



Poverty, Vulnerability and Migration Choice

IMISCOE A2 Workshop

18-19 May 2006

The Graduate Institute of Development Studies - Room Aubert,
20, rue Rothschild, 1211 Geneva 21

Poverty, Vulnerability and Migration Choice **18-19 May 2006**

This workshop explored the interconnections between poverty and vulnerability on the one hand, and various migration issues on the other and encouraged a dialogue between researchers and policy-makers. The main issues tackled during this two-day event are presented in the following sections, with an emphasis on the findings that may support policies. The programme, with the titles of the sessions and papers, on which this report is based, is provided in Annex 1. Annex 2 provides a list of participants.

Migration Choice and Migration Culture

In their presentation, Carletto, Davies and Stampini emphasized the role of family migration networks and accumulated migration experience for reinforcing migration choice. They argued that family networks are a significant determinant of both permanent and temporary migration and they provide an important source of support to new migrants. On the other hand, Collyer's quantitative analysis of the characteristics of the culture of migration in two Moroccan regions emphasized that gender and environmental factors are significant predictors of the intention to migrate. His findings contrast with and question earlier studies that see social networks as the main determinant of a culture of migration. However, the author argues that the fact that social networks, work, education or information have no apparent impact on the desire to migrate is itself an important result because it suggests that migration has become (in certain areas) a broad social phenomenon that influences individuals' actions regardless of their personal or family circumstances.

Schoorl et al. explored the role of education, perceived income position, economic activity and social networks in informing migration choice in four African countries: Morocco, Egypt, Ghana and Senegal. The roles of these factors vary from one country to another and this shows that local contexts are very important. For example education seems to exert very little influence on the intention to migrate in Morocco and Senegal but plays a very important role in Egypt and Ghana, especially for women.

These findings suggest that policies tackling migration have to be adapted to the 'local' culture of migration. In some countries family/kin network may enhance the potential for migration, whereas in other countries the experience of migration, one's assessment of the opportunities in the home country and gender may inform the choice between working in or outside one's country.

Migration as a Livelihood/ Coping Strategy

Kaczmarczyk argues that contemporary migration from Poland is a livelihood strategy for coping with a market economy in transition. Migration and especially remittances represent a social protection strategy against risks (mainly unemployment in Poland) and poverty. The author stresses that social and economic change has a great impact on international migration. Thus, he argues that future migration trends will depend on the reforms carried out and the economic performance of the country.

Different coping strategies are emphasized by Rafique, Massey and Rogaly. They explore the role of temporary labour migration as a livelihood strategy in poor rural areas in East India. The

demographic impact of this movement is considerable as tens of millions of poor people move away from their places of residence to find work for weeks or months. The authors pay particular attention to the livelihoods of family members left behind (their strategies for managing food, money and healthcare) and the linkages between social relations and informal social protection i.e. the support of kin in time of need.

Helga Rittersberger –Tılıç discusses the role of family/kin networks used by rural-to-urban migrants to cope with poverty in Turkey. The importance of these networks is explained by the role of patriarchal authority within families and the weak role of the state in providing social assistance. The author argues that kin support ‘relieves pressure on public welfare institutions’. However, this comes with a price because ‘the solidarity that characterizes most families leaves only a small space for individuals to gain self-reliance and to make independent personal decisions on economic, social and cultural issues’ (Rittersberger –Tılıç, 23).

The papers presented emphasize that migration (international and internal) as a livelihood strategy needs to be analysed in a complex context, ranging from macroeconomic reforms to the livelihoods of people who do not migrate but are affected by migration.

Migrant Status and Vulnerability

Sabates-Wheeler and Natali explore why migrants return to Ghana and whether having a legal status in the country where they work enables returnees to strengthen their livelihoods upon return. The authors argue that, on the one hand, ‘poorer people face the dual burden of the inertia of lingering poverty and the lower likelihood of obtaining the correct legal documents to support migration as a result of poverty, with both of these factors impeding their ability to use the migration experience to their advantage’ (Sabates-Wheeler et al., 20). On the other hand, legal migrants are able to work abroad longer than illegal migrants and they are thus more likely to acquire assets that facilitate sustainable success upon return. The research suggests that migration policies should facilitate the access of poor migrants to legal migration.

Piguet discusses different aspects of decent work (employment, social protection, workers rights, social dialogue) in the case of migrants. The author emphasizes the main challenges faced by migrant workers and then makes some policy recommendations. The author shows that migrants have problems with mastering the language of the ‘host’ country, their qualifications are rarely recognised, they get low salaries, are employed on short term contracts and have little power to negotiate. To address these issues, Piguet makes several recommendations including language classes for migrants, campaigns against undocumented work, and equal treatment at the workplace for migrants and natives.

The presentation made by Moret focused on ‘irregular secondary movements’ of Somali refugees and asylum-seekers from eight countries: Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, the Netherlands, South Africa, Switzerland and Yemen i.e. their trajectories, the different stages in their migration history and their underlying motivations, for informing policies targeting refugees. The study revealed that secondary movements are due to dissatisfaction with refugee/asylum-seekers’ protection, legal status and/or living conditions. They may also be viewed as collective coping strategies aimed at diversifying both the risks related to refugee situations and the resources of members of the extended family’ (Moret et al., 30). Thus, they persist, due to family ties and the desire for better legal, economic, and social conditions. This draws attention to the need to improve the status of refugees. The authors conclude that

'enlarging the rights of refugees, and enabling local integration, would certainly have an effect on the scope of these movements' (Moret et al., 31).

The papers included in this section make recommendations for the social protection of migrant workers, refugees and asylum seekers.

International-Internal Linkages

Zeza et al. explore the spatial patterns in the distribution of poverty and migration in Albania, using a combination of survey and census data. The authors suggest that internal and international migration appear to be associated in opposite ways to observed poverty and welfare levels. For example 'while poverty acts as a push factor for internal migration, it seems to be a constraining factor for the more costly international migration' (Zeza et al., 1). The authors talk of 'three basic district typologies with respect to migration: districts that specialise in internal out-migration, districts that absorb much of this internal migration but are also source of large international migration flows, and districts that have high rates of international migration but small or negligible internal migration flows' (Zeza et al., 17). On this basis they suggest that the relationships between poverty and migration should be discussed separately for internal and international migration.

Hein de Haas explores whether internal and international migration increase household income and wealth over four countries: Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey. He concludes that international migration (especially accumulated migration experience) has a significant and positive effect on both household income and wealth, whereas internal migration experience does not have a significant effect on either.

The studies presented show that internal migration has little effect on the welfare of the household whereas international migration does make a difference. This may reinforce the idea that international migration is an important coping strategy, which needs to be taken into account as such.

Remittances and Poverty Alleviation

Castaldo and Reilly look at the impact of domestic and international remittances on household expenditure patterns in Albania. The research suggests that only international remittances influence the spending habits of Albanian households. Moreover, the authors argue that durable commodities can be interpreted as investment-type goods as they may have multiplier effects within the local economy, as increased demand for these types of goods creates incentives for the establishment of new retail businesses. In this sense, external migrant remittances constitute an important source of local economic development in Albania. Consequently, policy-makers should concentrate on facilitating the transfer of remittances.

Ciobanu explores the impact of migration on community development in several Romanian villages and argues that the likelihood of migrants' investment in the community of origin depends not on the length of migration history and accumulated financial capital but on the level of development of the community and migrants' status after migration i.e. the cultural, economic and social capitals they accumulate during their migration experience. These factors influence the consumption behaviour of migrants and their propensity for investment.

The presentations suggest that there is no simple and straightforward link between migration and poverty alleviation or development and local context, before or after migration. Each case needs to be evaluated individually for assessing the improvement or worsening of the situation.

Migration and Development

McCarthy et al. explored whether migration has an impact on agriculture in Albania. The authors looked at how migrants influence the choice of agricultural activities in their households, on the basis of their financial capital and the household's physical and human capital endowments. They argued that migration stimulates livestock production, thus unlocking the 'livestock side' of Albanian agriculture, which overall appears to offer higher returns.

Lassailly-Jacob and François Gemenne explored how environmental vulnerability and poverty interact in migration strategies, creating 'environmental refugees'. The authors focused on two cases of slow-induced migration: Sahel farmers and inhabitants of a small island. The authors argued that migration determined by environmental degradation is a complex issue, interlinked with political and economic choices regarding the pace of economic development, pollution and their effects.

ANNEX 1: Programme

17/18 May	Registration of Participants		
18 May			
8:45	Registration and Coffee/tea		
9.00-9.30	Opening session		
	Rachel Sabates-Wheeler	Sussex Centre for Migration Research	Chair
	Richard Black	Sussex Centre for Migration Research	
	Michel Carton	Institut Universitaire d'Etudes du Développement, Genève	
	Rosita Fibbi	Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies (SFM), Neuchâtel	
9.30-11.15	Migration Choice and Migration Culture		
	Hans Werner Mundt	Senior Advisor, Migration and Development Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)	Discussant
	Michael Collyer	Sussex Centre for Migration Research	How does a 'culture of migration' affect motivations for migration?
	Gero Carletto	World Bank Washington	Familiar faces, familiar places: the role of family networks and previous experience for Albanian migrants
	Benjamin Davis	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	
	Marco Stampini	Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna Pisa	
11.15-11.45	Coffee/tea break		
11:45-13:00	Migration as a Livelihood/ Coping Strategy		
	Charlotte Heath	Department for International Development, UK	Discussant
	Pawel Kaczmarczyk	Centre of Migration Research, Faculty of Economic Sciences, Warsaw University	Migration as a livelihood strategy: the case of Poland
	Abdur Rafique Deeptima Massey Ben Rogaly	Sussex Centre for Migration Research	Migration for hard work: a reluctant livelihood strategy for poor households in West Bengal, India
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break		
14:00 – 16:00	Migrant Status and Vulnerability		
	Hein de Haas	International Migration Institute, Oxford	Discussant
	Etienne Piguet	University of Neuchâtel	Migration and decent work
	Rachel Sabates-Wheeler	Sussex Centre for Migration Research	Legality, return and pathways out of poverty

	Claudia Natali	United Nations World Food Programme	
	Joëlle Moret	Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies (SFM) Neuchâtel	Secondary movements as livelihood strategies to deal with economic, social and legal insecurity: the case of Somali refugees
16:00-16:30	Coffee/tea break		
16:30-17:30		Official Presentation of the Study conducted by the Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies	The Path of Somali Refugee into Exile
19:30 -	Dinner	Restaurant Awash	Rue du Valais 11, 1202 Geneva
 19 MAY			
9.00-10.45	International-Internal Linkages		
	Rachel Sabates-Wheeler	Sussex Centre for Migration Research	Discussant
	Alberto Zezza	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Moving away from poverty: a spatial analysis of poverty and migration in Albania
	Gero Carletto	World Bank	
	Benjamin Davis	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	
	Helga Rittersberger – Tılıç Sibel Kalaycıoğlu	Department of Sociology, Middle East Technical University, Ankara	Dynamics and types of internal and international migration effecting poverty and vulnerability
	Hein de Haas	International Migration Institute, Oxford	The effect of internal and international migration participation on household income and wealth: Evidence from rural Morocco, Turkey, Egypt and Tunisia
10.45-11.15	Coffee/tea break		
11.15 – 13.00	Remittances and Poverty Alleviation		
	Ester Hauert	Head of Controlling Division, Economic Development Cooperation at the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs	Discussant
	Adriana Castaldo Barry Reilly	Department of Economics and Development, Research Centre on 'Migration, Globalisation and Poverty', University of Sussex, UK	The impact of remittances on household expenditure behaviour in Albania

	Mathias Lerch, Janine Dahinden Philippe Wanner Ruxandra Oana Ciobanu	Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies (SFM), Neuchâtel Migration Research Group, Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWA)	Remittance behaviour of Serbian migrants in Switzerland: preliminary results Changing the home from abroad: the impact of migration on the community of origin
13.00-14.00	Lunch break		
14.00-15.30	Migration and Development		
	Michael Collyer	Sussex Centre for Migration Research	Discussant
	Gero Carletto Nancy McCarthy Benjamin Davis	World Bank International Food Policy Research Institute Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Unlocking the potential of agriculture in Albania: the role of migration
	Irini Maltsoylou	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	
	Pierre Beaudouin	Centre d'économie de la Sorbonne University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne	Economic impact of migration on a rural area in Bangladesh
	Véronique Lassailly-Jacob François Gemenne	Migrations Internationales, Espaces et Sociétés (MIGRINTER), University of Poitiers Centre d'Etudes de l'Ethnicité et des Migrations (CEDEM), University of Liège	Environmental vulnerability and migration strategies: two contrasted cases in Sahel and in the South Pacific Ocean
15.30-16:00	Coffee/tea break		
16:00-16:30	Wrap-up/Plenary		
	Rachel Sabates- Wheeler Mathias Lerch	Sussex Centre for Migration Research Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies (SFM), Neuchâtel	
	Ernst Spaan	Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI), The Hague	

ANNEX 2: List of Participants

	Name	Affiliation	Contact
1	Stephanie Barrientos	Institute for Development Studies, UK	S.Barrientos@ids.ac.uk
2	Pierre Beaudouin	Centre d'économie de la Sorbonne University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne	pierre.beaudouin@malix.univ-paris1.fr
3	Richard Black	Sussex Centre for Migration Research (SCMR), University of Sussex	R.Black@sussex.ac.uk
4	Matthias Buess	Direktion für Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit (DEZA) Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	matthias.buess@deza.admin.ch
5	Gero Carletto	World Bank, Washington	gcarletto@worldbank.org
6	Michel Carton	Institut Universitaire d'Etudes du Développement, Genève	iued@unige.ch
7	Adriana Castaldo	Department of Economics and Development, Research Centre on 'Migration, Globalisation and Poverty', University of Sussex, UK	a.castaldo@sussex.ac.uk
8	Ruxandra Oana Ciobanu	Migration Research Group, Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWA)	Oana.ciobanu@hwwa.de
9	Michael Collyer	Sussex Centre for Migration Research	M.Collyer@sussex.ac.uk
10	Rosita Fibbi	Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies (SFM), Neuchâtel	
11	John Davies	Sussex Centre for Migration Research	Jdavies@tesco.net

12	Benjamin Davis	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	benjamin.davis@fao.org
13	François Gemenne	Centre d'Etudes de l'Ethnicité et des Migrations (CEDEM), University of Liège	F.Gemenne@ulg.ac.be
14	Hein de Haas	International Migration Institute, Oxford	hein.dehaas@qeh.ox.ac.uk
15	Jessica S. Hagen-Zanker	Maastricht Graduate School of Governance	Jessica.Hagenzanker@GOVERNANCE.unimaas.nl
16	Ester Hauert	Economic Development Cooperation at the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs	
17	Charlotte Heath	Department for International Development, UK	C-Heath@dfid.gov.uk
18	Pawel Kaczmarczyk	Centre of Migration Research, Faculty of Economic Sciences, Warsaw University	p.kaczmarczyk@uw.edu.pl
19	Véronique Lassailly-Jacob	Migrations Internationales, Espaces et Sociétés (MIGRINTER), University of Poitiers	vlassail@univ-poitiers.fr
20	Mathias Lerch	Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies (SFM), Neuchâtel	mathias.lerch@unine.ch
21	Joëlle Moret	Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies (SFM) Neuchâtel	joelle.moret@unine.ch
22	Hans Werner Mundt	Migration and Development Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)	hans-werner.mundt@gtz.de
23	Cristina Pantiru	Sussex Centre for Migration Research	M.C.Pantiru@sussex.ac.uk

24	Etienne Pigué	University of Neuchâtel	Etienne.Pigué@unine.ch
25	Helga Rittersberger -Tılıç	Department of Sociology, Middle East Technical University, Ankara	helgat@metu.edu.tr
26	Abdur Rafique	Sussex Centre for Migration Research	abdurrafique67@yahoo.co.uk
27	Rachel Sabates- Wheeler	Sussex Centre for Migration Research	R.Sabates- Wheeler@ids.ac.uk
28	Julie Vullnetari	Sussex Centre for Migration Research	j.vullnetari@sussex.ac.uk
29	Alberto Zezza	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	alberto.zezza@fao.org