has been low. According to data from the Chinese Ministry of Education, over 700,000 Chinese students and scholars went abroad for further education between 1978 and 2003, of whom about a quarter (173,000) had returned to China by 2004 (Yao, L., 2004: 8). Political instability, low salaries, poor research facilities and work environment, as well as the prevalence of the '*guanxi* work culture' have been cited as some of the common reasons for professionals deciding against returning to China.

Recognising the negative consequences of a brain drain, the Chinese government has striven to make the return to China more attractive by offering preferential treatment to returnees. The Ministry of Personnel published the 'Opinion on Encouraging High-Level Overseas Chinese Students to Return to Work in China' in 2001, which states that in addition to privileges in housing, social insurance, jobs and schools for their families, and procedures for visiting overseas relatives, policies were also set up to guarantee intellectual property rights such as copyrights and patents, and rewards established for those who make significant contributions. The returnees' mobility is also assured as they are allowed to have their long-term or permanent right of residence abroad preserved while they work in China. These measures do seem to have had an effect; the number of returnees has recently increased significantly. By 2005,

198,000 had made their way back to China, either to join existing companies or to establish their own. Many of these returnees have graduate degrees, with a high percentage of PhDs and MBAs (Vanhonacker *et al.*, 2005; Zhongguo, 2005). Perhaps more important than these fringe benefit packages are the macro-economic changes in China since the late 1990s – characterised by increasing market liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation – which have made a return more attractive.

Overseas Chinese Scholars Pioneering Parks have been set up reserved exclusively for companies started by returnees. In addition to offering the standard package shared by other science parks in China – including low rent, tax relief, loans for start-ups, shared infrastructure and other financial benefits, these Pioneering Parks also address the special needs of overseas Chinese returnees. They provide special services such as speeding up the bureaucratic process involved in establishing residency, and guaranteeing access to high-quality housing and prestigious, often bilingual, schools for returnees' children (Saxenian, 2005). In order to provide opportunities for overseas Chinese experts to meet and explore investment options in China, the Shenzhen Foreign and Overseas Affairs Office of the Shenzhen Overseas Chinese Association, organises a 'China Hi-Tech Fair' every year. Over a hundred specialist entrepreneurs and overseas Chinese students, mainly from the USA, the UK and Southeast Asia, attended the Fair held in 2004 (Yao, D., 2004).

These efforts are showing results. Overseas Chinese scholars, scientists and professionals are finding China more interesting. Twenty-four state-level pioneering parks have been established, in Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, Shenyang, Harbin, Dailian, Xian, Xiamen etc., in addition to over 110 other kinds of pioneering parks, hosting over 6000 firms and operated by over 15,000 returnees (China.org.cn, 2005). According to a survey conducted by Zweig and Rosen (2003), who interviewed 65 returnees in high-tech zones in Hangzhou, Guangzhou and Wuhan, nearly half of these entrepreneurs had imported technology to their operation, of which 71 per cent was state-of-the-art and 23 per cent was new for China. These authors also concluded from their interviews that returnees are raising the technological level of China's domestic economy. In addition to technological gain, 23 per cent of those interviewed have brought in foreign capital, and 28 per cent were maintaining overseas contact on a daily basis, thus linking the Chinese economy dynamically and organically with the outside world.

Having come to terms with the fact that objective framework conditions in China might not be enticing enough to keep talents in the diaspora at their old home for long, Chinese officials have also modified their attitude toward 'brain power stored overseas' – a metaphor coined by Zhao Ziyang in 1987 when General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party. Since the mid-1990s, the

Chinese state has been proactive in encouraging Chinese overseas to serve their motherland from abroad, by investing or establishing companies in China, serving as links between China and other economies, offering lectures and training, acting as consultants or participating in other forms of knowledge, technological and financial transfer – all ‘patriotic acts’ that do not require moving back to China on a long-term basis.

Financial incentives have also been made available for ‘super talents’ in research areas. The Seed Fund for Returned Overseas Scholars was established as early as 1990, followed by others, including the Cross Century Outstanding Personnel Training Programme, and the National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars. The Chinese Academy of Sciences hosts the Hundred Talents Programme through which successful candidates are granted as much as two million yuan (about US\$240,000) and world-class research facilities for their projects. The Cheung Kong Scholars Programme jointly established (in 1998) by China’s Ministry of Education and Hong Kong’s Li Ka-shing Foundation provides another example for initiatives that aim to attract natural scientists to contribute to the upgrading of China’s education and intellectual competitiveness by temporary return.

In addition to materialistic incentives, the Chinese state has also deployed softer measures to improve their rapport with overseas Chinese investors and talented members of the diaspora. Overseas Chinese are often presented as ‘national treasure’ and heroes (Nyíri, 2001). By encouraging transnational practises among these new migrants, the Chinese state expresses support and good wishes towards those who aspire to leave the country, and prepares these potential migrants for contributing to modern transnational nation-building, often by means of ‘virtual returns’, making use of advanced telecommunication technology.

In addition, the Chinese government also acknowledges the achievements of overseas Chinese professionals who have returned, and presents awards in order to encourage more to follow suit. The ‘Chunhui Cup Pioneering Competition for Overseas Chinese Scholars’ was initiated in 2006, aiming to ‘explore [the participants’] independent creative abilities, single out excellent projects high in technological content and carrying pathbreaking potential with good future market value, and inspire their passion to build their careers back in China’.<sup>6</sup> ‘Model’ returnees are also often celebrated and promoted to high social status through invitations to meet high-ranking government officials and attending important functions. Though rather indirectly, the Chinese state has also been more active in sponsoring cultural institutions and activities overseas, such as

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<sup>6</sup> See [http://www.most.gov.cn/eng/pressroom/200701/t20070115\\_39641.htm](http://www.most.gov.cn/eng/pressroom/200701/t20070115_39641.htm)



Chinese language schools, festivities and the so-called 'root-seeking programmes' for overseas Chinese. While the future economic impact of these cultural efforts is hard to estimate, diasporic states all over the world seem to believe that such activities are worthwhile as they help to promote a sense of belonging within the diaspora.

Efforts to establish and maintain links with the diaspora are not conducted only at the central state level. In fact, provincial, county and municipal governments have also been creative and active in making links with their brothers and sisters overseas. Provinces or cities are in contest to access overseas capital and talent. In addition to competing to provide more benefits to potential returnees and investors, numerous institutions based on kinship, birthplace and university affiliations etc. are being set up and delegations sent to strategic destinations for 'marketing' purposes. In strategic areas such as Silicon Valley in California, there is an almost continuous flow of company and government 'head hunting' representatives from all over China. Many municipal governments have also set up their own Overseas Chinese Scholars Pioneering Parks (similar to the state-level parks, but drawing upon local means) to lure Chinese scholars from overseas.

### Summary and policy recommendations

Drawing upon experiences in China, this chapter has discussed the relationships between migration, the diaspora and economic development. As the first section explains, Chinese people have been involved in international migration for centuries. The demographic composition and direction of these migration flows, as well as the relationships between the diaspora and the Chinese state, have evolved over time. Like migrants from other places, Chinese migrants have always been an important source of human, social and economic capital for their home communities and homeland state.

Even during the years of political and economic isolation during the cold war period, overseas Chinese served as bridges between China and the outside world. This chapter has focused on conditions in China since the adoption of the Open Door Policy in late 1970s. Overseas Chinese have been praised by top Chinese officials as engines for economic development in the country. The contributions made by the Chinese diaspora have been discussed above in detail, in four categories. Overseas Chinese are an important source of financial capital, and valuable trade partners, for China. They also provide other forms of input, such as acting as institutional substitutes and in consultations regarding Chinese economic reform. Finally the Chinese diaspora has functioned as bridges for valuable economic, political, social and cultural linkages between China and the outside world.

This chapter emphasises the role played by different levels of the Chinese state in shaping the timing, extent, nature and geography of investment by overseas Chinese in China. Important decisions include Deng Xiaoping's choice in locating the initial SEZs in those areas with the strongest connections with the diaspora, and a gradual geographical expansion of the various investment zones (such as Industrial Zones, Hi-tech and New Technology Development Zones) to areas in the northern and western part of the vast country.

In order to tap the growing pool of skilled Chinese scholars and professionals overseas, the Chinese state – ranging from national to municipal levels – has also, sometimes in competition, offered incentive packages to potential returnees. Having confronted the fact that the political-economic conditions in China might not entice resourceful overseas Chinese to return permanently, the Chinese state began in the late 1980s to adopt a new attitude toward the brains 'drained', seeing them as 'brain power stored overseas'. Such a concept has been implemented in proactive policies and programmes both in China and overseas, which work, either directly or indirectly, to establish and maintain a growing network of Chinese professionals and potential investors around the world.

Certainly the involvement of overseas Chinese investors and professionals in the Chinese political economy has not brought only benefit to every person in every place of China, as their investment activities are based, to varying degrees, on the exploitation of labour and natural resources. At the same time, their aggregate contribution to the remarkable economic growth in Chinese recent history is obvious and widely acknowledged. What kind of insights does the Chinese experience offer? Before I conclude this chapter with policy suggestions, it is important to stress that the relationship between migration and development, both in sending- and receiving-societies, is highly varied and context-specific. It would be naïve to suggest any one-size-fits-all policies for other contexts. Nevertheless, an analysis of the Chinese case can help identify favourable factors and policy options for other diaspora states.

#### *Perceiving migrants as potential contributors*

The Chinese case aptly demonstrates that considering migrants as deserters and viewing migration only as a brain drain process is an obsolete way of thinking. Migrants can make valuable economic, social, cultural and political contributions to the communities and societies they have 'left behind'. When the framework conditions are favourable, migrants maintain close connections in both host- and home-countries, utilising their networks to trade, invest and exchange knowledge between them, often without planning for a permanent return to the 'homeland'.

*Policy recommendations*

- Liberalise freedom of movement for members of the diaspora in entering and exiting the country. This might include simplifying the procedures for visa application or granting visa-free entrance.
- Introduce dual citizenship, which can eliminate problems for diaspora members travelling to and from their different 'home' countries and is likely to simplify bureaucratic procedures in investment in business and trade. Furthermore, dual citizenship could contribute to sentimental and psychological linkages and foster a sense of belonging to the motherland, which could consequently encourage later generations in the diaspora (i.e. descendants of migrants) to maintain links with their diasporic homeland.

*Capturing remittances*

- Remittances are an important and most reliable source of income for many families in the traditional migrant-sending communities. The impact can be very positive when remittances are used productively.

*Policy recommendations*

- Reduce the cost of fund transfer to encourage remittance from the diaspora.
- Provide matching funds from public sources or through development agencies, to encourage remittance.
- Allow foreign currency accounts.

*Improve the investment environment*

- In order to attract investment from the diaspora or foreign investors, a healthy local business environment is important.

*Policy recommendations*

- Plan and make available funding for productive infrastructural projects, for example transportation, communication networks, basic facilities such as power and water supply.
- Improve financial systems and banking services.
- Build an investor-friendly, transparent and stable legal environment.
- Promote local human resources to meet (both foreign and local) investors' needs and expectations.

Depending on the migration history of the country concerned, governments might plan infrastructural development, considering the preferred locations of migrant investors, as the Chinese government strategically planned the initial SEZs in areas with strong connections with the diaspora.

*Provide productive fiscal incentives to attract foreign investors or professionals from the diaspora*

As is the case in many other states, the Chinese government and administration at different levels have been proactive and generous in providing fiscal incentives of various sorts to attract investors and professionals from the diaspora.

*Policy recommendation*

- Offer appropriate and affordable incentives, in the form of tax concessions, cash inducement or seed money for housing, company establishment or research activities.

While fiscal incentives work to attract foreign investors, they have also been criticised for systematically disfavoured domestic capital and consequently exacerbating domestic economic weaknesses (Huang, 2003). Similarly, preferential treatments favouring professional returnees can act as a double-edged sword. While they are effective in luring talent overseas to return, they also widen the differences between returnees and local professionals. This preference for foreign experience increases the appeal of migration as a step for rapid career advancement. It is therefore crucial for states to be cautious about balancing interests and opportunities between foreign and domestic investors, and among returnees and local professionals.

*Establish and strengthen linkages and partnership with members in the diaspora*

The Chinese case demonstrates the importance of outreach and partnership-building with the diaspora, and especially, in recent years, among students and young professionals.

*Policy recommendations*

- Establish extensive policy frameworks and institutions to mobilise members in the diaspora. Good coordination and cost effectiveness are also important. A certain degree of duplication and lack of coordination among the multiple ministries, departments and agencies in China has been observed and should be avoided.
- Involve of high-level and specialised governmental agencies to handle migrant affairs – to show the state's commitment.
- Encourage or subsidise the establishment of institutions that provide intermediary functions (e.g. community and hometown associations, alumni networks and professional associations).
- Initiate programmes and policies that encourage knowledge- and information-exchange, business, investment and diaspora philanthropy (e.g. visiting

delegations, information exchange forums, trade fairs, scientific conventions etc.).

- Improve regular information dissemination using appropriate technology (e.g. printed materials or the Internet).
- Adopt softer approaches as a 'long-term investment' by establishing and maintaining rapport with the diaspora (e.g. support for language schools, communal events overseas and home visit tours for migrants overseas).

## Conclusion

The Chinese case indicates that the impact of out-migration can be more multi-fold and sometimes more positive than it is depicted in most brain-drain scenarios. However, since the relationship between migration and development is complex and dynamic – since it is mediated by a whole array of historical, contextual, cultural and individual elements – the Chinese 'fortune' might not be reproducible elsewhere. By focusing on the positive side of Chinese migration, I do not claim that negative effects of migration do not exist or can be easily corrected; indeed loss of talent threatens, in varied degrees, the sustainable development of many economies. Nevertheless, since migration is inevitable and likely to increase in the increasingly globalising world, it is important to come up with ways through which migration can be harnessed to benefit economic and social development in the home country.

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## International migration policies and the fight against poverty: Some final reflections

Annelies Zoomers & Aderanti Adepoju

### Introduction

This book has focused on achieving a better understanding of the implications of international migration for national development from the perspective of the sending countries (with an emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa). More specifically, it is concerned with the question of how a coherent international migration policy can contribute to the fight against poverty.

In the various chapters, we have presented the reasons why – as opposed to in previous times – migration is currently seen as one of the more important issues on the development policy agenda, and we have analysed, for different countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and Latin America, how governments develop their own strategies for maximising the benefits of migration, while attempting to minimise its negative implications. In this chapter we bring together various issues that we hope will help in the design of migration policies relevant, or beneficial, to development.



## The characteristics of international labour migration: Towards a typology

Our research project has focused in particular on international labour migration – the movement of persons (non-nationals or foreigners) across national borders for purposes other than travel or short-term residence (Messina & Lahav, 2006). Little attention is paid to other groups, such as refugees, internationally displaced persons and/or asylum seekers (Skeldon, 1990; Mafukidze, 2006) although it is difficult in practice to make a clear division.

The number of international labour migrants is currently estimated at between 175 and 200 million (GCIM, 2005; Farrant *et al.*, 2006), which is about 3 percent of the world population. If we try to obtain a picture of the direction of international migration flows, we find that there is a limited number of dominant destinations: the classical immigration countries (the United States and Canada), a number of countries on the Persian Gulf (such as Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Emirates) and, lastly, a number of European countries (France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain and Italy). Viewed from a distance, migration streams seem to flow from the poor South towards the richer northern countries, although there are considerable differences in types of migration and in opportunities for integration and upward mobility.

Some basic facts regarding migration to these countries are as follows:

### *The USA and Canada*

Migration flows to the United States (US) and Canada derive, as one might expect, mainly from Mexico and the Caribbean (over 20 million Mexicans and Cubans live and work in the US), although there has recently been a marked growth in migration to these countries of highly skilled people from China and India. After being granted an H1 visa, migrants can quite easily settle with their families and, as long as they have work, there is a good chance that the visa will be extended.

### *The Gulf states and the Middle East*

Migration to the Persian Gulf region originates mainly from south and southeast Asia (Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand), but also increasingly from north, central and east Africa. It consists mainly of the temporary labour migration of unskilled men, but increasingly also of other groups, for example, a growing migration by women, particularly from Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka. In addition, Saudi Arabia conducts searches in countries such as Nigeria and Ghana for highly-skilled labour (especially for female nurses and doctors). Recruitment takes place mainly among Moslem populations, and there is a considerable flow of Somalis

and Ethiopians across the Gulf of Aden to the Middle East (van Moppes, 2006), as well as migration from West Africa (Burkina Faso) to the Gulf States (Broekhuis, 2006). There is no possibility of visa extension in the Gulf States, so that each time a migrant's contract expires, he or she must leave the country. There are therefore no opportunities to settle permanently and migrants enjoy no right of family reunification. Recently, the growing presence of foreign labour appears to be leading increasingly to problems, especially in relation to worker's rights, for example in wages, education and health, as demanded in the free trade agreement negotiations (Rutten & Muli, 2006: 24).

#### *The European Union*

A large part of the migration flows to countries of the European Union (EU) derives from North Africa and Turkey and is a direct consequence of migrant worker programmes (up to 1974) and subsequent family reunification (Lucas, 2004). After a period in which immigration was largely determined by refugees and asylum seekers, the EU has recently been confronted with migrant flows from sub-Saharan Africa (especially Nigeria – 72,000, Senegal – 77,000, and Cape Verde – 43,000), Asia, and Latin America. Most of the migrants enter Europe via Spain and Italy (once emigration countries themselves), but the influence of the colonial past and/or cultural ties appears clearly in their ultimate destinations: West African migrants go mainly to France; Latin Americans migrate relatively frequently to Italy and Spain; and Asians migrate proportionately rather more to the United Kingdom. The majority of EU countries occupy an intermediate position in comparison with the US/Canada and the Gulf States. Where restrictive policies operate, possibilities often exist for family reunification and settlement, but not in all places: each country employs different definitions and pursues a different policy. The situation is thus heterogeneous as far as the circumstances of migrants (including integration and deportation policies) are concerned.

Viewed from the receiving countries, there therefore appears to be, at first sight, a relatively comprehensible situation in which globalisation has been translated into a worldwide migration system, with richer receiving regions (receiving countries) on one side, and poorer sending countries (countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America) on the other side. Thus from the perspective of the receiving regions there appears to be a situation in which the migration flows follow a relatively fixed pattern. An international migration system generally includes a core receiving region, which may be a country or group of countries, and a set of specific sending countries linked to it by unusually large flows of immigrants (Fawcett, 1989; Zlotnik, 1992). These migration flows are usually matched by a reverse flow of remittances.

If we look at international migration from the perspective of the sending countries, however, a different – more diverse – picture emerges (Zoomers, 2006). The majority of migration flows are found to be directed not towards the core receiving countries just referred to. Only a limited number of countries are characterised by South-North migration. By far the majority of emigration countries are found to be the subject of South-South migration. In other instances we encounter diasporic states (states with a large migrant population fanning out over many countries).

### South-North migration

Examples of countries with South-North migration directed at one of the above core regions include Mexico (to the US), Morocco (to France, Germany, etc.), Senegal (to France or Spain), and Ecuador (to Spain). In the case of the EU, there is a limited group of sending countries with a clearly structured flow towards specific receiving countries, with the majority of migrants entering via Spain and Italy and settling in the former colonial mother country.<sup>1</sup>

Countries with directed South-North migration enjoy the advantage that, thanks to migration, they have been able to strengthen their negotiating position with EU countries and gain access to additional resources.<sup>2</sup> Negotiations are increasingly taking place between sending and receiving countries, especially regarding readmission and migrant quotas, and historical ties are being selectively re-established. Compared with other countries, the ex-colonies sit close to the fire and are able to benefit from new, though as yet modest, work opportunities in the core regions. The migration makes them a noticeable – and noticed – part of the situation.

What is interesting, though problematical, is the fact that countries with strong South-North migration (such as Senegal, Morocco, etc.) – but also diasporic states like Kenya or Nigeria – are often seen in their own region as desirable destination and/or transition areas, and perform an important function as reception areas for South-South migration. In order to satisfy the demands imposed by northern countries (admission and deportation policies), these countries are often constrained to act more stringently against the inflow from

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<sup>1</sup> Other examples of countries with important South-North migration are Kenya and Nigeria; but given the dispersal of the population ‘overseas’ we have classified these countries as diasporic states (see below).

<sup>2</sup> Where international organisations (such as OIM, ILO) are currently undertaking initiatives – through programmes such as MIDA and TOKTEN – to increase the development effects of migration (though reduction of transaction costs of remittances, encouragement of brain gain/limitation of brain drain, combating illegality, etc.) these are often highly concentrated in countries with south-north migration.

their neighbours than would otherwise have been the case. Mexico, for example, is obliged by the US to keep its southern border closed and to act against illegal immigrants, which has immediately negative consequences for intraregional relations and is also at odds with the striving for free mobility within the region (Mercosur etc.). In this sense, many of these countries have a northern agenda.

### South-South migration

In many countries – notably in sub-Saharan Africa – there is mainly South-South migration. These are usually relatively poor, and often landlocked, countries. Examples include Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger (with migration mainly to Ivory Coast, but also to Nigeria and Senegal); Lesotho and Mozambique (with migration to South Africa and Botswana); and Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burundi, Congo and Rwanda, where continuing conflicts have caused a large part of the population to seek refuge in neighbouring countries (such as Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania). In Latin America examples include such countries as Paraguay and Bolivia, from where, until recently, large numbers emigrated to Argentina; Nicaragua (with migration to Costa Rica); and Honduras (migration mainly to Mexico). Asian examples are Indonesia (with a population of more than one million in Malaysia) and Myanmar (with one million living in Thailand). There is also considerable migration from Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam to destinations within the region (Lucas, 2004).

A high proportion of the migrants being discussed here are not well-treated in the receiving countries. Compared with migration to the northern countries, the possibilities for earning remittances are often limited in south-south migration. People migrate on a temporary basis in order to earn a supplementary income in the event of a crisis (circular migration); they often do not have the necessary documents, are illegal and have generally to be content with low-paid work. Sometimes they take up the places left by the emigration of the country's own population (see for example Broekhuis 2006 on Burkina Faso). Migrants enjoy very little protection, either by their own government or by the government of the receiving country, and cases of disguised slavery are regularly found (such as the treatment of Bolivian migrants by an Argentinian business, recently come to light). Migrants are often the victims of discrimination and xenophobia, even in their own region (as has happened recently in Ivory Coast, and also in Botswana, Argentina and South Africa). The migrant population is sent back with great regularity from the neighbouring countries to the country of origin (as with Burkinabé from Ivory Coast, and Ghanaians from Nigeria). Many Bolivians and Paraguayans have also returned from Argentina to their own countries as a consequence of the economic crisis (Zoomers, 2006).

*Diasporic states and regions*

'Diasporic states' are countries with a large number of expatriates dispersed in other countries. Many migrants originate from diasporic states. As a result of outmigration over a long time – covering several generations – a substantial part of the population of these states (including the elite) has now become dispersed over a large number of countries throughout the world. This diaspora includes refugees and is partly composed of South-South migrants, and the numbers involved are many times greater than the flow of South-North migration. The Asian diaspora alone is estimated at more than 70 million. The largest of these is the Chinese diaspora – over 35 million, widely dispersed over South East Asia, but also across the rest of the world. The figure for India is 20 million, that for the Philippines over 7 million, and Korea has a diaspora of over 3.5 million. Other examples are Malaysia with a diaspora of 5 million, Vietnam (1 million) and Pakistan. The Latin American diaspora is estimated at over 25 million. If we ignore Mexico and the Caribbean (which are oriented mainly to the US) and Argentina and Ecuador (relatively strongly oriented to Italy and Spain), we find that the countries mainly concerned are Colombia, Brazil, Peru and Venezuela, from where a group of over 8 million has fanned out over a large number of countries: not only the US, UK, Germany, Spain, Italy, Israel and Japan, but also over neighbouring countries in their own region (Germana *et al.*, 2005). African examples of diasporic states are South Africa, Nigeria<sup>3</sup> and Kenya, and, on a more modest scale, smaller countries such as Ghana, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Gambia and the Cape Verde islands (Sheffer, 2003: 104–105.).

In contrast to the group of South-South migrants described above, these diasporic migrants relatively often constitute a well-off elite, including a considerable group of transnational entrepreneurs (van Naerssen *et al.*, 2005). In a growing number of countries, including China, the Philippines, India and Mexico, the national government is pursuing an active policy to involve the diaspora in national development. In many countries, however, policy in this field has not yet crystallised out clearly. Although it is customary to speak of migrants, we are referring here to what is often a consolidated group of well-to-do expatriates, the majority of whom have lived for many years outside their

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<sup>3</sup> Nigeria, with 140 million inhabitants, plays a key role in African migration. It was for a long period an immigration country, but is now an example of an important emigration country, with a considerable diaspora in the EU, UK and USA, as well as important populations in the Gulf states and South Africa. The expatriate population in these countries is relatively well-educated and established. It is also characterised by emigration to Ghana, Cameroon, Gabon and Botswana (de Haas, 2006). At the same time, it is an important destination and transit area for its own neighbouring states, and is an important member of ECOWAS and the AU.

own countries – in some instances even for several generations – and many have succeeded in building up a successful new livelihood in the originally-receiving country. However, many countries have very little information about their diaspora and it is only relatively recently that they have been seen by receiving-country governments as development potential (Adepoju *et al.*, 2006).

The above classification makes clear that, where migration is concerned, it is no longer sufficient to divide the world into ‘origin’ and ‘destination’ regions and to connect the two groups with arrows to indicate migrant and capital flows. There is a wide variety of ways in which countries are incorporated into the migration system. This has direct consequences for the possibilities of profiting from migration. Diasporic states and countries with directed South-North migration generally find themselves in a relatively favourable position, while the countries with south-south migration appear to be increasingly faced with fresh restrictions.

The most favourable circumstances are those of the diasporic states: thanks to migration over many generations, they can call on a considerable overseas population to use as development potential. They have to suffer less under restrictive policies; the majority of their migrants are already living in the reception region and are, on the whole, successfully integrated, with relatively good possibilities for investment. Countries with South-North migration enjoy the advantage that they are clearly ‘in the picture’ and can relatively easily negotiate about projects, readmission or migrant quotas. They are very visible – have strategic positions compared with other countries- and so are able to profit from temporary requirements for migrant labour.

This stands in contrast to the countries with mainly South-South migration, which are largely at the mercy of the policy of receiving countries in their own region – often therefore neighbouring countries – where conflicts are relatively quickly translated into inter-state problems, and where problems of discrimination or xenophobia (which also arise in the north) remain relatively invisible, because the media pay attention mainly to tensions in the northern countries.

### Migration routes from sub-Saharan Africa and recent trends

The heterogeneity of migration finds expression in a great variety of migration routes. Because of rapid changes in the volume and direction of migration, there is a growing complexity which is difficult to capture in a typology of migration countries.

If we analyse the dominant migration routes from sub-Saharan Africa to ‘Fortress Europe’ (van Moppes, 2006), just as the route through Mexico is the main route for most Latin American migrants on their way to the United States, there is a restricted number of gateways to the EU. There are currently three

major departure areas in sub-Saharan Africa, leading to a number of transit destinations (van Moppes, 2006):

- A large stretch of Africa's west coast, including northern Mauritania (notably Nouadhibou), Western Sahara and southern Morocco. The Canary Islands, especially Fuerteventura, are the main transit destination for migrants arriving from these areas.
- Northern Morocco. In this area are located the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, which form direct transit destinations on the African continent. In addition, the northern and north-western shores of Morocco are the main departure areas for small boats heading toward the Spanish mainland, notably Andalusia.
- The Tunisian east coast and western parts of the Libyan coast. From these shores the boats head for Italy (Lampedusa, Sicily), or Malta, and/or further north.

The Spanish and Italian territories in and near Africa are thus the main migrant destinations on the way to the EU. Arriving in one of these territories means actually being in the European Union, which opens up a broad range of possibilities of other countries to go to. However, before migrants arrive in departure areas such as airports, seaports and the coasts of different African countries, they have usually been on a long and arduous journey on the African continent in order to get there (van Moppes, 2006; Spaan & van Moppes, 2006). Migration destinations are to a large extent determined by historical factors (colonial ties) and there is thus some degree of consolidation. Migration patterns, however, are becoming increasingly less transparent and are changing rapidly.

Radical changes have recently occurred in directions and volumes of migration. In the first place a reversal of migration has occurred in many countries: former emigration countries, such as Spain or Italy, and also Botswana (Gwebu, 2006), now act as both immigration and transition areas. Other examples are Nigeria and Kenya, which have developed from immigration into emigration areas – often in combination, assuming the role of transit area (de Haas, 2006; Rutten & Muli, 2006). An increasing number of countries (for example Morocco) are affected, not only by emigration *or* immigration, but by being the subject of both at the same time. Another example is Senegal, with about two million Senegalese abroad (in France, Gabon and Ivory Coast), but at the same time the number of foreigners within the country is estimated at 800 000 (Broekhuis & Ndione, 2006). Countries such as Rwanda, Kenya and Senegal increasingly act as transit areas.

As a direct consequence of restrictive policies in the core regions (EU, US, etc.) new transition zones and more specific migration hubs have arisen between

places of origin and places of destination (van Moppes, 2006). Cities along the Sahara route, or places with direct boat and flight connection are attractive locations for people specialising in the migration business. Examples of important transition cities – where people stay temporarily to earn money – include Agadez (Niger), Bamako (Mali) and Tamanrasset (southern Algeria). Other important migration hubs include Accra (Ghana), Banjul (the Gambia), Casablanca (Morocco), Dakar (Senegal), Ndjamena (Chad), Douala (Cameroun), Freetown (Sierra Leone), Tripoli (Libya), and Sal (Cape Verde). Finally, the cities of Lagos (Nigeria), Abidjan (Ivory Coast), Cotonou (Benin), and especially the capital of Guinea, Conakry, are named as places where travel documents can be easily forged, or where one can buy stolen travel documents (van Moppes, 2006).

Migrants are confronted with rising costs and are often forced to pause to earn extra money on the way (en route to Europe or the US), to finance the last part of their journey. Many linger en route, having rid themselves of their old identity, and remain temporarily at an intermediate location as quasi-migrants. They have been forced to break the journey en route, but can often not go back, because they fear loss of face or are unable to repay the sum that relatives and friends helped to advance.<sup>4</sup> The migrants often find themselves in poor circumstances, particularly in the transition zones. These groups are extremely vulnerable to exploitation, especially to North Africa (Collyer, 2006).

### Transit migration

Restrictive policies (in the US, Europe, but also within the migrants' own regions<sup>5</sup>) have led to an increasing diversity of origin and destination areas. For example, migration from Nigeria to the EU was initially directed at the UK, but more recently an increasing number of Nigerians have migrated to countries such as Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Belgium as well as to the Gulf states. In the 1990s, Spain, Italy and Ireland emerged as new major destinations of labour migrants from West Africa (Black *et al.*, in de Haas, 2006: 3). Migrants from Kenya (originally focusing on South Africa, the UK and USA) nowadays also migrate not only to the Gulf states (lowly skilled labour), and the Middle East, but also to Germany (Rutten & Muli, 2006). The Burkinabé

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<sup>4</sup> According to the theory of the new economics of labour migration, the decision for (international) migration rested traditionally with the family: the family decided which member should go. Nowadays migration can also be an individual decision (Broekhuis, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Examples of sub-Saharan African countries with restrictive migration policies are Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa and Botswana, where there seems to be a tendency to restrict or at least control immigration.



(inhabitants of Burkina Faso, referred to above as a country with predominantly South-South migration) are also migrating increasingly to Italy. Bolivians, who for a long time migrated to Argentina in search of work, are now migrating in large numbers to Spain. There is also increasing intercontinental migration within the South (for instance Chinese who migrate to Europe or the US via Kenya). Where migration previously occurred along more or less well-known routes, travel now preferably takes place to less conventional destinations, in order, as far as possible, to evade tightened border controls.

Along with more restrictive policies, there seems to be a rapid increase in human trafficking and illegality. According to de Haas (2006: 3), increasing European restrictions and controls on immigration have not led to a decrease in emigration rates from Nigeria. Rather, migrants are more often undocumented and their itineraries tend to be longer and more perilous. According to a recent study in Kano State (Nigeria), traffickers successfully exploited the annual pilgrimage to Mecca to traffic children, men and women for different exploitative purposes such as prostitution, begging and all forms of domestic work (Ehindero *et al.*, in de Haas, 2006: 4). This increase in restrictions has made Nigerian migrants more vulnerable to exploitation and marginalisation. It has also made migration more permanent, because people no longer take the risk of leaving or even of returning home temporarily (de Haas, 2006).

In reaction to restrictive policies, changes have occurred in the manner of migrant travel. People now travel less often by air – that is the preserve of the relatively well-to-do and to those travelling as tourists or students. Less well-off migrants prefer to travel overland (cheap) or by boat (they cannot be immediately sent back) (van Moppes, 2006). From Nigeria for example, labour migration and trafficking to Europe in the past predominantly used air links, but visa requirements and increasing immigration controls at air and seaports seem to have led to an increasing reliance on trans-Saharan, overland routes to the Maghreb countries (in particular to Morocco). From there Nigerians and other sub-Saharan Africans attempt to cross the Mediterranean Sea to southern Europe, or the Atlantic Ocean to the Canary Islands (de Haas, 2006), and from there they move in various directions. From Senegal, too, migrants originally travelled mainly by air and now increasingly by boat (if necessary via Mauritania). The journal ‘Nouvel Horizon de Dakar’<sup>6</sup> gives an appropriate summary of the situation: ‘Après avoir utilisé l’avion, le bateau, le chemin hasardeux des caravanes sahariennes, la traverse suicidaire du détroit de Gibraltar, les barbeles de Ceuta et de Melilla, il ne reste plus que la voie la plus directe: la

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<sup>6</sup> *Courrier International*, number 814, of 8th June 2006, page 38.

*mer, et le moyen de transport le plus inattendu: la pirogue*<sup>7</sup> (Broekhuis & Ndione, 2006: 5).

Important changes have also recently occurred in the composition of migrant flows. Whereas migration was for a long time a matter for men, now it is increasingly women who take the challenge, whether or not accompanied by their family. In the past, if women migrated it was for reasons of family reunion, but significant numbers of females now migrate independently to fulfil their own economic needs (Adepoju, in van Moppes, 2006). Their proportion is currently estimated at over 50 per cent of all migrants (UNFPA 2006; Usher, 2005.). As a result, radical changes are occurring not only regarding the roles of men and women, and in parenthood in general, but also in relations between the generations. In the case of migration, the grandparents often play an important role in bringing up the children who remain behind. Increasingly, however, it is also the children themselves who decide to migrate, sometimes even before they have completed their schooling. Thus there is not only feminisation, but also juvenation of migration flows (Adepoju *et al.*, 2006).

Lastly, changes have occurred in the occupations and levels of skill of migrants. While formerly many migrants were wage-earners, now a considerable proportion are self-employed entrepreneurs. As a result of recruitment (by universities and companies), there also appears to be a shift towards higher-skilled migrants, although a large proportion are still poorly skilled (van Moppes, 2006). The heterogeneity of the migrant population can be illustrated by drawing on the example of Nigeria (de Haas, 2006). There is circumstantial evidence that more recent migrants to continental European countries are less skilled on average, and that they more often work in the (formal and, particularly in southern Europe, informal) service, trade and agricultural sectors of the economy. The UK and also, in particular, the US (through student and professional migration, as well as through the Green Card lottery) generally continue to attract relatively more highly skilled workers (Hernandez-Coss *et al.*, 2006). The Gulf states have also started to attract the relatively highly skilled (in addition to the low-skilled labour).

Compared with earlier times, people are now much better able to cross great distances in a short time and to maintain close contact with the area of origin. In a certain sense the world has shrunk. Where travel formerly might well have meant years of absence, today's migrants can travel quickly and maintain contact with several places at the same time. Migration is increasingly transnational and consists of an ongoing series of cross-border movements in which

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<sup>7</sup> Having used air, boat, the hazardous route of Saharan caravans, the suicidal Gibraltar crossing, the barbed wire of Ceuta and Melilla, there is nothing left but the most direct route: the ocean, and that most neglected form of transport: the canoe.

immigrants develop and maintain numerous economic, social and cultural links in more than one nation (Jackson *et al.*, 2004.). In the case of transnationality, people no longer find themselves based in one place: they find themselves in several places at the same time, as it were, and try to make strategic use of the differences which exist between countries (Portes, 1996). Thus there is a growing group of transnational entrepreneurs who commute intensively in an attempt to profit from the economic opportunities which present themselves in several countries at the same time. They belong both to their region of origin and to their reception region (see Maas, 2005 for the Philippines).

### Viewpoints in the areas of origin: Common issues

In analysing the characteristics of migration in the various countries in sub-Saharan Africa, we found a number of common features that can be summarised under the following headings:

#### *Migration is not new: Traditional types of population mobility*

The population of most sub-Saharan countries has always been one of the most mobile in the world. There are many examples of nomadism, and livelihood systems are based on people's ability to move in response to seasonal variation and variability of natural resources. International borders imposed during colonial times were often not in line with natural conditions, nor did they coincide with the territorial claims of different ethnic groups. Some of today's international migration forms part of indigenous patterns of mobility – traditional, seasonal movements within one and the same eco-region (see de Haas for Nigeria, Rutten & Muli for Kenya, and Broekhuis for both Senegal and Burkina Faso). Much international migration in sub-Saharan Africa is therefore a product of the colonial era – a reflection of the introduction of artificial boundaries.

#### *Migration patterns reflect colonial patterns of forced labour*

During the colonial period, large flows of Europeans moved in the direction of Asia, Latin America and Africa, and introduced systems of forced labour in order to have sufficient workers in the colonial economy (on mines and agricultural estates). In addition to the deportation of slaves to South America and the Caribbean – the basis for the creation of one of the earliest African diasporas (Mafukidze, 2006: 109) – there were important population movements to mining areas and the coastal plantations (circular migration). In particular, taxes imposed by the French stimulated many Burkinabé to migrate to Ghana to escape French colonial rule (Broekhuis, 2006). After independence, some of the colonial population left these countries, to be partly replaced by the arrival of a

new group of Europeans who moved voluntarily in search of fresh opportunities overseas. But the dominant migration routes remained the same, with mines and agricultural estates still being important destination areas for African migrants. In Nigeria, the dominant movement of internal migration is still towards the densely populated coastal areas, although Abuja in the centre and Kano in the north are also major destinations for internal migrants (de Haas, 2006).

*Rapid urbanisation and brain drain*

In the 1950s and '60s most sub-Saharan African countries had to cope with rapid urbanisation (internal migration) and where Africans decided to leave (international migration) it was often the elite who left. In countries such as Nigeria, there was a large outflow of the elite to Europe and the US – as a response to political change, conflicts and disparities in economic opportunity – which resulted in a rapid brain drain.

*Anti-migration policies*

Where national governments made an attempt to reduce urbanisation or to counter the negative effects of mass migration (brain drain) they usually did so by introducing exit visas – for example in Rwanda, Mozambique, and Tanzania, as well as in Burkina Faso (Broekhuis, 2006: 8). In Rwanda, and elsewhere, people were obliged to pay guarantees (deposits in bank accounts) and family members had to sign before would-be migrants were allowed to leave the country. Governments did their best to root people in the countryside, often as a part of socialist policies, as happened in Tanzania, and in Mozambique (Raimundo, 2006). This has, however, now changed, and freedom of movement is permitted.

*Alternations between recruited immigration and expulsion*

In many cases, countries have experienced reversal of migration, in response to economic booms or to stagnation. Countries like Nigeria and Ivory Coast, as well as South Africa, Kenya and Ghana, attracted migrant labour during times of rapid economic growth, followed by crisis and economic decline, which often went hand in hand with the expulsion of foreign populations. In Nigeria, after a period of rapid growth between 1973 and 1981, economic decline led the government to expel large numbers of West African migrants in 1983 and 1985, including one million Ghanaians (de Haas, 2006). Other examples – often combined with political conflict – include Ivory Coast and Ghana (expulsion of large numbers of Burkinabé) and Kenya (Ugandans and other groups in 1984 and 1987) (Rutten & Muli, 2006). Migrants in Kenya and South Africa, and also in Botswana (Gwebu, 2006), now have to cope with – sometimes unbridled – discrimination and xenophobia.

*Root causes of migration*

The history of migration cannot be seen in isolation from poverty and other push factors that are often described as root causes of international migration. Because of harsh environmental conditions (droughts, less fertile land) and a low technological level, the agricultural sector is unable to provide employment and income for constantly increasing population numbers (Broekhuis, 2006: 7, writing about Burkina Faso). Similar factors are mentioned for central and East Africa: ecological degradation, disasters such as droughts, a lack of economic prospects, and conflict are among the principal causes of migration from these areas (Spaan & Moppes 2006; Rutten & Muli, 2006).

*Recruitment programmes, family reunion and asylum policies*

In various countries (Nigeria and Ghana, but also relatively rich South Africa) emphasis is given to the fact that international migration has recently intensified as a direct response to recruitment programmes. Universities and enterprises in the Gulf states and the Middle East, Canada and the US, and different EU countries play an active role in 'cherry picking'. Current migration patterns cannot be understood without taking into account the history of guest worker programmes, consolidated by subsequent family reunifications. Later migration is also a reflection of northern asylum policies. It is stressed that core countries have, for a long time, played an active role in shaping migration flows. The introduction of restrictive policies occurred relatively recently.

*Lack of comparable data*

Much emphasis is placed in many countries on the lack of data and deficient information about international migration. Within sub-Saharan Africa (but also elsewhere) a comparison of statistics is very complicated. A first factor which should be taken into account when trying to make an assessment of the importance of international migration is that of differences in population size. In a country like Nigeria, with its large population, international outmigration is relatively modest in comparison with massive internal migration, but it is still considered one of the most important sending countries, with large numbers of Nigerians concentrated in the US and the UK.

Although there is a clear distinction between internal and international migration, they do not necessarily represent significantly different experiences. In many cases, the impact of internal migration (short distance) is not necessarily less than that of long distance, international border crossings. In the case of Nigeria, for example, taking into account the huge ethnic, linguistic and religious variety, as well as the fact that non-indigenous inhabitants of states face considerable legal institutional discrimination, the characteristics and

personal impacts of inter-state migration may resemble those of international moves, especially within Africa. It is important to observe that differentials in development within Nigeria are at least as important, if not greater, than between various West African countries. The difference between international and internal migrants is not always clear, and in many cases conflicts occur in relation to internal, short-distance migration.

#### *Definitional problems*

An important distinction made in statistics, which is not always visible in reality, is that between labour migrants, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and refugees. Different groups live in different situations. Refugees who went to Burkina Faso (a restricted group of 1200 people from Sudan, Burundi, Rwanda, Eritrea, Somalia and Chad) are allowed to live dispersed in the cities and are not concentrated into camps (Broekhuis, 2006). This is the opposite to the situation in Kenya, where people are forced to live in camps and are not allowed to take paid work. Refugees in Kenya become illegal aliens as soon as they leave the refugee camp (Rutten & Muli, 2006). In addition, however, refugees are sometimes better off than native groups living in the same area: in Kenya, the Turkana living near a refugee camp receive less support and experience more insecurity than the foreign groups who are supported by UNHCR (Rutten & Muli, 2006<sup>8</sup>). Depending upon the definition (migrant, refugee, IDP) or nationality, people have varying chances of receiving support from international organisations, as well as permission for buying land or getting a job in government.

#### *Conflicting images and tensions*

In addition to definitional problems, there are complications related to the image of migrants, and how people look at each other from different sides.

In host countries, migrants are often seen as strangers who are different from local people, who have different habits and attitudes, and who have come to profit from better living conditions in the host country. In their country of origin they are often seen as money makers, a positive image based on the remittances brought or sent home. In addition it is expected that migrants will acquire specific skills and/or knowledge during their sojourn abroad which can be used in their own or their family's interest after their return, or applied in the interest of their country of origin. If these conditions are not fulfilled, the image of migrants is not so positive at home (Broekhuis, 2006) and tensions can arise between migrants and non-migrants. In Burkina Faso, for example, there is

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<sup>8</sup> See also Horst 2006, for the situation of Somali refugees.

increasing competition between the *tengas* (native people) and the *diaspos* (children of previously emigrated Burkinabé, who have returned from Ivory Coast to study in Burkina because of lower costs and better job opportunities).

#### *Remittance corridors and geographical restrictions*

In the case of international migration, it is acknowledged that the impact of remittances is spatially defined, because most migrants originate from particular areas and are concentrated in a limited number of destination areas. This means that migration not only generates patterns of dependency, but also creates patterns of spatial and social inequality.

In Nigeria, for example, most of the migrants who moved to the EU or the US originated from the southern provinces. The Ibo from the southeast and the Yoruba from the southwest, and, to a lesser extent the Edo and the Ogoni ethnic groups constitute the majority of Nigerian migrants in the UK (Hernandez-Coss *et al.*, 2006). In the destination regions, too, the areas involved in international migration are rather restricted. Fifty per cent of all Nigerians and Kenyans who migrated to the US are to be found in Washington, with the rest distributed between Texas, California, Georgia and North Carolina (Rutten & Muli, 2006). International migration thus involves only a limited number of areas, and the majority of the population will not be able to benefit from it.

#### *The ageing population of Europe – new labour opportunities*

International migration is now viewed in nearly all sending countries as something necessary and positive if there are insufficient work opportunities in the migrants' own country. Partly as a result of demographic growth, international migration is a logical response and a human right as long as no better alternatives exist. It is expected that Europe will need extra labour in the years to come as a result of the ageing of its population, and that Europe, like the US and Canada, will turn to a more selective migration policy (Commission of the European Communities, 2003). Europe's need creates opportunities for labour migration, in particular, for doctors, nurses and technical experts (Broekhuis, 2006: 5). Despite this, little information is currently available about Europe's future labour needs.

#### *The criminalization of migrants*

In most sub-Saharan countries, illegal or clandestine migration and human trafficking are regarded as undesirable, and many countries are prepared to cooperate with each other in combating them. Besides programmes aimed at combating trafficking in women and children, the combating of illegality, including the forging of documents, is high on the agenda.

A great problem, however, is that migrants (including illegal immigrants and the victims of human trafficking) are being criminalised – people are increasingly wrongly treated as criminals. In most countries there is understanding of European attempts to counteract unauthorised immigration: the more stringent admittance of migrants is usually not a point of general discussion, nor is it thought of as undesirable, even. A point of concern, however, is the treatment of migrants in Europe. There is a call from many sides for a more respectful treatment of migrants and the avoidance of indignity, and many sending countries blame the northern countries for not ratifying the ILO Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Family Members (Broekhuis, 2006: 5). There has been criticism in many countries of current deportation policies, including the way in which victims of human trafficking are sent back to their countries of origin in the same aircraft as the traffickers themselves (Broekhuis, 2006; de Haas, 2006).

### Concluding remarks

International migration is nowadays reshaping the world in a selective way, contributing to a global reallocation of development opportunities for the various countries in the world. Some countries play important roles at the centre stage, while other countries are hardly involved or play only marginal roles. Some countries in sub-Saharan Africa benefit from migration as a new source of financial capital, or use it as a source of negotiation power. Other countries are less successful in attracting remittances and/or establishing agreements that might contribute to development. Bilateral and multilateral migration agreements are flourishing, but it is not yet clear to what extent this will help countries – or not help them – to maximise the benefits of migration while minimising its negative effects. There is a large number of commonalities in migration, but it is the differences in particular that need to be taken into account when searching for new development strategies. Current policy initiatives will be dealt with in the final chapter.

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Searching for appropriate  
migration policies:  
A summary of concrete  
policy initiatives

Annelies Zoomers & Aderanti Adepoju

A summary of concrete policy initiatives

In this final chapter we reflect upon the operational aspects of policy making, and in particular those questions that have to do with policy implementation and designing (new) migration strategies.

Reviewing migration as a policy issue, it becomes clear that the stimulation and/or controlling of migration has, since colonial times, been an important strategy for encouraging economic growth – for example, through systems of forced labour. Since independence, African states have tried to respond to labour migration, brain drain and urbanisation by issuing exit visas and by obliging people to remain in the countryside (Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, etc.). In some countries, especially South Africa and Namibia, it is only recently that the majority of the people have been free to move, and this should be taken into account when trying to assess international migration. Where volumes of international migration have increased, this is the result partly of the neo-liberal reforms, and partly of the technological revolution and processes of regional

integration, which have stimulated the free movement of capital and goods. Neo-liberal policies have also resulted in the collapse of local economies which, together with ecological problems, have reduced opportunities for local development in large parts of sub-Saharan Africa.

In spite of the growing concern of governments with migration issues, and the large range of topics currently on the policy agenda, most sending countries have no consistent migration policy. In most instances there is a *laissez faire* approach, with no systematic way of limiting international migration or measures to promote emigration. In recent years there have been great efforts at the regional level to secure rights of free movement, residence and establishment (in Africa ECOWAS, UEMOA, AU; in Latin America Mercosur, ALCA etc.), but their implementation has been subject to many restrictions. Most conventions, treaties and agreements have proved to be dead letters without ratification by national parliaments or their translation into national laws (Adepoju, 2000a; Broekhuis, 2006; Soulama, 2005). In sub-Saharan Africa efforts to achieve the free movement of persons have led to reduced possibilities for controlling migration, and human traffickers have been able to profit from this (Adepoju, 2005).

In recent years many arrangements have been made by northern countries (in particular the EU) with individual sending countries, for example, between Nigeria and Italy; between South Africa and Namibia, Botswana, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo; and between Senegal and France and Spain (Rutten & Muli, 2006). There is a growing number of bilateral arrangements to control migration, in some cases combined with co-development programmes (Adepoju, 2004). At the same time, there has been some intensification of recruitment, not only from the US/ Canada, the EU and the Gulf States, but also within sub-Saharan Africa. In Kenya, high school and elementary school teachers were recruited throughout the 1990s in such places as the Seychelles, Rwanda, Burundi and Congo (Rutten & Muli, 2006: 19).

As regards concern at the level of individual countries about the link between international migration and combating poverty, international migration is referred to only to a very limited extent in the context of poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) (van der Veen, 2006). There is generally no systematic policy. Migration is either referred to as a negative force, or related to positive developments, but there has been no systematic approach and international migration has not so far been cited as a structural element for combating poverty. Migration is still seen primarily as a development failure rather than as a constituent part of broader social and economic transformation processes (de Haas, 2006).

Summarising the types of programmes currently under way, we can say that they are usually a combination of the following measures:

- Policy priorities in the sending countries (also prioritised on the migration and development agenda of receiving countries and/or donor agencies)
- Increasing the flow of remittances and/or ensuring a more productive investment of money through forms of co-financing (for example co-development in West Africa, and *Tres por Uno* in Mexico).
- Measures aimed at encouraging brain gain and limiting brain drain; encouragement of return, often linked to northern programmes (MIDA, TOKTEN in Senegal, Ghana, and also Burkina Faso). While in many sending countries there is an interest in how brain gain can be given impetus (without the expectation of migrant return), many donors and receiving countries place the emphasis mainly on return and/or limiting brain drain. Donors try through programmes such as MIDA and TOKTEN to create possibilities for bringing expertise back to the region of origin, although numbers are thus far very modest and success has been limited (and the number of beneficiaries is not in proportion to the total number of migrants and/or expatriates).
- Capacity strengthening for the improvement of border controls, intended to limit immigration. Investments are made within the framework of this policy, with financing from northern countries for training customs officials and supplying equipment, to sharpen border controls. Kenya has recently strengthened its border control, in order to keep a better check on internal migration (for example by Asians) and to keep out 'undesirable aliens'. In sub-Saharan Africa, however, borders are highly porous, and migrants respond to strengthened border controls by taking alternative routes (at a higher cost and greater risk), lingering for a longer time in transition zones. This approach thus does not generally lead to a reduction in the number of illegal immigrants, partly because it does not solve the problem of overstaying (people entering legally on a tourist or student visa, and staying longer than permitted). As soon as the 'stamp' expires, the holder becomes illegal, so often there are no possibilities of leaving a country legally.
- Combating human trafficking (mainly of women and children, partly linked to the problem of forced labour). Many anti-trafficking policies are financed and carried out in collaboration with donors and/or receiving countries. Different emphases are placed by the sending and receiving countries: sending countries are critical of receiving countries because they find that illegal migrants are not treated with respect. Most Nigerian stakeholders, in particular those in non-governmental positions, criticise the anti-trafficking policies of the European states, because they do not differentiate between traffickers and their victims, who are collectively labelled as illegals and subsequently expelled. They stress that serious anti-trafficking policies should address trafficked men and women as victims and protect their rights. A blanket repressive approach is considered as working counterproductively

because it increases the reciprocal relationship between traffickers and their 'victims', who in fact have relatively good career prospects once they have paid off their debts, with the potential of improving their livelihoods in the longer term.

Since policy priorities can differ greatly, depending largely on whether the perspective is that of a sending or receiving country, we now give a summary of such priorities, from the different perspectives:

*Policy priorities in sending countries (together with the diaspora) which are partly supported by receiving countries/donor agencies*

- Instituting a Ministry of/for Diaspora (there are new initiatives in this direction in Nigeria, Senegal, Mali, Rwanda and Argentina); intensifying contacts with the population overseas).
- Starting programmes, such as cultural programmes, in the host countries; disseminating information, for example about the host country; granting the franchise to the population in the diaspora (these are currently being discussed in several countries, including Kenya and Nigeria)
- Setting up programmes aimed at attracting investment in the sending countries by improving the investment climate, e.g. by offering tax concessions (examples are China, India and Korea, and this is starting in Senegal).

*Policy priorities in sending countries which are not on the migration and development agendas of receiving countries/donor agencies*

- Protecting the rights of migrants; complying with the ILO Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Family Members (not ratified by most of the northern countries)
- Examining ways of creating youth employment (this is happening in Senegal and Burkina Faso). This is part of conventional development policy, but is not on the migration and development agendas of either receiving countries or donor agencies.
- Encouragement of immigration and return, as in Rwanda. Migration forms part of the refugee agenda, but usually only from the perspective of the reception region.
- Exporting any labour surplus and/or developing remittance corridors. In different countries active attempts are made to facilitate emigration (providing services and/or institutional reforms) and to maximise its positive effects (as in the Philippines, Kenya, and Ecuador); examining ways to capitalise best on future labour needs, and to prepare migrants better, so that they can improve the quality of the work they are likely to do. In countries such as Kenya there is an active policy aimed at exporting highly skilled labour, with

a special office for outplacement. In the Philippines, too, there is a tendency to target the training of professionals for work abroad. These initiatives are not supported by receiving countries; they are not on the agenda because they are associated with ‘threatened invasion’.

- Reducing the dependency on remittances and/or promoting a greater stability (Cape Verde, Kenya). Again this is not on the migration and development agenda of donors.

*Policy priorities in receiving countries, or of donors, which are not sufficiently in line with priorities in sending countries*

- Encouragement of circular migration: this is presented as a win-win situation by sending countries – because it makes migration possible without the threat of an invasion. From migrants’ experiences with circular migration to the Gulf States (which have strongly regulated migration with temporary labour contracts) it can be stated that there are nevertheless increasing tensions. There is a demand for this form of migration (as a means of supplementing income), but it offers no solution to those who are mainly interested in career migration. The thought of return migration plays in the background of discussions on circular migration. This leads many sending countries to react with suspicion.
- Anti-migration campaigns and/or information, designed to make people aware of risks and dangers. In discussions held in receiving countries, and by donors, emphasis is placed on the need to stop the brain drain, and the need to inform people about the risks of migration – in the sense of anti-emigration policy. (In most sending countries these issues do not stand very high on the agenda, although it is acknowledged that many people lack information about what to expect at the other end and are therefore vulnerable to exploitation.)
- Policies for improving migration data. It is mainly from donor circles that resources (such as migration statistics) are currently being provided for access to reliable information. Senegal is a pilot country in this respect (Broekhuis & Ndione, 2006). At the same time it can be noted that insufficient attention is being paid to problems relating to the definition of migration (or more specifically the paradigms underlying such concepts as newcomer, alien, IDP, refugee, circular migrant and so on), and the consequences which a particular designation may have for a person’s development chances. This less statistical and more qualitative dimension remains underexposed, but is of great importance – probably more important than the precise quantification of numbers of migrants.
- Involvement of migrants’ diaspora organisations. There has recently been a growing interest from the sending regions in making contact with their

diasporas. Governments in reception zones, and donors, are trying to involve migrants actively in the formulation and/or implementation of policy in their regions of origin, addressing migrants and such diaspora organisations as exist in the given reception region. By doing this, they are trying to benefit from the 'overseas' development potential, but the problems should not be underestimated. Many migrants in diaspora organisations are not expert in the field of development, and are often not representative or politically oriented. Indeed they are sometimes seen from the perspective of the sending countries as defectors. Whether a contribution can be made to development through the support of diaspora organisations depends on the quality of the available expertise, and – in some cases – on the degree to which the activities of diaspora organisations can be harmonised with each other – in the Philippines, for example, there are about a thousand diaspora organisations (Baggio, 2006). In the worst case, projects carried out by such organisations actually interfere with the mainstream policies carried out by the national government or local organisations.

### Final reflections and recommendations

This brings us to the final question: How can consistent migration policies contribute to combating poverty? At this moment, several 'sending' countries are looking at 'migration and development', but there are a number of reasons why international migration will not automatically result in poverty alleviation or sustainable development.

Much will depend on the type of destination. Migrants moving to the Gulf states will have fewer possibilities for upward mobility than those, for example, who migrate to the US/Canada or the EU, where conditions are better for establishment, family reunification, and so on. Within the EU there are wide differences between countries in the possibilities for integration and becoming full citizens, which will determine to a large extent whether migrants will be able to benefit from migration or not. The Netherlands, for instance, is not viewed by many migrants as an ideal destination, partly because of the language, but also because of the current integration policies. Where people do arrive in the Netherlands, this is sometimes transit migration: there is currently an exodus of Somalis from the Netherlands to the UK.

At the country level, the development potential of migration will greatly depend on the way in which countries are incorporated into the migration system, with direct consequences for the possibility of profiting from migration. Diasporic states and countries with directed South-North migration generally find themselves in a relatively favourable position, while the countries with South-South migration appear to be increasingly faced with restrictions. In the



case of South-South migration, migrants often travel without the required documentation and are vulnerable to exploitation; they do not receive protection of the receiving state; job opportunities – as well as salaries – are usually unfavourable in comparison with the northern destinations; the flow of remittances is small in comparison with the flow of money coming from the northern states. Much of the suffering of these migrants remains invisible.

To the extent that receiving states and donors are currently implementing ‘migration and development’ policies, these are aimed mainly at controlling dominant patterns of South-North migration. The areas of origin are treated as ‘sending states’ without taking into account that many of these countries also play a role as immigration and/or transition areas. The EU countries and a selected group of emigration countries are currently negotiating readmission and migration quotas (in bilateral agreements) – often without taking into consideration the negative consequences for intra-regional relations (i.e. the restriction of migration from neighbouring states).

There is another paradox: regional organisations, such as ECOWAS and the AU, aim at facilitating ‘the free movement of persons’, but also acknowledge the need to control migration. Processes of regional integration seem to have given more space to human traffickers and have restricted the ability of states to control migration.

The likelihood of international migration helping to combat poverty is less favourable than it used to be – at least in receiving countries. Migrants are increasingly attracted to criminal activities (to earn large amounts of money in a short time), and so the migration agenda has become mixed up with anti-terrorism; and human trafficking has intensified.

International migration may have helped people escape from poverty, but we should not forget that, in many cases, the impact tends to be limited, even in the most favourable circumstances. Where migrants do manage to send remittances to their areas of origin, these flows are usually geographically concentrated, and benefit only small numbers of people. Flows of remittances thus help to create ‘islands of wealth’, and will in many cases not contribute to national development. Another problem is the variability of remittance flows and their lack of sustainability. Even if remittances are stable in the short run – with first-generation migrants sending home significant amounts of money on a regular basis – this often declines in the course of time, as second or third generations lose interest and feel less committed. Experience shows that migration streams from particular areas will usually not last longer than about twenty years, and that the intensity and direction of migration will depend very much on economic growth, which will vary in time.

Even though migration is nowadays described as a strategy aimed at spreading risk (common in the ‘new economics of migration theory’), it often

results in new vulnerabilities. There is a considerable group of migrants who – due to their migration – suffer downward social mobility: they fall ill, are involved in accidents, or became victims of robberies or exploitation; and well-educated women working as domestic servants will often not be able to exploit their capabilities to the full. Another negative dimension of migration is the intensification of land conflicts, and rising land prices due to the use of remittances for purchasing land. International migration – along with the liberalisation of land markets and the use of Internet – has opened the door to a real estate boom. International migrants are increasingly appearing as a new category of absentee landowners.

Where attempts have been made by policymakers to maximise the positive impact of international migration or to restrict its negative implications, most of the sending countries in sub-Saharan Africa do not yet have well-established policies. It is a new policy field, and there is a wide variety of issues – depending very much on the particular position of each country. In our analysis we showed that there is some overlap between the ‘migration and development’ agendas of northern and southern countries (increasing the flow of remittances, combating human trafficking, improving border controls, stimulating brain gain etc.), but this is again very dependent on the country under consideration, and within the South there are considerable conflicts of interests between countries.

We also showed that – where northern countries or donors invest in ‘migration and development’ programmes (such as MIDA and TOKTEN) – the number of beneficiaries is small in comparison with the total migration flow. From the perspective of the sending countries, it seems unrealistic to expect migrants to be willing to return as long as there are no comparable employment and/or educational opportunities at home. In many sending countries, the focus is not so much on ‘return’; instead, policymakers are searching for ‘long distance’ types of support from migrant populations. They accept that people should have a right to move freely, and aim to get the diaspora involved by inviting them to send money or make investments.

In general terms, in donor policies there is a bias in favour of countries with South-North migration and little is done for the countries experiencing South-South migration.

## Recommendations

In order to improve the development impact of international migration and to make international migration more relevant to development, we have the following recommendations:

*Improvement of current policies (supported by donors and northern countries):*

- *Anti-trafficking* measures (programmes to stop the trafficking of women and children) should continue to receive high priority. This is supported by both sending and receiving countries, but sending countries are unhappy that victims and traffickers are treated equally as criminals. Priority should be given to stopping the criminalisation of the victims, and more to focusing on the traffickers. Legalisation of the victims is seen as an important requirement in making anti-trafficking more effective.
- *Anti-migration* policies and the intensification of *border controls* are not effective in restricting illegal migration and lead to increased vulnerability of migrant groups. Whereas governments of receiving countries try to combat the problem of ‘illegality’ by strengthening border controls (through capacity building, technology etc.), most migrants become irregular by ‘overstaying’.
- Where receiving countries show an interest in facilitating *circular migration*, it is necessary to examine critically previous experiences (such as guest worker programmes), and the development implications of current migration towards the Gulf states. The ageing population in Europe might offer opportunities for Africans on the European labour market, but little is known about the particularities of future labour needs, and how such migration could help to promote essential productive investments and knowledge transfer. A better orientation towards the international labour market is needed if countries wish to profit more from international migration. It is also important to anticipate better the growing competition between different migrant groups: how is it possible, for instance, to guarantee that migrants from sub-Saharan Africa will be able in the long run to compete with migrants arriving from Asia and Latin America?
- It is recommended that an analysis be made of the extent to which MIDA-TOKTEN initiatives (aimed at brain gain and brain circulation) form part of mainstream development policies (PRSPs and sectoral plans). An analysis should also be done on the extent to which these initiatives are in conflict with ‘traditional structures’. Questions should be asked, such as: What is the capacity of local institutions to facilitate ‘reintegration’ and/or the return of people, and what is the impact of ‘foreign expertise’? What kind of institutional adaptations are necessary (e.g., property rights, inheritance rights etc.)? Who is responsible for the people moving in and out, and what are the social security implications for these groups? What are the rights and obligations of circular migrants and who is responsible for them (the government of the sending or the receiving country)?
- Where support is given to migrant and diaspora organisations, it is important to consider also supporting such organisations in the countries of origin (in

Burkina Faso, for example, there are numerous migrant organisations). Northern governments and donors could continue to help migrant organisations in establishing contacts, not only with areas of origin, but also with diaspora organisations in other countries, thus facilitating communication and information flows.

#### New orientations:

- Greater priority should be given to the problems of countries with South-South migration, and to those which are transition areas and/or migration hubs; in other words how the situation of transit migrants could be improved. In doing this, sufficient attention should be paid to the Asian-African (and potentially Latin American) connection.
- More emphasis should be given to supporting both national governments and local groups (in sending countries) in establishing links with their diaspora. Many sending countries are interested in intensifying relations with countries with substantial migrant groups, but the financial means of their governments are limited.
- More attention could be paid to the worldwide problem of discrimination and xenophobia (including in the South). Rather than continuing data collection –and in so-doing deepening the problems between migrant and non-migrant populations (as is currently done by different donors) – it is necessary to make a critical review of the paradigms used (aliens, ‘immigrants’, expatriates, etc.) and to assess how, in different countries, this categorisation contributes to stigmatisation, exclusion etc.
- More attention should be paid to the negative implications of the boom in bilateral agreements (on readmission, migration quotas, etc.) for intra-regional patterns of collaboration and/or interstate relations within the South.
- Given the growing interest in circular migration (see above), it would be interesting to collect more concrete information about how to monitor ‘urgent labour needs’, not only in the North, but also within the South in relation to HIV/Aids etc. Ways of matching demand and supply need to be found, to make circular migration more relevant to African labour requirements.
- Priority should be given to providing more and better information to different categories of migrant groups. Migrants need to be informed before their departure about conditions in their intended host countries; women and children need information so that they do not become victims of traffickers, Aids and other diseases; people need to know about visa requirements, and the need to formalise their presence once they have arrived in the host country, and so on. Information is also required concerning economic

investment possibilities, assessing future labour needs, obtaining information about new laws and international treaties, etc.

- It is urgent that discussion be initiated regarding the new role of embassies and consulates. They currently provide visas and passports, but what is their future role in distributing information, in providing assistance in cases of emergency or expulsion, and in preparing agreements to improve social security etc.?
- More attention should be paid to the problems of internally displaced persons and refugees, in particular 'ecological refugees' (together with political conflicts, this is one of the causes of migration forced by human factors). In addition, early warning systems and spatial planning could help to prevent geographically-forced migration such as that caused by floods or droughts.
- It is important to mainstream 'migration and development' policies in the direction of anti-poverty strategies. The current emphasis on 'migration and development' should not result in the reallocation of money in favour of migrants (as distinct from those who remain in their places of origin). The majority of the population (97%) is geographically stable; they are quite reluctant to leave their homes and villages or towns. More explicit attention must be paid to ways of controlling population growth, as well as to improving local employment opportunities, especially for the youth.

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