

Development on the Move:

Measuring and optimising migration's economic and social impacts

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT FINDINGS – January 2010

This short report presents a summary of the main findings from a major global research project, *Development on the Move*, carried out by the Institute for Public Policy Research (ippr) and the Global Development Network (GDN). This extensive, innovative, policy-focused research project has been underway since 2006. It has examined a wide range of migration's impacts on development, using methods that have included gathering new, comparable data in the following countries: Colombia, Fiji,¹ Georgia, Ghana, Jamaica, Macedonia and Vietnam (see map).

This pamphlet presents an overview of the project's aims and activities and some of the key findings. The full project report will be published in March 2010.



Project objectives

1. **To develop better methodologies for assessing migration's impacts.** The project designed a new, holistic approach to the study of migration and development. Our aim was to examine the range of various effects that international migration – both immigration and emigration – has on economic and social development.
2. **To improve the evidence base.** The project commissioned a set of new country studies, each of which was conducted in the same way, combining analysis of the existing literature with new data taken from extensive, in-depth household surveys and stakeholder interviews.
3. **To analyse policy impacts and options.** An explicit focus of the project was current and potential policy frameworks for managing migration and its impacts. We wanted to explore how policymakers could enhance positive impacts and reduce negative ones.
4. **To build research capacity on migration.** In order to help build migration research capacity and strengthen research networks, especially in developing countries, teams based in the countries studied conducted the majority of research for the project, with support and coordination from GDN and ippr staff and advisers.
5. **To promote multi-disciplinary analysis.** By adopting a multi-disciplinary framework and by assembling researchers and advisers from different social science backgrounds, the project aimed to go beyond the narrow focus of much current migration research, and to promote holistic analysis.

Please note that the findings in this paper are preliminary and should not be quoted.

Box 1: Scope and definitions of the project

Development on the Move seeks to investigate migration's effects:

- on a range of economic and social outcomes: economic impacts, educational impacts, health impacts, gender impacts and 'wider' social impacts
- for individual migrants themselves, as well as their families, communities and nations
- that occur both directly as a result of movement (through immigration, emigration and return) and indirectly (for example, through remittances, other actions by migrants that might impact on events back 'home', and the potential that migration has to change people's behaviour).

The project uses a relatively liberal definition of 'migrant', with a focus on those who have moved fairly recently. Our survey asks households whether or not they have one or more of three kinds of migrants:

- **Immigrant:** A person who was born in another country but has come to live in the country being studied.
- **Returned migrant:** A person who was born in the country of our study and who lives there now but who at some point has lived in another country for three months or more. They may have returned at any time.
- **Absent migrant:** A person who was born in the country of our study and who left to go and live in another within the last 10 years. Because we only gather information from households in our country of study, we do not study households that have migrated in their entirety, as they leave no members behind who could be interviewed by our fieldworkers.

Project methodology

In each of the country case studies the researchers gathered together the existing evidence on migration's development impacts and complemented it with two additional kinds of new data – information gathered from stakeholder interviews, and new, nationally-representative household surveys.

The most important and innovative aspect of our approach was the household survey. This was a major new survey, designed specifically for this project to give us reliable data on how common migration is and to investigate a range of its development impacts (for further information on the focus of our research and the definitions used, see Box 1).

Each survey is nationally representative (with the exception of Colombia which, for logistical and financial reasons, was representative of urban areas only), which means that the results give a picture of the scale and impacts of migration across the countries as a whole. This should mean that policymakers can draw on the findings with confidence, knowing that they depict trends for their entire country, and not just certain specific groups.

The final dataset includes information from almost 10,000 households, each of which was asked 178 questions. The topics covered included household members' characteristics (such as age, occupation, gender) and their experiences of migration, and information on the household as a whole (such as their consumption patterns and receipt of remittances). Around two thirds of the households in the final dataset had a member who was a migrant of some sort (either currently absent, returned, or an immigrant), and about one third did not, making households with migrants much more common in our dataset than in the population as a whole (see Table 1 for further details on this). Households without migrants were included so that they could be compared with those with migrants.

A key issue in interpreting data on migration is attributing causality – in other words, understanding when migration is genuinely the cause of a particular trend. For example, if the data show that households with migrants have higher incomes than households without, how can we be sure that migration has caused the increase in incomes? The real explanation might be, for instance, that members of richer households are more likely to be able to afford to migrate. To address this problem, researchers used a range of techniques, which are described in Box 2.

Box 2: Understanding causality

We have used four main approaches to try to unravel causality.

1. We use a range of econometric techniques. Alongside methods such as OLS (ordinary least squares), probit and logit (which are not able to address causality issues) we also use propensity score matching (PSM) and instrumental variable-based analysis (IV). These latter methods have been shown to provide more accurate estimates of migration's causal impacts than the former², and because of this, we place greater emphasis on results that are derived through their use. The examples we cite in this paper are drawn from PSM and IV analysis, except where mentioned.

2. We included retrospective questions in our household survey, asking not just about the situation households face now but also what was taking place five years ago. This allows us to compare how outcomes have changed over time.

3. Where we examine the effects of returning migrants on development, we often ask the migrants themselves about the role they think migration played. While they cannot know what would have taken place had they not migrated, they are uniquely well placed to give an impression of the effects that living in another country has had.

4. We use qualitative as well as quantitative data – existing knowledge from the literature, as well as expert opinion and commentary from stakeholders – in order to contextualise and explain particular quantitative findings. This mix of methods assists in understanding what is cause and what is effect.

Findings

How common is migration?

Development on the Move evaluated existing estimates of migration (those in use in-country and those taken from the University of Sussex's Global Migrant Origin database, which is based on global census data), as well as adding new information, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Estimates of frequency of migration

Country	Pop'n size	Total emigrant stock [1]		No. emigrants departed within last decade leaving some household members behind	Total stock returned migrants [2]	Total immigrant stock [3]	
		Estimates in use in-country	GMO estimates			DotM estimates	GMO estimates
Colombia [4]	44,530,000	460,000–3,300,000 Consensus towards upper end	1,650,000	-	-	115,000	-
Georgia	4,680,000	196,000–1,500,000 Consensus around 900,000	1,040,000	140,000	138,000	219,000	526,000
Ghana	23,350,000	2,000,000–4,000,000	960,000	541,000	877,000	614,000	664,000
Jamaica	2,690,000	1,000,000+	950,000	130,000	240,000	13,000	17,000
Macedonia	2,040,000	3300–700,000 Consensus around 450,000	260,000	163,000	159,000	33,000	59,160
Vietnam [5]	86,210,000	3,000,000+	2,000,000	1,200,000	479,000	22,000	-

Notes: 1. No. of people born in that country who currently live abroad. 2. No. of people living in that country who have lived in another country for three months or more. 3. No. of people currently living in that country who were born in another country. 4. No DotM statistics are provided for Colombia because the survey there was only representative for urban areas and not the country as a whole. 5. The Vietnamese researchers did not collect data on households with immigrants.

GMO = University of Sussex's Global Migrant Origin database; DotM = Development on the Move

Box 3: Calculating the rate of return

We calculate this rate – the number of people who return out of the group who initially migrate – using *Development on the Move* (DotM) return migration figures and an estimate of each country's stock of emigrants calculated using the GMO and the commonly used estimates for each country (further details on how this number was reached are provided in the main project report).

The two figures are a good match in that they both refer to total stocks, with the DotM information referring to anyone born and currently living in the country of study who has ever migrated, and the emigration statistics referring to anyone currently abroad who was born in the country of study, no matter when they migrated.

However, because the DotM data defines a migrant as someone who has moved for three months or more, and the GMO uses a one year or more definition, the statistics may overstate the rate of return migration somewhat, depending on what proportion of returning migrants are away for between three and 12 months.

Also, it should be noted that in Ghana and Macedonia the various existing estimates for emigration differ greatly from one another which makes the margin of error for our rate of return estimates for these countries quite high. In Ghana, where this issue is most extreme, while we suggest the rate of return is around 37 per cent, it may range between 18 and 48 per cent. As such, these estimates in particular should be treated with some caution.

Two points in particular emerge from Table 1. First, it is interesting to note that the kind of emigration often assumed to have the greatest development impacts – that is, recent emigration in which the migrant leaves other household members behind – forms only a relatively small proportion of all emigration from the developing countries studied: no more than 60 per cent for the countries we have data for, and in some places far less than this, just above 10 per cent for Georgia, for instance.

Second, the project presents the first nationally representative and comparable statistics on return migration that have ever been collected, as far as we are aware. When 'rates of return' are calculated (see Box 3) we find that although they vary somewhat between countries, in no cases are they very high. In Georgia we estimate about 12 out of every 100 emigrants have returned, in Vietnam about 16 out of every 100, and in Jamaica about 20. Ghana and Macedonia see somewhat higher levels of return with 34 migrants returning to Macedonia for every 100 who have departed, and 37 out of 100 in Ghana.

However, even where rates of return appear broadly similar, that does not mean that return migration is composed of similar people across countries, or that is driven by similar forces or has the same development effects. Migration's nature and its impacts need to be explored explicitly and separately from its scale, as we do in the following sections.

Why do people migrate?

Our survey gives an insight into the motivations driving emigration and return across the developing world. Drivers of emigration appear remarkably consistent across countries, with the pursuit of economic opportunity clearly emerging as the major reason. As shown in Figure 1 opposite, employment and higher wages are by far the strongest motivators of movement, with having the opportunity to remit the third most important. These findings demonstrate explicitly that migrants do not leave just to further their own economic prospects, but also to improve their families' economic welfare.

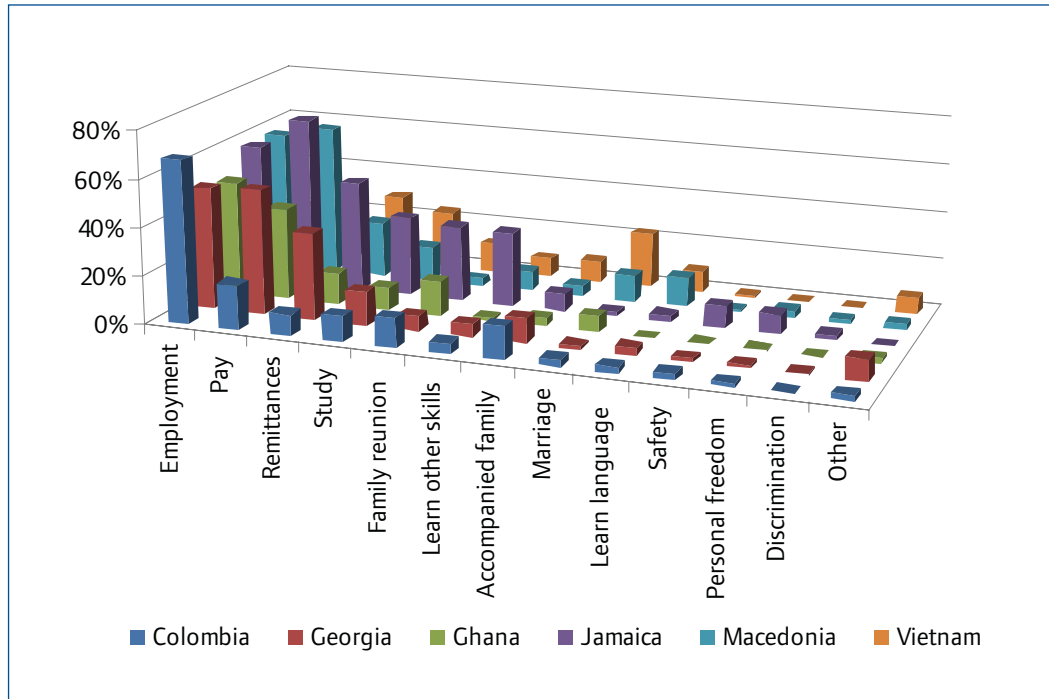
After these economic factors come two other broad categories of motivation – learning (migration for formal study, to learn a language and to acquire other skills) and family (migrating alongside family members, or to join those already living abroad). The least commonly given reasons relate to social and political problems in the country of origin. This is striking – and perhaps surprising – given that some of the case study countries, Colombia for instance, have experienced turmoil and instability in recent years. But this does not mean that such problems *aren't* drivers of emigration – political and social problems often create the economic conditions that drive economic emigration.

While reasons for departure were broadly consistent across countries, reasons for return were much less so – both between and within countries, suggesting return may be driven by more personal reasons than departure is.

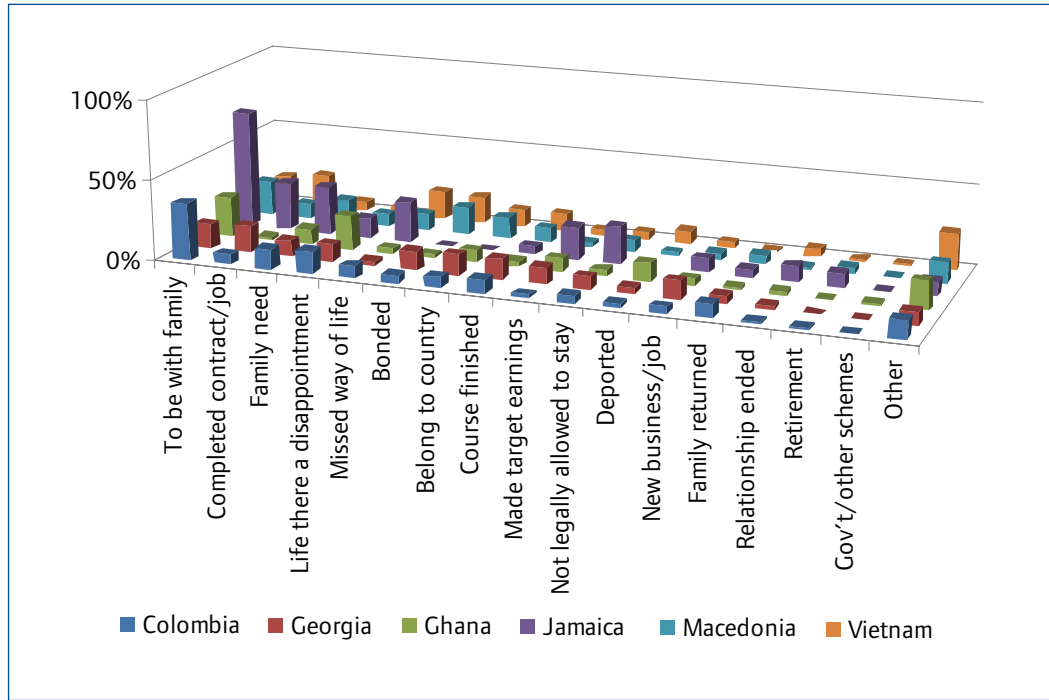
It is still possible to draw out some common themes, however. As shown in Figure 2, family reasons are the biggest driver motivating return, to be

**Figure 1:
Reasons given
for emigration**

Note: The question was asked in an open form, with respondents answering freely and interviewers recording all factors mentioned, except in Jamaica, where a check list was given to the migrant, who was asked whether each motivation applied or not. Therefore the data for Jamaica may not be fully compatible with that for the other countries.



**Figure 2:
Reasons given
for return**



with family representing the principal reason, followed by return because someone in the family needs them to come home.

After family considerations come three sets of reasons that are mixed up together. First, there are ‘completion’ motivators – the migrant finishes their job or contract, their studying, or makes the amount of money they went abroad to earn. Second, there are visa and related issues – people returning because of having a bond placed on them,³ people returning voluntarily because their visa expired, or people who are deported. Thus immigration regimes in countries of destination do drive some return migration, despite assertions by some that they have no effect. A third set of reasons revolve around the migrant either being disappointed with their life overseas, or missing the culture and lifestyle at ‘home’.

New economic opportunities in the country of origin – such as a new job, or wanting to start a new business – and government or other schemes to motivate return are only mentioned rarely. This is likely to be disappointing for policymakers who hope to tempt returnees back by highlighting new economic opportunities or providing specially tailored programmes.

Remittance patterns

Table 2 highlights the proportion of absent migrants who remit to the household they left behind when they migrated – somewhere between one third and three quarters, depending on the country in question. Given the information we have on the proportion of households in each country that have a migrant, we are able to calculate the proportion of the population in each country that receives remittances from their own absent migrant. This ranges between 2 and 11 per cent.

Country	Proportion of absent migrants that remit to household in country of origin	Est. proportion of all households that receive funds from absent migrant	Est. proportion of all households in country who receive remittances from 'non-member remitter'
Colombia	43%	2%	4%
Georgia	72%	11%	10%
Ghana	66%	6%	4%
Jamaica	67%	7%	28%
Macedonia	36%	9%	7%
Vietnam	77%	4%	9%

Our research also shows that it is very common for households to receive funds from migrants who were not previously members of their households – typically more distant relatives, or in some cases (especially in Jamaica), friends. In three countries – Colombia, Jamaica and Vietnam – more households are estimated to benefit from this kind of remittance than those sent by their 'own' absent migrant. 'Non-household member' remitters send less money, and send it less frequently, than a household's own absent migrant, but the differences tend not to be very great. Thus it is clear that the development impacts of migration extend beyond the migrant's own household into the wider community: an important finding, challenging the commonly held perception that migration's benefits may only go as far as their immediate household.

We also explore how the characteristics of migrants influence their remitting behaviour. Neither gender nor the migrant's level of education prior to departure has a clear or consistent influence over the likelihood that they will remit, nor do these factors appear to affect the amounts they send. Rather, patterns vary by country, with Vietnamese women remitting more than men, for example, while Macedonian women remit less than men. Other characteristics appear to have more consistent effects – for example, if the migrant leaves close family behind (such as a partner or children), they remit more. This is unsurprising, but may raise awkward trade-off questions in policymakers' minds, especially in countries of origin, for while extended periods of separation are no doubt bad for family welfare, there may be a temptation to pursue that kind of migration to maximise remittance flows.

How is migration affecting development?

(a) Economic impacts

Our research finds that individual migrants' own disposable income⁴ is improved – quite often dramatically – by migration. Typically between 70 and 90 per cent of migrants report

to have experienced an increase in their real disposable incomes while abroad, the majority seeing large increases. Of the remainder, the majority experience no change, and few see their incomes decline.

Our research suggests that not only does migration raise individual migrants' incomes: it also raises the incomes of households they come from and/or remit to.⁵ For example, in Colombia households that receive remittances are 12 per cent less likely to be below the national poverty line than those who do not; and in Georgia having an absent migrant makes a household more likely to have built up its assets, being 10 percentage points more likely to have acquired a DVD player over the preceding five years, and 9 percentage points more likely to have acquired a washing machine.

We also found that receiving remittances seems to have a positive impact on **business ownership**. In Colombia, for example, receiving remittances raises the likelihood that a household has a bank account used for running a business by 5 percentage points. On the other hand, having an absent migrant in the household, does not appear to increase business ownership. The general trend for households with returned migrants suggests that on the whole this, too, increases the likelihood of the household owning a business. Here, results vary significantly by country: while in Georgia returnees appear to have no effect on business ownership, in Macedonia the presence of a returned migrant appears to make a household more than twice as likely to be running a business than similar households without such migrants. Doing business in Georgia is generally regarded as relatively easy, and in Macedonia less so, and it may be that this means that there is less need in Georgia than in the Balkan nation for the advantages that migration brings.

Receiving remittances appears, on the whole, to have little impact on **labour force participation** or unemployment. Nor does return migration affect household members' employment status, though the returning migrants themselves tend to have a greater chance of being unemployed for the first 12 months after return than would be expected of people with similar characteristics (after that they adjust and this risk dissipates). The evidence on the impact of having an absent migrant is more divided but the most notable results suggest that migration increases employment. In Georgia having an absent migrant reduces the likelihood that anyone in the household is unemployed by 37 per cent, and a result of a similar magnitude is found in Jamaica (though the latter result comes from a logit model and so is unable to address questions of causality).

Both households receiving remittances and those with absent migrants see an increase in their **savings**. In Colombia, for example, households in receipt of remittances save US\$4 more per capita per month than otherwise, and households with absent migrants US\$3 per capita per month (putting this in context, the World Bank says the average monthly per capita income in Colombia is US\$228). Return migrants appear to have no effect on savings one way or the other.

(b) Educational impacts

The evidence suggests that being in receipt of remittances and having an absent migrant have a positive impact on household spending on education. Households in Ghana with absent migrants, for example, spend US\$107 more per year on education than those without. Return migrants appear to have no particular impact one way or the other.

In terms of school attendance, however, migration seems to have no effect (whether household experience is through the receipt of remittances, having a migrant away and/or having a returned migrant in their household). Putting these two results together suggests that households with migrants are probably making small improvements to the quality of

children's education, investing in materials like books, or sending them to better schools, rather than making larger changes such as enrolling them for an extra year's schooling.

One facet that does appear to have a substantial impact is **parental migration**. Some evidence suggests that when a parent migrates, this has a considerable effect on whether or not their children, left behind in the country of origin, are in education (though results vary significantly by country). In Jamaica, parental absence is associated with younger children in particular being much less likely to be in school, whereas in Vietnam and Macedonia the result is reversed, with parental migration being associated with children having a substantially greater chance of being in school (in Macedonia migrants' offspring aged 19–22 with absent parents are more than three times as likely to be in education than those without). However, the models that examine this do not control for causality, and so it is difficult to know how much of this association is driven by migration, and how much by reverse causality.

(c) Health impacts

Where households receive remittances, there is some strong evidence from across the studies that spending on health increases. In Vietnam, for example, regional fixed effects analysis suggests that not only does receiving remittances raise healthcare spending, remittances also have a stronger positive effect than other forms of income. And having an absent migrant on the whole appears to increase spending on healthcare, although here the evidence is thinner and less consistent.

While having a returned migrant does not appear to affect spending on education, it does seem to affect healthcare spending. In Jamaica, for example, each additional returned migrant in a household increases healthcare spending by more than 50 per cent. The patterns of spending change too, so that less emphasis is placed on traditional Jamaican medicines and more on the kinds of treatments that migrants will have been exposed to in the countries they have been living in (predominantly the US, UK and Canada). We suggest that while this analysis is based on OLS modelling and thus does not explicitly address questions of causality, these combined findings do point towards migration being the cause of the changed behaviour.

Returning migrants, while they appear to boost healthcare spending, do not affect household members' reported health status, and neither on the whole (except for in Colombia, where effects are negative), do absent migrants or remittances. As in education, there is a distinction between spending patterns and outcomes – migration appears to have positive impacts on spending on health and education, on the whole, but not to the extent that outcomes such as household members' health, or school attendance, improve.

We also look into the effect that migration has on country's **healthcare provision** – an issue that often gains attention because of fears that 'brain drain' draws healthcare professionals out of a developing country. Our evidence suggests that there is a danger of overstating the damage that brain drain can do, though there may be problems in some cases.

'Incentive effects' may be the most important factor here: people may choose to become healthcare professionals because doing so will allow them to emigrate. But how strong is the incentive – to what extent can it counterbalance the effect that emigration has on the number of healthcare professionals working in the country? In Jamaica and Ghana 20 per cent and 25 per cent of medically trained personnel respectively are located abroad⁶, which, according to the literature, is probably above the level which incentive effects can compensate for. On the other hand, Vietnam and possibly Georgia might actually benefit from having higher levels of

medical migration, as it might lead them to have more healthcare staff than they do at present, with incentive effects more than outweighing the numbers of people who actually leave.

(d) Gender impacts

Exposure to different norms and experiences while abroad can, it is suggested, change people's attitudes towards gender roles. Among our returned migrants this was indeed the case: typically more than 70 per cent of migrants from each country said that as a result of their experiences, they were more committed to efforts to achieve gender equality in their country of origin. However, changes in attitudes do not seem to translate into changes in behaviour within returned migrants' own households (or in households in receipt of remittances or with absent migrants). While there is less evidence on this area than on some of the other impacts, none of it suggests that migration is changing who – men or women – undertakes household tasks such as childcare, home repairs and cooking.

(e) Other social impacts

We look here at migration's effects on family structure. While it is clear that in some cases migration splits families, it has not been clear either how common this kind of migration is in comparison with other kinds, or if it leads to permanent separations. Our study suggests that while some migration does split nuclear families, this does not occur as often as one might expect – for example estimates suggest that about 6 per cent of emigration from Jamaica involves a parent leaving a child behind, and similarly in Colombia emigration makes it 6 per cent less likely that parents and children are kept together. These numbers are so low partly because much of the emigration that takes place is of whole households.

It does appear that initially temporary separation may lead to permanent separation, however, even when migrants return. For example, in Vietnam rates of separation and divorce are higher among returned migrants than the non-migrant population, as are numbers of single parent families, who make up 4.5 per cent of non-migrant families but 6.7 per cent of returned migrant families. That said, there is no investigation of causality here (and it may be that people migrate to escape from a bad relationship, or feel freer to go because their family life is poor), and the rates are still quite low.

Policy implications

The findings from *Development on the Move* have some clear implications for policymakers, particularly in the countries that were studied. In each country, there seem to be a number of ways in which migration is shaping economic and social development, either through direct income impacts or indirect social impacts. The resultant nuanced picture should give national policymakers a better understanding of where to intervene.

At the individual and household level, this project contributes further evidence that in almost all cases migration can be an important way of improving livelihoods and expanding capabilities. This should be an important reminder to policymakers and practitioners that migration should not be seen primarily as a 'problem' for development. While it may create challenges, migration does allow people – many of whom may have few alternatives – to improve their own standard of living and that of their families and others to whom they remit. The evidence suggests, moreover, that through business creation, increased labour market participation and other spillover effects, it may also improve development outcomes even for people who do not have a direct relationship with a migrant.

That said, poor economic opportunities in developing countries drive migration and are also likely to make return less attractive. Plus, while migration is improving many outcomes for people in developing countries, these changes tend to be incremental. Nothing in the

findings of this project suggests that migration is transformational at the societal level, or that it can be relied on to act as a national strategy for development. Rather, the fact that people are migrating in order to achieve certain goals (and are not being attracted back by opportunities at 'home') should be taken as a reflection of people struggling to achieve their aims and improve their lives in their country of origin, and that more needs to be done to promote sustainable national development. This is not news – policymakers do not need migration to remind them of the need for development – but it is important to note because there is a danger that migration and its benefits are used as a reason for development to be pursued with less urgency, when it should be seen as another indicator that successful development strategies must be found.

An equally important implication of this project's broad framework has been to underline the complexity of impacts that migration can generate. For example, while large-scale emigration from one particular sector (such as health) can in some instances have a negative impact, there are many other ways in which the departure of those migrants may be having positive impacts on the society they have left behind. *Development on the Move* has cast light on some of the better known of those impacts (such as the economic benefits of remittances) and those that have not been studied much in this way (such as attitudes to gender equality). The research suggests that any attempt to intervene based on a narrow or short-term view of migration's impacts could be counterproductive.

More generally, the findings emphasise how powerful a force migration is – it is very common; it is successful in improving key aspects of migrants' and others' lives; and the policies put in place around it can shape it but cannot control or determine it. This implies that policies that acknowledge and even facilitate people's migration ambitions are likely to be more effective than those that work against them.

As such, policies such as those which facilitate legal migration make it easier for migrants to invest and buy property in their country of origin while away, or reduce remittance costs are likely to boost migration's development impacts, as these are all policies that recognise and work with people's migratory intentions and migrants' ties and interactions with their country of origin. In contrast, policies that try to stop emigration, induce return without changing the wider policy environment, or even those that are simply poorly connected to the lives migrants live (such as policies that try to induce migrants to invest in community development projects over which they have little control or to which they have few links) are much more likely to fail. Good policy interventions should be based on a sound understanding of migrants' motivations and real life experiences, and should 'go with the flow' of migration as an unstoppable fact of life in the 21st century.

Finally, by focusing on recent migration, this project has also uncovered evidence that the scale, nature and even impacts of migration seem to be changing. In some countries there has been much more short-term migration that falls below the generally accepted threshold of who is defined as a migrant and may not be officially recorded as migration by border controls. For example, when a Jamaican goes to the United States and works cash-in-hand for a few months before returning home, this is generally not classed as international migration. Yet, such behaviour does seem to be common in some contexts and potentially has development impacts as important as those from longer-term migration.

Furthermore, the impacts of new communications technologies seem to be transforming the ways that migrants can interact with their home country. Policymakers interested in managing migration, let alone harnessing its development benefits, should recognise that today's migration patterns do not mirror those of yesterday. While migration may be an age-old human strategy for seeking betterment, the conditions under which migration takes place and the nature of its impacts seem to be evolving constantly.

Next steps

The main *Development on the Move* project report will be published in March 2010, and will be available on the GDN and ippr websites (www.gdnet.org and www.ippr.org).

The individual country reports, currently in the process of being finalised, will also be available on those websites. You can already find the project working paper series there.

Launch events have been held in Ghana and Macedonia, with the others to follow in the next few months.

Further project outputs are also planned, including a publicly available version of the household dataset, an edited volume containing versions of the papers, and launch events in further locations.

Stay in touch

If you are interested in joining the mailing list for project outputs, or if you would like someone to present the project's findings to your organisation, please contact Laura Chappell at ippr – l.chappell@ippr.org.

Endnotes

1. Results from Fiji are still to come.
2. See D McKenzie, J Gibson and S Stillman (2006) *How Important is Selection? Experimental vs non-experimental measures of the income gains from migration*, IZA discussion paper 2087
3. Bonds are arrangements whereby when a migrant goes abroad supported by the government of their country of origin (often for study), they agree to return, and if they do not they have to pay a certain amount to the government.
4. We asked whether migrants were 'overall wealthier when they lived abroad than before they left the country'. This measure should give an accurate picture of real disposable incomes, as it requires the respondent to reply taking into account issues such as differences in costs, and discounting any money they earn which they don't benefit from (e.g. money they send back to the country of origin as remittances).
5. While there is some overlap between households that receive remittances and those with an absent migrant, they are not the same (see Table 2). It seems likely that effects on the former group come predominantly through the receipt of remittances themselves. But for households with absent migrants, while they will get some effect through the receipt of remittances, other 'channels' of effect are also likely to be important, such as the direct effects of the migrant's absence (including the fact that they are no longer present in the domestic labour market), as well as ideas and attitudes they 'transmit' back to household members.
6. Estimates taken from F Docquier (2006) *Brain drain and inequality across nations*, IZA discussion paper 2440

Development on the Move: the team

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