

# MIGRATION & DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

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THE WORLD BANK



## Sessions Abstracts

### **Session I**

#### *Labor Markets and Migration: Evidence and Policies*

Domestic labor imperfections, in both sending and receiving countries, are one of the main drivers of migration, and because of that, migrant flows are linked to the emergence of a global labor market where demand for and supply of labor transcend international borders. The current policies that regulate the global market and the social protection for international migrants are not international but national. Then, the key policy issue is if national immigration laws, labor market regulation, and social protection provisions are able to strike the right balance between the needs of employers and the protection for migrants. This session will address the following specific questions:

- Who is addressing the imperfections stemming from information asymmetries, monopsony power, and externalities of the global labor market?
- What are the causes and consequences of migration in the labor markets of sending and receiving countries? In particular, how can developing countries better manage *South-South* labor migration?
- What is the current state of social protection of international migrants? To what extent can migrants access to social services -such as social security, unemployment benefits, education and healthcare- and to what extent are long-term benefits like pension benefits portable across international borders?
- What are the costs and benefits of enhanced coverage of international migrants by social systems in host countries? In particular, what are the costs and benefits of enhanced portability of long-term social benefits?

### **Session II**

#### *Enhancing the Role of Diasporas: Trade, Technology and Knowledge*

Social networks between migrants and their families and others in their home country are channels that can facilitate trade, investment and technological transfers. As a linkage between host and source countries, migrants help to overcome information asymmetries and other market imperfections. This session will discuss the growing role that Diasporas play in the development of their countries of origin. Governments are realizing the potential role migrants can play in providing lucrative networks with their native countries. In an effort to tap into these unique resources and facilitate knowledge sharing and technology transfer, some source countries are

creating policies designed to encourage long-term and long-distance linkages between emigrants and their countries of origin.

- What are the recent Diaspora mobilization initiatives? What are the factors that create enabling environments for investment and enterprise development by the Diaspora?
- What are the instruments that the Diaspora can use to enable investment?
- Since Diaspora organizations are engaged in private entrepreneurial initiatives, is there a role for the government and multilateral organizations to enhance their impact in source countries?

### **Session III**

#### ***Brain Drain, Service Delivery, and the Public Sector***

Brain drain can lead to the deterioration of the already-weak human capital base in a developing country, the decline of the positive externalities associated with the presence of skilled workers, and the under provision of key public services such as healthcare and education. However, educated migrants send remittances and establish linkages with global markets, enabling technology and capital flows. The objective of this session is to present the advances in research and policy practices related to these issues and to focus on their operational relevance for the Development Community. The following questions will be addressed:

- Do we need to manage the spillovers that are taken from one country into another? Are these big enough to require public action?
- How do we manage and design educational systems in migrant-sending developing countries so that the negative externalities of brain drain are minimized and the development impacts are enhanced?
- What role should policy institutions play in coordination with private and public sectors in handling these complex challenges?

### **Session IV**

#### ***Migration Policies and Interventions***

Because some migration-specific policies shape migration decisions and outcomes, there is a need to better understand them in relation to development outcomes. Migrant decisions at individual or household level are driven by the potential positive return- or net benefit- that they perceive when they migrate, but these movements generate important spillovers to others in both sending and receiving economies. More importantly, spillover effects from migration between two countries sometimes affect third countries. The emergence of those externalities associated with migration is what motivates the need for policies that address possible negative externalities and create opportunities to enhance the positive ones. Additionally, migration may also expose other problems that reveal the need for public goods such as global coordination in development interventions -between countries and agents across countries- providing a facilitation mechanism to identify and to share the gains and spillovers. In this context, the session will answer the following questions:

- How migration selection policies affect migration outcomes? What is the rationale for government interventions and how effective could they be?
- How coherent are migration policies across sending and receiving countries? Are policies in sending and receiving countries creating spillovers in third countries?
- What are the lessons derived from the migration related interventions in developing and OECD countries like the regularization processes, migration oriented training, addressing pervasive competitiveness effects, mobilizing Diaspora resources (other than remittances), complementary public interventions, among others?
- How have countries incorporated the migration agenda into their national development strategies? What are the challenges for the policy design to move forward?

## **Session V**

### *Remittances and Financial Access*

Given that remittances are considered the most “private” of all migrant transfers to sending countries the role for public action is difficult to define. However, remittances create potential spillovers that go beyond the senders and receivers of financial flows, and these spillovers might be managed to enhance their developmental impact and to minimize risks. This session will focus on answering the following questions:

- How could remittances leverage financial access at an individual level, especially among the less well off?
- What other innovative financial products, besides the information content, can be linked to remittances to increase credit among receivers? What are the roles of micro-finance agencies and post offices in this respect?
- Since businesses related to remittances are faster in identifying opportunities, the potential for public action should also be acknowledged and carefully designed to address the following issues:
  - How to generate more competition in the remittances markets?
  - What are the regulatory constraints, including anti-money laundering and countering of the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT)? What can be done in destination countries?

Similar questions will be also discussed at the country level. The key point is to answer how remittances can leverage capital market access at the institutional and national level. In particular, the questions to be answered are:

- How can remittances be securitized for bond financing if they do not belong to a Bank?
- How can countries use Diaspora bonds and foreign-currency deposits to mobilize external financing for long-term investment and development purposes?