



ICPD IN ACTION

in the Caribbean



United Nations

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A Passage to Hope: Women and International Migration

The 2006 UNFPA State of World Population Report

Today, women constitute almost half of all international migrants worldwide. Yet, despite contributions to poverty reduction and struggling economies, the international community has only recently begun to grasp the significance of what migrant women have to offer. And it is only recently that policy makers are acknowledging the particular challenges and risks women confront when venturing into new lands.

The new *State of World Population Report*, (UNFPA, September 2006), reveals that the viewpoint and research that concentrated on male workers as the main "participants" in migration of the 21st century misjudges some of the most important factors. The rapidly growing importance of migration of women and youth is the task a new and better approach would have to take into account.

The growth of female migration constitutes a movement that has been powerful and, until now, mostly quiet; described as "a mighty but silent river". The might of this "river" is evident in the available data, as today 94.5 million, or nearly half (49.6%) of all international migrants, are women. The most important change is that women are no



Migrant Mother, Dorothea Lange (1936)

longer merely accompanying male migrants, or travelling for family reunification, but are increasingly travelling alone or in the company of other migrants outside of their family circle.

In the Caribbean, women have been outnumbering men in migration flows to North America since the 1950s. Income earning opportunities abroad have been the major "pull" factor behind this phenomenon.

But women generally leave their country of birth mainly because of so called "push" factors like family obligations, unemployment, low wages, poverty, limited social and economic opportunities and the desire to expand their horizon. Economic and social upheaval can also provide the impetus to leave.

This change in the migration landscape contains socio-economic implications.

One important aspect is remittances, the money sent to their home countries and families. The female contribution to remittances is important because women tend to send a larger share of their income home and therefore in some countries female contributions constitute over 50 percent of the total remittances. Apart from remittances, migrant women contribute to the socio-economic development in their countries of origin, since their home countries profit as well from "social" remittances like ideas, skills, attitudes, knowledge, etc. *continued on page 4*

IN THIS ISSUE

From the Editors	2
.....	
Conclusions of the High Level Dialogue on Migration	2
.....	
Special Report:	
Not Who You Think I Am: Profile of a Migrant	3
.....	
Text Box 1 -	
Tipping the Scale: The Impact of Migration on Small Nation States	4
.....	
CARICOM's Migration Policy	5
.....	
Text Box 2 -	
Migration and Domestic Violence	6
.....	
Interview -	
With IOM Representative	7
.....	
Cricket World Cup 2007	8

The Caribbean has the world's highest emigration rate to member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which is affecting the development prospects of the region. Data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) indicate that countries like Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica and St. Kitts and Nevis lost between 85 and 90 per cent of their most skilled populations and over 30 per cent of the workforces from 1965-2000.

This edition of the ICPD newsletter is once again devoted to the multiple and complex dimensions of migration and development. Migration is an essential and inevitable component of the economic and social life of every state and has proven to be one of the major policy concerns of the twenty-first century. To this end, in light of the ongoing debate at international, regional and national forums, we have sought to highlight the policies of organizations such as the International Organization for Migration and the

Caribbean Community (CARICOM). This newsletter also provides examples of the policy in action as the region grapples to address all the challenges associated with hosting the Cricket World Cup in 2007. The issue of feminization of migration is the focus of the UNFPA State of the World's Report for 2006. This has been summarized for our readers.

It is our hope that by highlighting some of the ongoing issues associated with migration, we can all continue the dialogue and action with a view to enhancing the benefits and minimizing the disadvantages for all involved. ●

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Conclusions of the United Nations High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, United Nations, New York, 14-15 September, 2006

The framework for the meeting was the Secretary-General's Report on International Migration and Development. This report reinforced the position that international migration constitutes an ideal means of promoting development, that is, the coordinated or concerted improvement of economic conditions in both areas of origin and areas of destination based on the complementarities between the two. The report also discusses the various ways in which international migration could contribute to development and presents a comprehensive review of multidimensional aspects of international migration.

The High-Level Dialogue

(1) Interactive dialogues took place in four Round Tables

Round Table 1:

Effects of international migration on economic and social development.

Round Table 2:

Measures to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of all migrants, and to prevent and combat smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons.

Round Table 3:

Multidimensional aspects of international migration and development, including remittances.

Round Table 4:

Promoting the building of partnerships and capacity-building and the sharing of best practices at all levels, including the bilateral and regional levels, for the benefit of countries and migrants alike.

Conclusions:

The HLD concluded that migration can provide a new 'window of opportunities' for trade and investment, tourism, knowledge-sharing and remittances.

These positive aspects of migration on development and poverty eradication can and should no longer be neglected. The participants also stressed the need to enhance the positive role of migrants in development and enhance their involvement as active actors in the development of partnerships between sending and receiving countries. Further, it was understood that there is a definite need to enhance regional and international cooperation and collaboration to enhance the orderly movement of persons, to protect undocumented migrants and particularly vulnerable groups, such as women and youth, and to promote orderly migration at the source, transit and destination countries.

Most countries attending the meeting supported the Secretary-General's proposal for the establishment of a 'Consultative Forum on Migration and Development Issues'.

For a full report on outcomes of the Global Forum on Migration refer to www.unpopulation.org

Not Who You Think I Am: Profile of a female migrant

Joan, 49 years, has been living in Trinidad as an undocumented migrant since 1991. She left her homeland, Guyana, to further her studies in accounting and to get away from an abusive relationship. When she left the country, her two sons ages 11 and 13 years old stayed in the care of her Mom. A couple of months later, her husband came to Trinidad on a surprise visit and stayed. The abusive relationship continued and her last child, a girl, was born in 1992. Eight years later she ended the relationship and has since lived and worked as a single parent. Her sons are now also living in Trinidad.

Joan has worked over the past 15 years mainly as a domestic worker, since her dream to pursue her studies was short-lived due to the loss of her documents by the educational institution she applied to and her husband's re-entry into her life.

She recounts numerous tales of living in an abusive relationship with little support from her church, her mainstay during the early years. She was told "your husband is an elder in the church, if there is a problem with the relationship, it can only be your fault". In fact, she speaks bitterly about losing even that support when she decided to leave the relationship.

She recounts how the twin issues of abuse and the fear about being deported resulted in her experiencing panic attacks, high blood pressure and other health challenges. Her daughter also suffered from constipation and inattentiveness at school, which she attributes to the fact that she was exposed to stress at home.

Numerous attempts were made to regularize her status in the country. On the advice of



*"your husband is an
elder in the church,
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your fault"*

her employers, she visited the Immigration Office and was told that she should leave the country for a period of six weeks and upon her return she would be given the right to stay in the country. However, when she returned, she was only given two months, and was told her residency application was denied, since she had no proof of her qualifications and experience.

She mentions the fear of revealing her status to anyone, given the experience at her first accounting job. After a telephone call from a co-worker, her employers advised her that she had to leave, since Immigration was expected to pay the company a visit. For her, the stress of having to leave Trinidad, which she calls home, is unimaginable. She remembers being back in Guyana for six weeks and the feeling of alienation she felt,

since she no longer identified with the place as her home. Her biggest regret is not having been able to attend the funeral of both parents who have since died.

Joan is now employed at an international food company and supplements her salary with part time domestic work. However, her Guyanese passport has expired and she has no source of identification, since she was told that she had to return to Guyana to renew it. This is a chance she was not willing to take for fear that she would not be allowed to re-enter the country. The lack of proper identification means that she cannot comfortably enjoy simple everyday activities, such as banking. She has basically lost her identity. In fact, despite the fact that her daughter is a citizen of Trinidad and Tobago, Joan cannot, as her mother, access the services afforded to her daughter under the various social service schemes, such as the book grants and rental programmes, which she would have to authorize.

In terms of support, she mentions the long hours of work and the fact that she has a few close friends, whom she can trust to assist her with her daughter, since they no longer have a relationship with the husband/father, who is also undocumented in the country. Her major challenge is not having enough time to do all the things she wants to. When asked about the relationship with her sons she indicates that they are both adults now and that her priority right now is the well-being of her daughter.

Joan, with the help of friends, has now hired a lawyer to again try to regularize her status. She hopes to get it legally, despite the cost and hassle, in the face of numerous offers to assist her by acquaintances, either through payment of a fee or a promise of marriage. Her dream is to provide a stable home and support for her daughter, now 14 years old and to pursue her studies in the field she loves, accounting.

When asked whether she would do it all over again, she, without hesitation, says yes, since in spite of all the hardship she has been experiencing, she is now enjoying a quality of life, far better than what she would have experienced, if she had stayed in her native homeland. ●

According to the report, studies also show that, due to the health education that women receive while living abroad, family health and child health in the home country have improved.

But the risks migration poses to women in particular must not be overlooked. Discrimination, inadequate rights protection, policies that bar women from migrating legally and safely, modern forms of slavery like sex or domestic work and trafficking are only some of them.

Another challenge the changed situation in migration poses on researchers and especially on policy makers is the increased migration of young men and women between the ages of 10 to 24. Because young people have special needs and rights, and no longer only



migrate as part of family units, these special needs have to be taken into account when talking about migration today. Accordingly, appropriate policies and responses for this most vulnerable age group have to be developed.

It is estimated that the proportion of youth from developing countries who cross borders is about a quarter of the total number of immigrants worldwide. And young people take with them the

great assets of youth - resilience, resourcefulness and perseverance. Also, youth offers the advantage of a longer time-frame to overcome the challenges of moving abroad, and to reap the potential awards.

But not only do youth have special needs and rights once they arrive in the destination country, they are also especially vulnerable when they are on the move. What started as a move for a better life ends up for many in the arms of smugglers, in the nets of sex traffickers or consigned as domestic workers to semi-slavery. For young people the loss of the networks of family and friends that give them support and a sense of identity and direction is especially hard.

continued on page 8

Tipping the Scale: *The impact of Mi*

Like most teenagers, 18 year-old Jamaican Tamian, enjoys having fun. His pastimes include playing and watching football, playing computer games and reading. But, that is where the similarity with most teenagers ends. By his own account, Tamian grew up "having life real rough". He remembers being bounced around from place to place - at one point living with both parents, then with each individually.

Tamian vividly recalls the promise his father made to return for him when he was eight years old as he was leaving for the United States. It's been 10 years since and that promise has not materialized. The migration of his father meant that Tamian's mother, who had little formal education, had to 'hustle' to provide for him and five other siblings. Just two years after his father left, Tamian received an even more crushing blow - his mother died. With this tragedy, the young boy became part of a sibling-headed household, with his older sister in charge.

*"... as a youngster
I was very angry
with him for not
being there..."*

"I was about 10 and she was 15, but I remember having to cook, to press for everybody, wash for everybody - at 10!" Tamian recalls. "After a while mi just get fed up, mi just start bad, smoke weed, stop go school..." he says. Despite his sister's best effort, he got involved with the "wrong crowd" and was caught up in criminality. His sister was forced to ask the Police to intervene and Tamian was placed in government care and eventually at the National Children's Home.

In spite of the abandonment by his father and the difficulties he experienced, Tamian has learnt to turn his adversities and negative life experiences into positive energy. "My

father not caring has been my strength", philosophizes the young man. "I was very angry. I'm not angry now, but as a youngster I was very angry with him for not being there and not even a phone call to say "you alright"? So I internalized it and I use it as my push," he declares. Now in his final year in high school, Tamian is doing well academically and has been an active student leader and advocate for the last three years.

There are others who have not done so well, according to Dr. Claudette Crawford-Brown, Lecturer in the Department of Psychology, Sociology and Social Work at the University of the West Indies. Dr. Crawford-Brown has done several longitudinal studies on *Migration and the Impact on Children left Behind* and has found that some children of migration are ending up with behavioural problems.

"It came about when I started looking at a cohort of children who were seriously delinquent back in the

The Caribbean region has been impacted to varying degrees by migration, as countries of origin and destination, from as early as 1791.

In recognition of the impact of migration on the development of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Twenty-seventh Heads of Government Conference in July 2006:

Agreed that special mention be made of establishing policies in specific areas such as:

- Development of a migration policy;
- Verification of strategies for the retention of skilled labour;
- Establishment of a reliable information system/database;
- Use of information to enhance national capacity;

CARICOM's Migration Policy

Adapted from discussion with

Dr. Halima Sa'adia Kassim,

Deputy Programme Manager,

(Gender Millennium Development

Goals & Migration),

CARICOM

- Building social support systems to respond to the requirements of voluntary and involuntary return migrants;

- Relations with the Diaspora

Agreed to adopt a multilateral approach to the issues of human trafficking and to support a Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) to create an impartial and transparent mechanism for evaluating the progress of countries with respect to human trafficking.

Supported the recommendation of the Community Council for the establishment of a Technical Working Group to undertake a policy study and report to Heads of Government through the relevant Councils and the Community council within one year. ●

Migration on small Nation States

TEXT BOX 1

1990s", she explains, adding that she found initially, that those children had absent mothers. "So I looked a bit more at the data and found that there was a disproportionate number of children with behavioural problems who had no mothers present, due either through death of the mother or migration".

Dr. Crawford-Brown says, now looking at a broader sample of children, "I'm finding out from the preliminary data (2005), looking at the same group of children with behavioural problems, that their problem is not necessarily straight migration. Within that group of absent mothers, we are finding mothers who have migrated and fathers who have migrated", she notes.

Current indications are that out-migration from developing countries, like Jamaica, will continue. Migrants are not only pushed by their quest for a better quality of life, they are also pulled by demand for specific skills by the more developed countries.

The current trend of highly organized recruiting programmes for both professionals and tertiary level students in nursing and teaching provides very clear examples of this present practice, which is usually accompanied by relatively attractive packages. There are also more subtle approaches, for example, immigration policies in some developed countries, such as Canada, that issues landed permit status for any qualified young person.

Indications from the 2006 UNFPA *State of World Population* report are that the migrant flow from developing countries to wealthier developed countries is likely to surge rather than slow down in the near future. For the health sector alone it is projected that by 2008, the United Kingdom, will require some 25,000 doctors and 250,000 nurses more than it did in 1997, and by 2020, the United States will have more than one million vacancies for nurses; while Canada and Australia

will have nursing deficits of 78,000 and 40,000, respectively.

Since most migrants in the health and education sector are female and fall within the 20-29, and 30-39 age groups, the implication is that many children and young people will be left behind. Although international communication has advanced in leaps and bounds in the last decade, many advocates feel family members will be left unconnected if serious intervention strategies are not implemented.

Easton Williams, Manager of the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), believes that the current trend provides a strong negotiating platform for developing countries to effectively lobby for more just international migration policy guidelines for the future. These are necessary to reduce the gaps between the rich and poor and to ensure that the benefits will flow to both those in origin and destination countries.

According to the United Nations Radio Special "Shattering the Silence", one in every four women is a victim of domestic violence, and the absence of women from work due to physical abuse represents the value of about 2 per cent of the global annual GDP.

Possible reasons for the increasing domestic violence might be overcrowded living conditions, unstable jobs and rising poverty. In addition, the experience of violence at a young age – for instance in school – also contributes to rising domestic violence. It is significant that, according to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), physical abuse predominates in the lowest income sectors, while psychological aggression is more common among middle and upper socio-economic strata.

Many experts directly link social violence with migration in the region. Migratory movement quite often disrupts familial and cultural bonds, creating unstable, economically and socially impoverished communities, which in turn lead to destructive behaviour from individuals who grow up in that setting. Three basic patterns have been observed as possible reasons for the link between domestic violence and migration.

First, undocumented migrants are especially vulnerable to domestic violence because of their legal status in the receiving country. In some instances, individuals might be trapped in abusive relationships, depending on their partner in order to obtain legal status or even citizenship in their host country. Fear of deportation often inhibits domestic violence victims from leaving the relationship, hoping to become a legal resident while staying with their abuser.

To prevent such situations, the Australian Government, through their Domestic Violence Provisions (DVP), allows some people applying for permanent residence in Australia to continue with their application after



Migration and Domestic Violence

the breakdown of their spouse relationship if they, or a member of their family unit, have experienced domestic violence committed by their partner.

Second, children are highly affected by migration in various ways. In most cases they have to make multiple adjustments to new homes or to shifting home environments made up of grandparents, aunts, uncles and other relatives due to the absence of their parents.

According to Maureen Samms-Vaughan of the University of the West Indies, Mona, Child Health Section, it can be rather difficult to maintain a consistent approach to parenting under these circumstances which would be of utmost importance for the children's emotional stability.

Migration often causes disruption to households, quite often inflicts stress upon the family life and might lead directly to domestic violence in such families.

Finally, another relevant aspect regarding migration and domestic violence is forced migration, which refers to the movement of refugees and internally displaced people. This type of migration differs from voluntary migration because the former does not include prior desire to leave the home country. Reasons for forced migration can be, among others, natural disasters, armed conflicts or development projects. According to Forced Migration Online (FMO), women in such situations enjoy less protection and fewer resources for recovery. Their vulnerability to domestic violence arises from an unequal work burden due to productive and reproductive responsibilities, restricted mobility and limited education and employment opportunities. Since their displacement happened involuntarily, most often it is extremely complicated for this group of female victims to seek help in the receiving country.

Since there is no complete data available on domestic violence, the area certainly needs more research. However, due to the delicacy of the topic, data collection is fairly complicated and should be thoroughly planned. A valuable approach is the Wellcome Trust's Health Consequences of Population Change Programme's project, which consists of six multidisciplinary researchers that dedicate themselves to exploring the relationships between violent crime, family structure and migration in three Caribbean countries: Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica. The new project's lead researcher, Elsie Le Franc, hopes to interview more than 6000 15- to 30-year-olds from all three islands on topics such as participation in violence – as victim or perpetrator –, any history of migration in the family and data on other variables including socio-economic status, ethnic identity and education in order to quantify the growing problem of domestic violence in the Caribbean and Latin America.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is the leading inter-governmental organization dealing with migration issues. IOM provides expertise in migration management, migrant's health, migrant's rights, and knowledge in migration dynamics.

Over the last 10 years, IOM has focused its cooperation in the Caribbean on activities to support the diverse migration and development efforts of States. This support is focused on five core areas;

- (a) technical cooperation to strengthen migration management systems;**
- (b) promotion of dialogue and information exchange about migration;**
- (c) counter trafficking programming;**
- (d) return and reintegration of highly skilled migrants; and**
- (e) health and mobile populations.**

Richard E. Scott, Regional Representative, International Organization for Migration, North America and the Caribbean, has worked for the IOM for over 30 years. In May 2006, he was assigned to this position following his last posting in Afghanistan. We sat down to discuss IOM plans for the Caribbean during the IOM Regional Seminar on "Building Capacity to Manage Migration in the Caribbean", Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles, 5-8 November 2006.



Interview with
Richard Scott,
Regional Representative
International Organization
for Migration

Q: Why is migration now seen as a priority issue on the international development agenda?

A: Migration has always been a big issue; however, countries dealt with it as an issue to be handled by sovereign States. A culmination of events and activities at the global and regional level including the recognition by the United Nations of migration as a major development issue and the globalization of markets have however challenged all concerned to discuss migration in an international arena.

Q: How is IOM intending to support governments in the Caribbean region?

A: IOM intends to provide technical cooperation and capacity building at the national level so that governments can enhance their migration management capabilities, reinforce their own structures or create new ones as needed, and modernize existing legislation in the following ways:

- (i) assist governments to analyse and

assess the ways in which they manage their own migration, specifically through the enhancement of migration data collection;

(ii) facilitate the implementation of projects to address the gaps; and

(iii) promote dialogue leading to concrete recommendations on the ground with more impact.

Q: What is the major challenge in dealing with migration in the Caribbean region?

A: The migration policies of governments in the region are not reflective of the current issues. One example of this is the use of advances in technology that could help governments to promote and enhance border patrols and thus enhanced migration management.

Q: Are there any challenges for the IOM?

A: Yes, there is the obvious to secure sufficient funding for projects to address the gaps, since 95 percent of IOM's funding is project-related. Further more efficient migration data collection, management and sharing is needed to use data in a systematic way, such as in the trafficking of person's database.

Q: How would you measure success of IOM under your guidance, say in the next five years?

A: Success will be measured by the number of governments we have assisted to modernize their migration management system and the organization of forums such as this one to support and discuss common concerns about migration and the way forward.

Thank You

New Publications

ECLAC Oct. 2006

Changing population age structures and their implications on socio economic development in the Caribbean.

Meetings

12 - 13 December 2006

Expert Group Meeting on changing the structure of Population in the Caribbean.
ECLAC Port of Spain, Trinidad.

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continued from page 4

A Passage to Hope: Women and International Migration

The 2006 UNFPA State of World Population Report

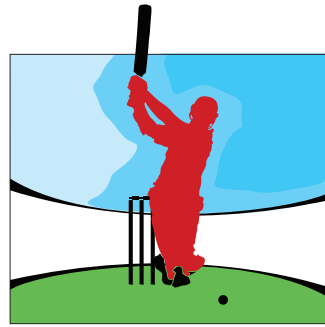
But despite all the particular risks that young people may face when migrating, most of them find it a rewarding experience, offering employment, increased skills, knowledge of the world and networks with benefits for both host and home countries. ●

The complete report is available online at www.unfpa.org

Cricket World Cup 2007

Regional Security during Cricket World Cup 2007

The biggest upcoming activity on the Caribbean's calendar is the hosting of the Cricket World Cup (CWC) 2007. CWC will be hosted in nine countries with the participation of sixteen international teams during the period 15 January - 28 April 2007.



It is anticipated that over 40,000 visitors will attend these matches. As such, there is a heightened awareness of major threats for our small nation States during such a mass movement of people. These threats include crime and violence; illegal trafficking of drugs, arms and ammunition; human smuggling, trafficking and undocumented migration; public health emergencies; terrorism; and natural disasters/mass casualties.

Here are some aspects of the Regional Strategy developed by CARICOM to address the many concerns:

- Establishing a Single Domestic Space;
- Common CARICOM special Visa Policy;
- Establishment of Advanced Passenger Information Service (APIS);
- CARICOM Intelligence Sharing Network;
- Employment of International Support Advisory Group (ISAG);
- Coordination of Regional and International Support Mechanisms;
- Complementing National Security Plans;
- Provision of a Regional Response Capability based on regional threats and risk;
- Legislative Framework based on Sunset and other Legislation.

Taken from Presentation by Col. F.E. Liverpool Coordinator, Crime and Security CARICOM Secretariat. Curaçao, November 2006.

DID YOU KNOW? **CSME at Work**

Should you wish to work in any CARICOM member State, participating in the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME), you must obtain:

- 1 A Certificate of Recognition of CARICOM Skills Qualification** also called a CARICOM Skills Certificate from your home country's Ministry responsible for issuing skills certificates. Documents you may need include:
 - a. Valid form of National Identification;
 - b. Documents supporting qualifications in the approved category or documents showing job experience in the respective category;
 - c. Birth certificates of dependants, if accompanying applicant;
 - d. Marriage certificate, if spouse is accompanying applicant;
- 2 Certificate of Recognition in the host country,** which gives you permission to work in that country.