

IF DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT ALLOW PEOPLE TO MIGRATE SAFELY, IT'S NOT SUSTAINABLE

Internal and international migration are fundamental human freedoms and play key roles in development processes. UNDP's 2009 [Human Development Report](#) found that, while some 200 million people are international migrants, approximately 740 million people are internal migrants, moving within national borders—typically from rural to urban areas. Among people who have moved across national borders, just over a third—fewer than 70 million people—moved from a developing to a developed country. Most international migrants moved from one developing country to another, or between developed countries. As a result, such key development issues as remittances, diaspora contributions, urbanization, rural development, border management, worker protection, human trafficking, and gender are intimately connected with migration. Because of these broad migration-development linkages, migration-related policies and programming can have very important implications for sustainable development.

Migration is both a reflection of, and is driven by, inequalities—at global, national, and local levels. Not everyone has equal access to mobility: those with the most to gain potentially from moving—the poor and low-skilled workers—often face the greatest obstacles, as they lack the requisite resources and are most constrained by policy and institutional barriers. This is particularly the case in areas affected by environmental degradation and climate change, where the most vulnerable people risk being trapped. Migration can be an important part of adaptation strategies, helping to diversify incomes for livelihoods facing environmental pressures.

It is clear that migrants and their families often reap significant benefits from moving, while also supporting the development of their home and host communities. But whether the skills, knowledge, and financial assets acquired through migration can contribute to sustainable development largely depends on economic and institutional conditions, and migration policies in countries of origin and destination.

Migration and sustainable development: the policy dimension

To translate migration trends into development opportunities,

Migration, development, and the United Nations

Established by the UN Secretary-General in early 2006, the [Global Migration Group](#) brings together the heads of 16 UN and other international agencies (including UNDP) to promote the wider application of relevant international and regional instruments and norms relating to migration. It focuses on helping its members capitalize on the opportunities and respond to the challenges of international migration.

In addition to promoting trans-national cooperation on migration issues, the Global Migration Group is also an important repository of data and analysis on migration and development.

policy makers should seek to ensure that migration—whatever its drivers—happens out of choice rather than necessity, and takes place in safe conditions. Development outcomes of migration ultimately hinge on such factors as:

- who moves (i.e., migrants' age, gender, education, socio-economic status, occupation, and ethnic identity);
- the conditions under which they move (i.e., whether movements are forced or voluntary, whether they occur via regular or irregular channels);
- how migrants fare at their destination (i.e., migrants' legal status, working and living conditions);
- whether migrants stay connected to their places of origin; and
- if conditions in places of origin are conducive to harnessing migrants' potential contributions for development.

Local and national policies, as well as international cooperation, play key roles in shaping these factors and thus in enhancing the benefits and minimizing the risks of migration for human development. Yet, global governance structures and national capacities to design and implement migration policies often remain weak. While global awareness of migration-development linkages has grown in recent years,

few countries have solid evidence and good analysis on how those linkages play out in their specific national context.

Credible evidence bases for policy making on migration and development—particularly in terms of indicators to monitor trends and measure progress—is often lacking. Broad-based multi-stakeholder engagement is needed to design, implement, monitor, and assess the impact of migration for development policies. More and better qualitative and quantitative data are needed for comprehensive analyses of the ways in which internal and international migration affects different sectors and dimensions of welfare. Combined with effective normative frameworks, clear policy goals, well developed institutional capacity, and national level policy coordination frameworks, these data and analytical capabilities can also facilitate international cooperation—since, ultimately, no country can tackle the transnational challenges of migration alone.

Scaling up pilots into sustainable migration-development partnerships

UNDP, in collaboration with the [International Organization for Migration](#) and other member agencies of the [Global Migration Group](#), is supporting the integration of migration into national development strategies, in pilot countries. The goal is to help governments develop more effective, evidence-based, participatory national policy frameworks for migration and development, based on guidance provided by the Global Migration Group's [Handbook on Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning](#). The Global Migration Group also supports UN Country Teams that are working on migration and development issues.

While this work has many dimensions, it generally focuses on removing barriers that stand in the way of freedom to move, by creating the legal, regulatory, and institutional preconditions for migrants, their families, communities, and countries of origin and destination to reap the benefits of migration—while also curbing its potentially negative effects.

Rio + 20 and migration

At Rio+20, the international community will have the opportunity to:

- Recognize the significance of migration both as integral to development—particularly in terms of remittances, diaspora contributions, urbanization, rural development, border management, worker protection, human trafficking, and gender—and as a means by which vulnerable people in disaster-prone areas and areas affected by environmental degradation can lift themselves out of poverty;
- Move the migration discourse closer to the centre of sustainable development strategies and goals, especially as they relate to cities, green jobs and social inclusion, climate change adaptation, education, and gender equality.

Important steps to be taken in this respect include:

- Including migration concerns in development planning, budgeting, and policy-making processes in

Integrated border management for sustainable development

Some observers view the free movement of labour migrants (as well as of goods and services) across national borders as inimical to national security concerns about terrorism and trafficking in weapons, narcotics, and people. Originally adopted by the European Union, the [integrated border management](#) paradigm is increasingly being applied outside of Europe, to reconcile sometimes conflicting development and security imperatives in border management.

Integrated border management promotes:

- Cooperation among the relevant state agencies (border guards, customs authorities, armed forces, local authorities in border areas, etc.), both within countries and across state borders; and
- the protection of the human rights of migrants and other individuals crossing state borders.

Integrated border management represents the application of integrated, rights-based approaches to the management of international borders and migration. It can serve as a practical example of how integrated development approaches can be applied to other sectors, and how security and development concerns can be reconciled.

UNDP has developed strong partnerships with the European Union, as well as programme countries, for [integrated border management in the former Soviet Union](#). Together with partners like the [International Organization for Migration](#) and the [International Centre for Migration Policy Development](#), more than \$200 million has gone through these programmes in the last decade, to modernize border infrastructure, train border officials, and help create post-Soviet 'borders with a human face'.

a meaningful way;

- Promoting migrants' rights and their access to opportunities, regardless of their legal status;
- Strengthening the collection and analysis of migration-related data, disaggregated by gender and age;
- Strengthening national and local capacities on migration and development, including transparent, well governed institutions, and effective mechanisms for including non-governmental stakeholders in consultation and decision-making processes, as well as service delivery to migrants and their families;
- Convening and facilitating national, regional, and global dialogues that raise awareness of the role of migration in sustainable development processes.

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