

Root causes and drivers of migration

Implications for humanitarian efforts and development cooperation



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Preface

The idea of alleviating migration pressure by means of humanitarian aid and development cooperation is long-standing. It has received renewed attention since the surge in migration across the Mediterranean in 2015. The establishment of the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa is a prominent reflection of the renewed interest in addressing the root causes of migration.

This report extracts insights from the research literature about the nature of root causes and the mechanisms that lead to migration outcomes. It reviews experiences from attempts to address the root causes of migration through development policy and outlines implications for humanitarian efforts and development cooperation today.

The report has a structure that seeks to make the core arguments easily accessible to the reader. The text contains 15 sections, each with a title that makes a substantive statement. The statement is supported by a short introductory paragraph, while the main text provides additional background and justification.

Section 2 ('Root causes are far removed from actual migration') provides the analytical foundation for much of the discussion that follows in other sections. Section 15 ('A focus on migration could harm the effectiveness of humanitarian and development policy') summarizes key policy implications. The report ends with a brief forward-looking summary of principles and insights that should guide policy priorities.

Much of the discussion is couched in general terms so as to provide foundations for general policy discussions. The general focus is nevertheless of the types of migration that dominate debates about 'root causes'—i.e. migration from low- and middle-income countries, motivated by either physical insecurity, poverty, or both, and often undertaken in unauthorized and insecure ways.

The authors of the report are specialists in migration research. The discussion therefore approaches the links between migration and humanitarian/development policy from the side of migration. The report stops short of making specific recommendations for humanitarian and development policy, since migration-related concerns will have to be incorporated with many other priorities and limitations in mind. What the report offers, however, is advice on how to adapt to the prominence of migration on today's development and humanitarian agenda.

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Migration patterns display both continuity and change

Migration rose higher than ever before on European policy agendas in 2015. This was a year with several record-breaking migration statistics, but there is no clear long-term trend of accelerating global migration.

It is commonly assumed that there has been an increase in the volume of global migration. However, the total *migrant stock*—the number of people living outside their country of birth—has represented a relatively stable percentage of the world’s population for a long time.¹ That proportion was 3.3 per cent in 2015, compared to 3.1 per cent in 1960. It has been lower in the meantime, however, dipping to 2.7 per cent in the 1980s.²

The picture of long-term stability, but substantial fluctuation, is confirmed by numbers on *migration flows* during five year periods.³ In 1990–1995, the people who migrated represented 0.75 per cent of world population. In the following five-year period, this proportion fell to 0.57 per cent. In 2005–2010, which is the latest period with available comparable data, the proportion had risen again to 0.61 per cent.

Global numbers conceal geographical differences and changing patterns and dynamics of migration. To understand how international migration has evolved, we need to understand the underlying changes in the diversification, geographical scope and direction of migration flows.⁴ A relatively small number of destinations countries continue to dominate global migration: Half of the world’s international migrants live in just ten countries.⁵ But the range of origins is growing; more and more countries contribute citizens to global migration flows.⁶

About three quarters of international migrants come from developing countries. The majority migrate to another developing country, rather than to the Global North.⁷ The South–South migration flows are diffused across a large number of destinations.

¹ Abel and Sander (2014), Czaika and de Haas (2014).

² Czaika and de Haas (2014), Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (2016).

³ Abel and Sander (2014).

⁴ King and Lulle (2016).

⁵ Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (2016). The countries are United States, Germany, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, Canada, France, Australia, and Spain.

⁶ Czaika and de Haas (2014).

⁷ Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (2016).

Root causes are far removed from actual migration

The notion of ‘root causes’ implies a chain of mechanisms that eventually produce migration. Examining the chain helps understand the observable outcomes and assess the scope for policy influence.

The idea of managing migration through addressing ‘root causes’ became part of European policy in the 1980s and gained popularity through the 1990s.⁸ By the 2000s, the root-causes doctrine had become engrained in European policy thinking about migration and development.⁹ It has partly been a dormant idea, however, and re-emerged in an unprecedented way with the establishment of the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa in 2015.

The notion of ‘root causes’ appears to have originated in debates about conflict-driven displacement.¹⁰ In this field attempts to tackle root causes have centred on humanitarian action to prevent violence, end human rights abuses, and facilitate peace-building. The preventative logic has been transferred to economically motivated migration where the assumption has been that migration can be stemmed by alleviating poverty and creating jobs. Since the 1990s, the two fields have partly merged, as governments and international agencies increasingly recognize the mixed nature of migration flows and migration motivations.

The notion of ‘root causes’ can be distinguished from ‘drivers’ and ‘determinants’ of migration, though they are partly overlapping concepts (Box 1). Root causes can be defined in a more systematic way as the *conditions* of states, communities, and individuals that underlie a *desire for change*, which, in turn, produces *migration aspirations*. These are elements of the model presented in Figure 1. The model reflects newer approaches to migration theory that see migration as the outcome of, first, the formation of migration aspirations, and second, the ability to realize those aspirations.¹¹

The conditions (or root causes) work in combination with the *prospects* for improvement. This is an essential point. Many in-depth accounts of migration describe how it is often not destitution that

Box 1 ‘Root causes’, ‘drivers’, and ‘determinants’ of migration: what is the difference?

‘Root causes’ of migration are basically thought of as the social and political conditions that induce departures—especially poverty, repression, and violent conflict. ‘Drivers of migration’ is a more inclusive term that also encompasses the mechanisms that eventually produce migration outcomes. For instance, social networks and access to information would be part of the drivers of migration, but they are not root causes. ‘Determinants of migration’ are generally not defined in such a theoretical way, but rather by methodology. The word ‘determinants’ alludes to quantitative modelling and the search for data that might explain and predict migration patterns.

⁸ Castles and Van Hear (2011). Although the term ‘root causes’ was introduced in the 1990s, there is a longer history of attempting to limit economic migration through development of the regions of origin.

⁹ Crush (2015:42)

¹⁰ The arguments in this paragraph draw upon Castles and Van Hear (2011), who provide the most thorough analysis of the root causes doctrine in migration policy thinking.

¹¹ Carling (2002). See also Carling (2014), de Haas (2011, 2014), Docquier *et al.* (2014)

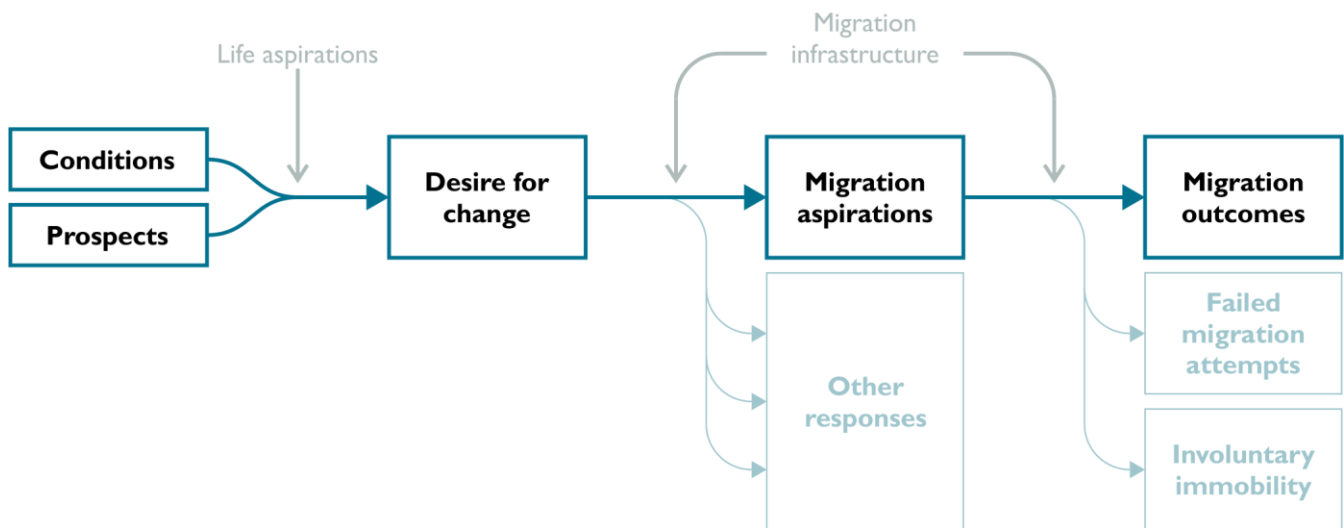


Figure 1. A model of the mechanisms that produce migration

The presentation of the model is developed for the purpose of this report. It draws upon original work by Jørgen Carling, with inspiration from other research as described in the text. See Carling (2002, 2014).

makes people turn to migration, but rather a feeling of inescapable stagnation.¹²

Whether or not certain conditions and prospects create a desire for change depends on peoples' *life aspirations*. In simple terms, if people are poor, and believe they are likely to remain poor, it is decisive whether or not they can imagine, and actively seek, a better life.¹³ If a country experiences rapid but uneven growth, *conditions* might change little for the majority of poor people, and the *prospects* for improvement might be dim. But *life aspirations* could rise in response to other people's visible wealth and a greater awareness of socio-economic differentials.

Conditions, prospects, and aspirations can combine to produce a desire for change—be it a matter of seeking security in the short term, or a higher standard of living in the long term. Such desires can produce *migration aspirations*. This generic term is commonly used to describe preferences for migration, regardless of the context. Civilians threatened by conflict, university graduates faced with unemployment, and farmers hurt by environment degradation might all reach the conclusion that the best option is to leave. They can then all be said to have migration aspirations. This is the first step towards actually migrating.

The concept of 'migration aspirations' might seem at odds with the notion of forced migration. Surely, people who are forcibly displaced do not desire to move? They do in the sense that they have considered the options and considered flight the best strategy for

¹² For instance Åkesson (2004), Frederiksen (2013), Hernandez-Carretero and Carling (2012), Mains (2007, 2011).

¹³ Appadurai (2004) examines this in terms of 'capacity to aspire'.

survival. The point becomes clearer by considering all those who make the same assessment but lack the resources to escape.¹⁴ ('Forced migration' is increasingly abandoned in favour of other terms, such as 'wartime migration'¹⁵ or 'survival migration'¹⁶, which are more aligned with the dynamics at work.)

When people develop a desire for change in their lives, directing this desire towards migration is only one possibility. As shown in Figure 1, there are paths that lead to other responses. The range of possible responses depends on the context. For instance, inhabitants of a country with a dictatorial regime could seek to escape, but they could also fight for change, or protect themselves through allegiance to the regime in power. Versions of these three options—presented as 'exit, voice, and loyalty' in a classic framework¹⁹—often apply.

Another situation that often spurs migration—or other responses—is the blockage of transition to independent adulthood (Box 2.) The ensuing frustrations are not simply about poverty, but also about social and political structures that marginalize young people. Migration is one possible response, but so is joining an insurgency or vigilante group.²¹ In other words, the 'root causes' of migration are also root causes of other, no less important phenomena.

A desire for change can also be a positive force. The frustrations and energies that turn people towards migration could conceivably be channelled to education or entrepreneurship, for instance. But that requires the right conditions. Education must be accessible and have a real impact on job prospects; the business environment must be conducive to small-scale entrepreneurship.

Where people direct their desires for change depend on the *relative* appeal and feasibility of the different possible responses (cf Figure 1). Even when it is risky, migration can hold greater promise of a better future than the alternatives. Conversely, when migration is blocked, people could be more inclined to other responses, such as joining violent movements.²²

It is not evident that migration features as a possibility in people's minds. But it probably will if many others have already left the same community. Few things predict migration as much as social networks with past migrants.²³ This is one aspect of *migration infrastructure*, a concept that was recently introduced to migration theory. (Box 3) As indicated in Figure 1, migration infrastructure affects migration processes in two ways. First, it affects how people perceive the possibility of migration, compared to other responses,

Box 2 'Waithood' as a driver of migration from Africa

In much of Africa, young people struggle to make the transition to socially recognized adulthood. Not having the resources to marry and sustain a family means being trapped in the category of 'youth', even entering their thirties.¹⁷ This period has been described as *waithood*, a term that is evocative but has drawn criticism for implying passive waiting. One of the things young (or not-so-young) people do in order to secure the financial foundation for adulthood is to migrate.¹⁸ With reference to Figure 1, waithood can be understood as a common configuration of conditions, prospects and aspirations, analysed at the level of individuals.

Box 3. Migration infrastructure

Among the recent developments in migration theory is the concept of *migration infrastructure* developed by anthropologists Xiang Biao and Johan Lindquist.²⁰ They argue that 'it is not migrants who migrate, but rather constellations consisting of migrants and non-migrants, of human and non-human actors'. This migration infrastructure has five dimensions: the commercial (brokers, smugglers), the regulatory (state apparatus and procedures), the technological (communication, transport), the humanitarian (NGOs and international organizations), and the social (migrant networks). Migration outcomes are shaped by the interaction of these elements.

¹⁴ Black and Collyer (2014), Carling (2002), Lubkemann (2008b).

¹⁵ Lubkemann (2008a).

¹⁶ Betts (2013).

¹⁷ De Boeck and Honwana (2005), Honwana (2012), Vigh (2006).

¹⁸ Hernandez-Carretero and Carling (2012), Vigh (2009).

¹⁹ Hirschman (1970).

²⁰ Xiang and Lindquist (2014).

²¹ Vigh (2006).

²² Ware (2005).

²³ Cohen and Sirkeci (2011), Faist (2000), McKenzie and Rapoport (2007).

and whether or not they develop migration aspirations.²⁴ Second, migration infrastructure affects whether or not such aspirations are realized.

As Figure 1 illustrates, migration aspirations are still one step removed from actual migration. And this is a decisive step. Survey data from the Gallup World Poll suggest that about 14 per cent of the world population would like to migrate permanently to another country.²⁵ This is a much higher proportion than the 3 per cent who have actually migrated. The share of people who want to migrate varies greatly by region and country. Nowhere is it greater than in West Africa (39 per cent). Other regions with a high proportion of potential migrants are the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa (29 per cent), European countries that are not OECD members (24 per cent), North Africa (24 per cent) and South and Central America (21 per cent).²⁶

Having a wish to migrate is not the same as acting upon it. Both the Gallup World Poll and other surveys have therefore asked additional questions about plans and preparations.²⁷ In the case of West Africa, 5 per cent plan to move within the next 12 months, and 2 per cent have started making preparations. These are much smaller proportions than the 39 per cent who express migration aspirations, but still represent substantial numbers of people (20 million and 6 million, respectively).

For people who have developed migration aspirations, there are essentially three outcomes (illustrated in Figure 1). First, they could succeed in migrating. This does not mean that migration is a ‘success’ for the individual, but it means that they managed to reach the destination. Again, the notion of migration infrastructure helps the analysis for understanding the mechanisms at work. Possibilities for converting migration aspirations into actual migration depend on migration regulations, access to information, availability of commercial migrations services, and other dimensions of migration infrastructure.

The second possible result of migration aspirations is a failed migration attempt. The most extreme—but not uncommon—form of failure is death. In 2015 alone, at least 5400 persons lost their lives in the attempt to migrate.²⁸ Many others were apprehended and returned soon after arriving. In addition, thousands of migrants manage to leave home, but get stuck on the way. For instance, many Sub-Saharan Africans headed for Europe are trapped in North Africa without the means to make the final leg of the journey. Failed migration attempts are a serious burden also for migrants’ families and communities of origin.

²⁴ These factors have also examined in terms of the ‘emigration environment’ by Carling (2002) and ‘culture of migration’ by Ali (2007), Reynolds (2013), Timmerman *et al.* (2014).

²⁵ Esipova and Ray (2009), Esipova *et al.* (2011).

²⁶ OECD (2015).

²⁷ OECD (2015).

²⁸ Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (2016).

The third type of outcome occurs when migration aspirations are thwarted at the outset and people fail to leave. They are then in a situation of *involuntary immobility*.²⁹ This is a largely invisible outcome, but nevertheless a consequential one. When people have their hopes pinned on leaving, they are less likely to invest resources in local livelihoods and locally relevant skills. Even in communities where emigration has brought significant benefits, involuntary immobility can drain resources away from development processes.

The chain presented in Figure 1 implies that there are many possible strategies for restricting migration—if that is an aim. The different strategies have different implications for the lives of individuals and the development of communities of origin. When migration is prevented in conventional ways, through restrictive immigration policies and border enforcement, it can result in involuntary immobility. If policy interventions are successfully directed at earlier stages in the chain—towards the left-hand side of Figure 1—people would stay because they want to, and not because they are blocked from leaving.

²⁹ Carling (2002).

3

Migration is mixed in more ways than one

It is increasingly common to talk about population movements from low-and middle-income countries in terms of 'mixed migration'. Such a holistic perspective is welcome, but depends on how the mix is conceived.

Migration research has a history of distinguishing between 'forced' and 'voluntary' migration, with the former group being those who flee war and persecution, and the latter group being seeking better material conditions. This distinction has been challenged and often discredited since the 1990s.³¹ However, it still persists in public debate about migration issues, as well as in the policy world.

From a legal perspective, some people qualify as 'refugees' while others do not, based on the criteria set forth in the 1951 Refugee Convention. It is also common, and unproblematic, to refer to people who move out of a conflict zone as 'refugees' without considering the circumstances of each person. But in more complex migration flows, 'refugees' might not be appropriate as a general label. A point of contention is whether 'migrants' is a valid label for everyone who migrates, including refugees (Box 4).

The term 'mixed migration' is a valuable addition to the migration vocabulary. There are several ways in which migration can be mixed.³² First, there may well be mixed motivations. For instance, many people migrate away from situations that are marked by poverty *and* insecurity. Second, motivations may be different at different stages of the route. For instance, a Syrian family might have escaped immediate danger and crossed into Lebanon, but decided to continue their journey because of intolerable socio-economic conditions. Conversely, a young Ghanaian man might have set out primarily for economic reasons, but faced immediate danger in Libya before escaping across the Mediterranean.

Mixed motivations at the outset and shifting motivations along the journey illustrate the difficulty of categorizing individuals as either 'forced' or 'voluntary' migrants. However, mixing also occurs when people who are evidently refugees travel together with other migrants who are evidently not refugees, using the same boats, for instance. When 'mixed migration' is used only to refer to this form of mixing, it misses the complexity that also plays out at the level of individuals. Consequently, debates about migration become distorted.

Box 4. The problem with 'migrants and refugees'

One approach to terminology is to regard everyone who migrates as 'migrants' and acknowledging that migrants may or may not also qualify as refugees. This makes it possible to talk about migration-related issues in a straight-forward way, take a humanitarian approach to all people who have left home and are in distress, and ensure that migration management incorporates the possibility of applying for asylum.³⁰ However, some stakeholders—notably the UNHCR—insists on seeing refugees and other migrants as two distinct categories of people from the outset. This means defining migrants as 'not refugees' rather than as an inclusive category. The contestations surrounding terminology has made it reassuring for journalists and policymakers to adopt the phrase 'migrants and refugees' but this phrase supports the questionable position that refugees are not migrants.

³⁰ Carling (2015a).

³¹ Richmond (1994), Van Hear (1998).

³² Van Hear (2014).

Initiative, hope, and determination are critical ingredients of migration dynamics

4

A problem-oriented perspective on migration can obscure the positive forces that underlie most human mobility. When people migrate, they are finding solutions and taking responsibility.

The reasons why people migrate are obviously diverse, but there is often an element of seeking to find solutions and lay the foundations for a secure and prosperous future. This is also the case when migration is difficult and dangerous.

Even today, when prospective migrants have access to many sources of information about the journey and the destination, migration is marked by uncertainty. The risks of the journey raise the stakes, as do the possibility of being deported. When so many people are willing to take the risks of migrating, it is partly because it is the lesser of two evils. But it is also because the uncertainty of migration is coupled with *hope*. The uncertainty of staying put—whether it means enduring poverty, security threats, or both—is often different because it does not involve hope in the way migration does.³³

Many prospective migrants are frightened by the dangers of the journey. But the need for courage also underlines a sense of being on a mission to secure a better future. Many of the migrants who start an uncertain journey towards Europe do so with remarkable determination.³⁴

Much migration from low-income countries is driven by hardship; people flee violence or poverty because leaving is preferable to staying. But this is not the whole story. People in low-income countries, too, can have a wish to travel and see the world. Such motivations are usually associated with the mobility of privileged groups.³⁵ However, empirical research has shown that a sense of adventure also plays a role in unauthorized migration from the Global South.³⁶

These perspectives on hope and initiative are easily overshadowed by destitution and desperation in debates about migration. It is obviously important to acknowledge the hardships that motivate migration, and the suffering that migration often entails. But such acknowledgments should be matched by respect for the migrants' agency.

³³ Bjarnesen (2009), Frouws (2014), Hagan (2008), Koikkalainen and Kyle (2016).

³⁴ Daniel (2008), Hernandez-Carretero and Carling (2012).

³⁵ de Haas (2014).

³⁶ Bredeloup and Pliez (2005), Schapendonk *et al.* (2014).

There is a two-way relationship between migration and development

The well-established concept of a ‘migration–development nexus’ implies that migration affects development and development affects migration. Policy interventions must relate to the nexus as a whole.

Development processes and migration flows affect each other in multiple ways. The resulting bundle of relationships is known as the *migration–development nexus*.³⁷ This nexus has given rise to two academic and policy debates, summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Responses to the two key questions in the migration–development nexus

Key question	General conclusions from academic research	Policy implications
(1) How does development affect migration?	Development tends to <i>increase</i> migration rates until countries reach a relatively high income level	Reducing migration through promoting development is a strategy marred with contradictions
(2) How does migration affect development?	Assessment of the overall effect varies substantially	Policy interventions can potentially increase the development benefits of migration

Note: ‘Migration’ refers to out migration and ‘development’ concerns the societies of origin.

The answers to the two key questions are more complex than the table indicates: outcomes depend on the context, on what exactly is meant by ‘development’ and on what form ‘migration’ takes. But the general conclusions are important for policy development.

This report essentially addresses the first question in Table 1. In the current section, we summarize general trends concerning the second question. The effects of out-migration on development are not only diverse, but often contradictory. Money transfers from emigrants (remittances) could alleviate poverty but at the same time foster dependence. High-skilled emigration could lead to brain drain in some sectors, but also stimulate subsequent return of human capital. Migration of women could produce vulnerability in the short term, but have positive effects on gender relations in the long run.

Still, the general sentiment has fluctuated between positive and negative views—a pattern that has been described as the migration

³⁷ Faist (2008), Sørensen *et al.* (2002).

and development ‘pendulum’.³⁹ An optimistic view in the 1960s gave way to a more pessimistic view from the mid-1970s onward. By the turn of the Millennium, however, the prevailing mood was an optimistic belief in the development benefits of migration, culminating in the 2009 *Human Development Report*. The current trend seems to be towards a sceptical or pessimistic view.⁴⁰

It can seem as if swings in the flavour of the migration and development debate have been coloured by shifts in the economic and political climate. This is not surprising, since it is essentially impossible to summarize the ‘overall’ effect of migration on development.⁴¹ In times when immigration has been seen as problematic, negative views on development effects have prevailed. This was the case after the oil shocks of the 1970s, and again in the wake of the financial crisis from 2008 onwards.⁴² This pessimistic trend may well be strengthened by the Mediterranean migration and refugee crisis that erupted in 2015. How to use empirical research to inform the overall assessment—and hence policy implications—is a point of contention among academics and analysts (Box 5).

Although ‘migration and development’ has been an area of substantial research and policy interest since the 1960s, it rose to unprecedented prominence on the international development agenda in the early 2000s. Not only was immigration to Europe and North America increasing, but several other factors contributed to this emergence. First, remittance transfers to developing countries were being compared to official development aid. Initially, it was pointed out that remittances were a *larger* flow of money than aid—a simple fact that underlined the economic importance of migration.⁴³ As remittance transfers rose more rapidly than aid, the comparison became even more striking. Second, the prospect of bottom-up development funding, driven by private initiative, had particular appeal in a neoliberal climate that was sceptical of government-driven development. Third, ‘migration and development’ provided an opportunity for the international community to address migration without tackling the much more contentious issues surrounding migration itself. It was possible to establish a prominent ‘Global Forum on Migration and Development’ while a ‘Global Forum on Migration’ would have been politically unfeasible at the time.

Against this background, much of the policy discussion on migration and development has not engaged directly with migration flows, but rather focused on improving migration’s development impact. In the case of Europe’s relationship with neighbouring regions, however, migration management objectives and development concerns have increasingly been addressed in a ‘comprehensive, though fragmented way (cf sections 9 and 14).

Box 5. The debate about *Exodus*

The Oxford-based economist Paul Collier published a book in 2013 entitled *Exodus: How Migration is Changing Our World*. Collier is an influential scholar, and the book was met with acclaim from the international development and establishment. However, migration was a relatively new field for Collier. Migration specialists would agree with much of his general analysis, but take issue with several of Collier’s claims, assumptions and recommendations. In simple terms, Collier recommends restricting migration and argues that this is required for the development of migrant-sending countries as well as for the social cohesion of migrant-receiving countries. The negative views on migration might be capturing the zeitgeist of the moment, but the scientific foundations are rather weak. As one review concluded ‘although Collier styles his book as a balanced review of the research literature, it is in fact a one-sided polemic that stands mostly outside academic research’.³⁸ But Collier makes one important point with which most economists would concur: the question is not whether migration is good or bad, but whether it should be increased or decreased from its current level. This focus on the marginal effect takes us closer to developing effective policy.

³⁸ Clemens and Sandefur (2014). See also Cameron (2013), Ratha (2014), Winters (2013). Carling (2015b) has identified the 107 scholars who have published the greatest number of articles in migration studies journals. Only one of them is cited in *Exodus*.

³⁹ de Haas (2012). See also Carling (1996), Castles (2009).

⁴⁰ Gamlen (2010, 2014), UNDP (2009).

⁴¹ Carling (1996).

⁴² Gamlen (2014).

⁴³ Gammeltoft (2002).

6

Development will increase migration in the short run

When poor countries experience growth, migration tends to rise. Historical experience suggests that migration only stabilizes and decreases when countries reach upper-middle income levels.

The so-called migration transition model postulates that all societies go through a period of increased migration.⁴⁵ The effect is two-fold, since development fuels both the formation of migration aspirations and people's ability to turn those aspirations into actual migration (cf. Figure 1 on page 7).

The argument with respect to rising migration aspirations is that, as incomes grow, people have greater capacity to plan for the future and are exposed to a greater range of choices in life. Moreover, material ambitions may rise more rapidly than the actual standard of living, thus strengthening the desire for a better life. Access to more information and resources also makes it easier to overcome the obstacles to migration.⁴⁶ The overall effect is thus that when the starting point is a low-income society, development will increase migration.⁴⁷

Migration transition theory has affinities with modernization theory, which purports a widely discredited view of a linear path towards development. But historical experience confirms key elements of the migration transition model. An extensive review of the literature suggests that emigration rates *increase* with rising per capita income until a level of about PPP\$ 7000–8000.⁴⁸ That is the level of several prominent countries of mass emigration, including El Salvador, Morocco, and the Philippines. Per capita income in Mexico is more than twice as high, and it is only recently that Mexican net migration has become positive.⁴⁹ In other words, even after migration rates start falling, emigration could exceed immigration for a long time.

The pattern that emigration rises with income until upper-middle levels is well documented. Fewer studies have assessed the hypothesised decline in emigration rates as countries get richer.⁵⁰ A prominent historical case is the experience of Southern European

Box 6. Migration and climate change

Climate change is expected to affect people's lives worldwide through changes in weather patterns, rising sea levels, and more extreme weather events. The connections between these changes and migration are typically discussed in terms of 'climate-induced displacement'. But this might not be the most fruitful perspective.⁴⁴ The effects of climate change will work alongside socio-economic and political factors in ways that make it difficult to identify certain migrants as displaced by climate change. Moreover, people are as likely to move into places of increased environmental vulnerability as away from them. For instance, growing urban areas may be prone to floods or other environmental hazards. Finally, a focus on displacement could easily overshadow the plight of those are negatively affected by climate change but face political and economic barriers to migration. Opportunities for migration will play important roles in adaptation to climate change, just as migration is integral to social and economic transformations more generally.

⁴⁴ Black *et al.* (2011).

⁴⁵ Skeldon (2012), Zelinsky (1971).

⁴⁶ Carling (2002).

⁴⁷ de Haas (2010, 2011), Salinari and De Santis (2013), Telli (2013), Vogler and Rotte (2000).

⁴⁸ Clemens (2014).

⁴⁹ Net migration is the difference between immigration and emigration. Negative net migration means that there are more people leaving than entering.

⁵⁰ Clemens (2014).

countries, which switched from being countries of emigration to being countries of immigration in the 1980s.⁵¹

The general pattern of migration transitions obscures great variation in country-level experiences. For instance, the proportion of people who express a desire to migrate varies greatly within each income level. And the proportion is surprisingly large in several high-income countries. For instance, the share of people expressing a wish to emigrate is *higher* in the United Kingdom than in Afghanistan. Such findings illustrate the importance of factors beyond economic development and security. They also attest to the difficulty of measuring migration aspirations in a comparable way.⁵⁹

Another factor that complicates the picture of migration transitions is climate change. At the global level, climate change is clearly a corollary of development. It will have greatly differentiated impacts, however, and those impacts are likely to shape migration flows in diverse ways (Box 6).

While migration transition theory describes general, long-term trends, the term ‘migration hump’ refers to medium-term impacts of policy (Figure 2). The argument is that successful development policy interventions will increase emigration before it eventually decreases. The prospect of a migration hump is relevant to fundamental interventions that affect socio-economic structures, such as trade liberalization (see Box 7).

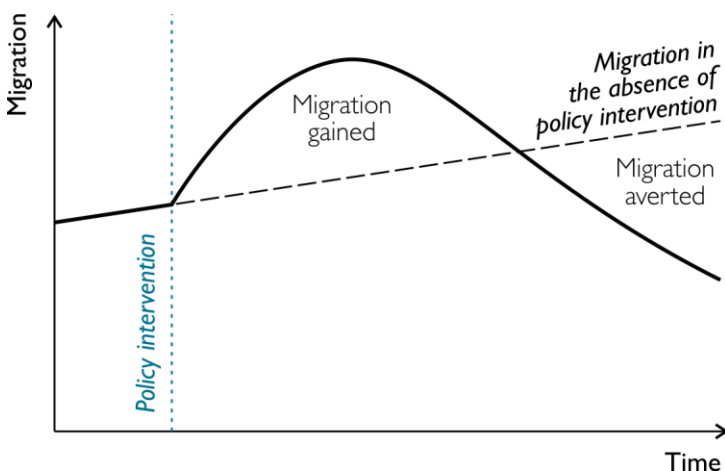


Figure 2. The concept of a ‘migration hump’

Box 7. NAFTA led to Mexico-US ‘Migration Hump’

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between Mexico, USA and Canada came into force in 1994 and has contributed to a migration hump.⁵² In contrast to the EU open market agreement, human mobility was not included in the NAFTA agreement.⁵³ It was nevertheless hoped that the agreement would lead to increased development in Mexico, which again would lead to decreased Mexico-US migration.⁵⁴ Following the implementation of the agreement and the liberalisation of the markets, the countries experienced a period of increased migration.⁵⁵ The migration flow peaked in 2002. By 2005–2010 the number of migrants had fallen to less than half the level in 1995–2000.⁵⁶ In the subsequent five-year period, the level of Mexico-US migration kept falling, and resulted in a net migration flow from the US to Mexico.⁵⁷ Although it is difficult to determine the precise role of NAFTA, the Mexican experience suggests that trade and migration are complementary in the short-run, while acting as substitutes in the long-run. The period of adjustment lasted for 15 years in the Mexico-US case, possibly prolonged due to a financial crisis in Mexico in the mid-1990s.⁵⁸

⁵¹ King *et al.* (1997), King and Rybczuk (1993).

⁵² Mahendra (2014).

⁵³ Fernandez-Kelly and Massey (2007).

⁵⁴ Martin and Taylor (1996).

⁵⁵ Garip (2012).

⁵⁶ Mahendra (2014).

⁵⁷ Gonzalez-Barrera (2015).

⁵⁸ Mahendra (2014).

⁵⁹ Carling (2014).

7

Poverty eradication has had a marginal impact on migration

Poverty eradication policy has had little success in decreasing either rural-urban migration or international migration. This is partly because targeted policies are only a minor influence compared to other socio-economic forces. Moreover, poverty reduction can fuel migration aspirations.

When previously colonized states gained independence, the control of urban growth and urban poverty remained an important political concern. It was widely assumed that economic development in rural areas reduced rural to urban migration. However, experiences have shown that development aid has been largely unsuccessful in decreasing internal migration to urban areas.⁶⁰ In a similar line of thought, poverty eradication has been believed to reduce international migration pressure. This view of poverty as a root cause of migration has inspired a range of policy initiatives to decrease migration by increasing economic growth.⁶¹

However, as highlighted in the 2005 Final Report of the Global Commission on International Migration, research and experience has revealed that ‘development instead of migration’ policies fail to decrease migration. The key idea of this critique is that it is mistaken to see migration and development in isolation from broader issues of global power, wealth and inequality.⁶² The report further noted that ‘the old paradigm of permanent migrant settlement is progressively giving way to temporary and circular migration’, and underlined ‘the need to grasp the developmental opportunities that this important shift in migration patterns provides for countries of origin’.⁶³

Although the focus of development policy has partly shifted from economic growth to basic needs, poverty eradication and sustainable livelihoods, it remains difficult to assess the success of development initiatives.⁶⁴ Development aid is a significant component of many low-income economies, but nevertheless has limited impact compared to other drivers for change, such as political reform, foreign direct investment and technological advance.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Bakewell (2008).

⁶¹ Piperno (2014).

⁶² Castles and Miller (2009).

⁶³ King and Collyer (2016).

⁶⁴ Raghuram (2009).

⁶⁵ Bakewell (2008).

The prospect of using poverty eradication policies to reduce migration is faced by a double challenge. First, the step from policy implementation to poverty reduction is modified by policy *effectiveness*, which is variable.⁶⁶ Second, the step from reduced poverty to reduced migration is modified by the relationship described in the previous section: migration pressures tend to rise with income until a relatively high income level.

Poverty-driven migration is not so much a result of absolute poverty as of *relative* poverty, *perceived* poverty, and perceived *causes* of poverty. People are more likely to turn towards migration if they think of themselves as poor, and see their poverty as a result of the place in which they live. One of Africa's political and economic success stories, Cape Verde, is a case in point. The economy grew rapidly around the turn of the century, but people had already become used to seeing their country as a place of poverty, and the wealth as coming from outside.⁶⁷ Much of the growth has, indeed, been driven by remittances, development assistance, and tourism. Migration aspirations remain widespread. A similar story can be told about the Dominican Republic, a middle-income country with one of the world's highest levels of migration aspirations.

⁶⁶ Carbone (2013).

⁶⁷ Carling (2002).

Concern for prospective migrants is a double-edged sword

A range of policy measures in the migration and development field justify restrictive measures with reference to the welfare of would-be migrants. But such humanitarian justifications easily underpin policies that are not in the target population's interest.

The dangers of unauthorized migration to Europe have created concern over the vulnerability of people on the move. The many migrant deaths in the Mediterranean represent a humanitarian disaster on Europe's doorstep. Saving lives at sea has therefore been a stated aim of policies that seek to combat smuggling.⁶⁸ However, this humanitarian justification overrides migrants' own assessment of the risks and benefits of migration.

Migrants who leave their country of origin because of a well-founded fear of persecution have a fair chance of being granted protection if they seek asylum in Europe. The journey to Europe is dangerous, but accepting the risk can be a rational choice. Counter-smuggling measures make access to protection more difficult, dangerous, and expensive. In short, it is not in the interest of potential asylum seekers.

Similar concerns have been raised with respect to mainstream approaches to migration and development. There is often an underlying 'sedentary bias', an assumption that staying in one place is natural and desirable, while mobility is deviant and problematic. Such attitudes were central to colonial-era policies that sought to control population mobility, and they permeate much contemporary thinking about development cooperation and humanitarian efforts.⁶⁹ The sedentary bias is closely connected with the focus on development of nation-states, rather than on the quality of life of individuals.⁷⁰

Development policy that aims to avert migration has paternalistic and self-interested elements, even if it is couched in terms of concern for prospective migrants. Today, such policy objectives coexist with others that take a more positive view on migration. In the case of the European Union, the aims of development cooperation related to migration are twofold. First, it should stimulate improved migration governance and increase the development potential of migration. Second, development

⁶⁸ Carling and Hernandez-Carretero (2011), Horsti (2012).

⁶⁹ Bakewell (2008), Horst and Nur (2016).

⁷⁰ Bakewell (2008), Clemens and Pritchett (2008).

cooperation is seen to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement, stimulating orderly, safe and regular manners of migration.⁷¹ These objectives are integrated in the so-called 'global approach to migration and mobility' (Box 8). In the bilateral mobility partnerships, actions regarding migration and development are covered alongside the thematic areas of legal migration and border management. Development policies in this context are often concerned with supporting voluntary return and sustainable reintegration, reducing the cost of remittances, and promoting the role of diasporas in development initiatives.⁷²

Critics argue that the EU's approach in migration-and-development cooperation is coercive. Increased development is the carrot, the reward given to African partners cooperating in achieving EU migration objectives.⁷⁵ Other criticism has highlighted that the cooperation is highly based on European initiatives, and is as a result mostly focusing on European concerns.

There are genuine conflicts of interest in the migration and development field. In particular, the demand for migration opportunities among people in low-income countries greatly exceeds the political willingness of high-income countries to open their borders. These conflicts of interest might not be possible to resolve, but it is unhelpful to obscure them by giving the impression that people from low-income or conflict-ridden countries are better off when migration is obstructed or discouraged.

Box 8. Euro-African relations and the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility

In 2005 the European Union introduced the 'Global Approach to Migration and Mobility' (GAMM). The dialogues between Europe and Africa on migration and mobility, including bilateral, regional and continental dialogues, happen in the framework of GAMM.⁷³ At the continental level, the 'Migration and Mobility Dialogue' takes place in 'the Africa-EU Partnership' priority area 'Human Development'. Regional level policy dialogues with countries along the western migratory route fall within the 'Rabat Process', and dialogues with countries along the eastern migratory route take place in the 'Khartoum Process'. At the bilateral level there are a range of programmes, projects and agreements between partner countries. In particular, the EU has initiated 'Mobility Partnerships' with African countries of origin and transit. The increase in EU-initiated dialogues on migration, border control and development demonstrate that cooperation with sending states has become a key component in European migration policy.⁷⁴

⁷¹ European Commission (2015).

⁷² European Commission (2015).

⁷³ Cross (2009).

⁷⁴ Kleist (2011).

⁷⁵ Chou and Gibert (2012).

‘Policy coherence’ is a virtue, but often lacks a foundation of coherent objectives

The connection between migration and development policies is often blurred. Policy making should pursue synergies and the creation of coherent aims. Improved coherence has proved difficult in the case of migration and development policy.

A number of different policy areas are entangled in the politics of migration. Foreign development assistance, asylum regulation, labour market, border control, international investment as well as trade all form a complex mix of policy areas that directly or indirectly affect migratory movement.⁷⁶ In this mixture of policy it might be difficult to draw the line between migration policy and non-migration policy. Not all policy areas have migration management as a top priority, such as with trade or macro-economic policy.⁷⁷ With other areas, such as labour market and development policy, the distinction is less clear since policies are likely to affect migration propensities. The relatively recent and still incoherent inclusion of migration in donor states’ development programs exemplifies the increased attentiveness to migration issues in other policy areas.⁷⁸

As policies typically serve multiple interests, it is difficult to define singular, objectively identifiable development goals of migration policies. Similarly, when development policies are influenced by migration-related objectives, the aims and means of the policies can remain blurred.

The construction of overlapping migration and development policy can be more or less strategic and coherent: some states do not directly link migration control policies to their development policies, but others implicitly state the aim of improving migration control through development cooperation.⁷⁹ A variant of the first alternative is when specific development initiatives aim to affect migration pressures in origin countries.⁸⁰ This could for instance be development aid targeted at increasing rural employment opportunities. A variant of the latter can be bilateral cooperation where origin countries implement more effective migration control policies in exchange for compensation such as development aid.⁸¹

⁷⁶ Berthélemy *et al.* (2009).

⁷⁷ Felbermayr *et al.* (2015).

⁷⁸ Castles (2009), Rotte *et al.* (1997).

⁷⁹ Vammen and Bronden (2012).

⁸⁰ Jean-Paul and Ruxanda (2009).

⁸¹ Bossard (2009), Dayton-Johnson and Katseli (2006).

The use of humanitarian discourse language and conditionality in *de facto* migration policies have been subject to increased criticism.⁸²

When these different policy areas interact with each other, it has been suggested that they must be designed and implemented in a coherent manner in order to be efficient.⁸³ However, policies encompassing both development and migration issues have been criticised for lack of coherence and competing ideological positions⁸⁴ This might be due to incompatibility of the fundamental goals of the two policy areas; while migration policy seeks to control human movement, development policy aims to increase human freedom, thus including the freedom to move.

It is important to acknowledge the inherent challenge of policy coherence in migration and development policy, and consider strategies to improve coherence in order to craft more effective policies.⁸⁵ Coherence in the migration and development perspective implies the pursuit of synergies, the elimination of negative side effects and the achievement of agreed upon policy goals. Suggestions for improved coherence include increased transparency, communication and consensus building among various actors.⁸⁶ The creation of common aims in a long term perspectives is a minimum core to enable improved coherence and effectiveness.⁸⁷

⁸² Horsti (2012).

⁸³ Berthélemy *et al.* (2009).

⁸⁴ Hong and Knoll (2014), Jean-Paul and Ruxanda (2009), King and Lulle (2016).

⁸⁵ Sørensen (2016)

⁸⁶ Dayton-Johnson and Katseli (2006), Hong and Knoll (2014).

⁸⁷ Rotte *et al.* (1997).

The effects of policy on migration flows are exceedingly hard to measure

We still know relatively little about the effects of migration-and-development policies on migration flows. Several studies suggest that development aid tends to increase migration, in line with migration transition theory.

Few studies have analysed the how the intersection of migration and development policy areas actually affects migration flows. This might be due to the complexity of the policy web. It is difficult to measure policy effects when there is lack of clarity in policy aims. To understand how the intersection of development and migration policy can affect migration flows, we may look to the research carried out to explore how *migration* policies affect migration flows and how *development aid* polices affect migration flows.

When measuring the effectiveness of migration policies, most studies have analysed how successful the policies have been in fulfilling the objectives set out by the migrant receiving state. The findings of this research have tended to be split in two diverging conclusions. Studies often conclude by stating (A) that migration policies can serve as successful tools for controlling migration, or (B) that migration policies generally fail as measures to control migration.⁸⁸ Some even argue that ‘the ability to control migration has shrunk as the desire to do so has increased. The reality is that borders are beyond control’⁸⁹. The differing findings of these studies have been explained as due to conceptual fuzziness. Different conclusions can be found depending on whether it is policy discourses, implicit policies on paper or implemented policies that are used as benchmarks.⁹⁰ A lesson to be learned from these studies is particularly valuable when assessing how development initiatives affect migration, namely that it is important with specificity and clarity in policy aims and policy evaluation.

Most of the attempts to measure the effects of development aid on migration have focused on purely economic determinants—aid inflows—and registered migration outflows. In these studies, some findings suggest that increased aid decreases migration from the aid receiving country to the donor country while other findings are in line with the migration transition and hump theories.⁹¹ The first set of findings confirms the popular hypothesis that aid relieves

⁸⁸ Czaika and de Haas (2011).

⁸⁹ Bhagwati (2003).

⁹⁰ Czaika and De Haas (2013).

⁹¹ Jean-Paul and Ruxanda (2009).

migration pressure.⁹² The latter and largest body of research, however, shows that aid can be counterproductive if the goal is to reduce migration pressure.⁹³ This will, however, depend on the level of economic and social development in the country of origin. In the least developed countries, any economic development will be accompanied by more migration. In more developed countries, economic development may reduce the migration pressure.

Most studies find aid to be an important aspect determining migration flows.⁹⁴ In a similar vein to analyses of how migration policy affects migration flows, this research divergent findings. It is difficult to assess whether development and humanitarian policy initiatives have, and will, increase or decrease migration. This is increasingly complex to understand when policy aims regarding development aid and migration intersect. It therefore becomes important to scrutinise how different policy impacts are analysed and whether observations concerning migration are causal.⁹⁵ In order to understand how policy affect migration, it is important to clarify which specific policy aims are evaluated and to take the context-specific level of economic development.

⁹² Müller-Using and Vöpel (2014).

⁹³ Lucas (2014).

⁹⁴ Berthélemy *et al.* (2009).

⁹⁵ Berthelemy *et al.* (2009), Clemens (2014), Lucas (2014).



The implementation of policy receives insufficient attention

There is often considerable discrepancy between official policy discourse and actual implementation. Poor policy implementation can lead to real or perceived policy failure. Attentiveness to implementation in humanitarian and migration policy is particularly important when policy aims are complex and ambitious.

Poor implementation can alter the original policy goals, lead to other outcomes than expected, or indeed lead to policy failure⁹⁶ Critical analyses of policy implementation have pointed to policy objectives that are too ambitious, insufficient monitoring and control, and the involvement of too many actors when policies are put into practice.⁹⁷

This is important to underline across policy areas, including migration-related humanitarian efforts and development cooperation. Both humanitarian emergencies and long-term development represent complex challenges and involve a large number of actors across states and levels.⁹⁸ When policies serve several purposes, the mix of policy goals can increase the complication of the implementation process and damage final outcomes. A case in point is when humanitarian policy has the parallel aims of improving the humanitarian situation *and* affecting the determinants of migration, e.g. in humanitarian emergencies that involve large scale population movements.⁹⁹

Migration policy more generally has also been criticised for insufficient attention to implementation challenges. These challenges are also relevant to policy in the intersection between migration on the one hand and humanitarian efforts and development cooperation on the other. One influential study of migration policy identified several gaps that help explain migration policy failure.¹⁰⁰ First, there is often a 'discourse gap' between publically stated objectives and specific policy measures. Such a gap often emerges when policies serve multiple purposes within different policy areas. Second, there is often an 'implementation gap' between specific policy measures on paper and the way in which they are put into practice.

⁹⁶ Pressman and Wildavsky (1984).

⁹⁷ Lipsky (1981), Pressman and Wildavsky (1984), Sabatier (1999).

⁹⁸ Bridges (2010), Nakamura and Smallwood (1980), Olu *et al.* (2015).

⁹⁹ McGinnis (2000).

¹⁰⁰ Czaika and de Haas (2011).

Attentiveness to implementation is especially relevant when policy aims are general and not context-specific, as with the migration-related components of the Sustainable Development Goals (Box 9). Efficient implementation of migration-related measures across policy areas require attention to the particular political and economic context in which the policies emerge, as well as the context-specific needs of the populations served.¹⁰⁴ Taken together, discursive gaps and implementation gaps often explain the limited effectiveness of much migration policy.¹⁰⁵

This argument is in line with the policy coherence argument put forward in relation to combining development cooperation policy with migration management. Humanitarian efforts must be designed and implemented in a coherent manner, such as through prioritising aims and policies that reinforce each other. Policy coherence increases the possibilities of efficient implementation.¹⁰⁶

Box 9. Migration in the Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the outcome of a process in which an array of stakeholders strived for influence. Migration issues have been given a more prominent place than in the Millennium Development Goals, which preceded the SDGs.¹⁰¹ In their final version, the SDGs include migration-related topics under several of its 17 goals. At least 10 of the 169 targets in the SDGs include migration, migrants or mobility. The most specific migration target calls for countries to ‘facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies’ (10.7).¹⁰² Other migration-related targets include ‘eradicate human trafficking’ (5.2, 6.7, 16.2), ‘Protect labour rights of migrant workers’ (8.8), ‘Reduce transaction costs of remittances’ (10.c), and ‘Establish legal identity, including through birth registration’ (16.9). As part of goal 17, which includes concrete measures to implement the SDGs, it is called for the disaggregation of data by migratory status (17.18).¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ King and Lulle (2016).

¹⁰² Sørensen *et al.* (2016), ZEF (2015).

¹⁰³ UN (2015, 2016).

¹⁰⁴ Doocy *et al.* (2011), Scortino (2000).

¹⁰⁵ Czaika and De Haas (2013).

¹⁰⁶ Berthélemy *et al.* (2009), Dayton-Johnson and Katseli (2006), Keijzer *et al.* (2015)

Awareness campaigns do not stem migration

It seems alluring to prevent migration in the short-term by warning prospective migrants about the dangers. Such efforts are often based on false assumptions and therefore risk having limited effect.

When individuals consider migration as a possible action, they make risk-taking decisions based on personal experience and the information they have access to. They evaluate the validity of the information and the relevance of the information to their particular circumstances. The acceptability of perceived migration risks can be mediated by the perceived alternatives. Moreover, prospective migrants at times downplay the dangers when relating to information about risk. These factors explain why particularly dangerous migration can seem as the best option.¹⁰⁷

One of the policy responses to irregular migration from less developed countries to Europe has been ‘information’ or ‘awareness’ campaigns that seek to reduce migration pressure.¹⁰⁸ The campaigns are managed by government agencies or non-governmental organisations, and are mostly funded by European donors. Awareness campaigns have been carried out in a number of less developed regions, including the Western Balkans, the Middle East, South-East Asia and a high number of countries in Africa. Despite limited assessment of how awareness campaigns affect migration flows, ever-greater financial resources are invested in campaigns trying to convince aspiring migrants to stay at home.

Awareness campaigns are based on assumptions about migrants that do not always reflect the reality. The basic belief is that irrational, irregular and risky migration occurs due to a lack of accurate information. It is assumed that if people knew about the risks involved with smuggling or trafficking, the dangers during the journey, the conditions of entry upon arrival and the difficulties facing irregular migrants in Europe, they would be deterred from migrating.¹⁰⁹ Awareness campaigns rarely provide information about legal alternatives for migration, but rather focus on the hazards of irregular migration.¹¹⁰

Research has found that awareness campaigns do not have a major influence on prospective migrants’ decision making. Aspiring migrants may discredit the validity of the information they receive,

¹⁰⁷ Hernández-Carretero and Carling (2012).

¹⁰⁸ Oeppen (2016).

¹⁰⁹ Pecoud (2010).

¹¹⁰ Alpes (2011).

accusing it of being biased by the vested aims of the funders and thus untrustworthy. Others may dismiss the information as irrelevant to their particular situation. Whether they discredit the information depends on their experiences, identity and socioeconomic position.¹¹¹

Prospective migrants receive information about migration, the journey and possible destinations from a number of sources, including acquaintances, relatives, authorities, organizations, the media and the internet.¹¹² Assuming that they undertake high-risk migration because they are unaware or ignorant of the risks is in many cases misleading. The focus on human smuggling and trafficking in awareness campaigns further reveals that these factors are assumed to be underlying causes of migration. However, rather than representing a cause of migration, brokers can represent the means to migrate.¹¹³

The vast majority of people who seek asylum in Europe depend on being smuggled. The journey can represent considerable costs and risks, but nevertheless be worthwhile when there is a real possibility of obtaining protection from persecution (see Box 10).

Raising awareness about legal opportunities can increase the trustworthiness, relevance and effectiveness of information campaigns. When local opportunities are (perceived as) scarce, irregular and high-risk migration may be relatively appealing options. Information campaigns can be valuable if they include information about possibilities for regular migration, relevant visa and work permit regulations, scholarship programmes, and means of protection and assistance during migration journeys.¹¹⁴

Box 10 The asylum paradox

For several decades, European asylum policy has been founded on a paradox. On the one hand, European countries have committed to granting protection to people who seek protection on the basis of a well-founded fear of persecution on individual grounds, as specified in the 1951 Refugee Convention. On the other hand, the same countries have strived to make it as difficult as possible for prospective asylum seekers to reach European territory and launch an application. This approach has allowed European states to uphold humanitarian principles while limiting the consequences. Refugee advocates have also been wary of challenging the paradox because of the risk that it could result in a more restrictive policy. Despite the shortcomings of the current refugee regime, there is a fear of 'rocking the boat' and endangering the support for the Refugee Convention.

¹¹¹ Hernández-Carretero and Carling (2012).

¹¹² Aker *et al.* (2011).

¹¹³ Alpes (2013).

¹¹⁴ Alpes and Sørensen (2015).

The landmark project *REVA* was a failure but yielded lessons to be learned

‘Return to agriculture’ promoted agricultural development to attract Senegalese youth and returnees. The project did not succeed in creating attractive alternatives to emigration, and has been criticized for its unclear links with readmission policy.

In June 2006 the Senegalese President announced that he had signed an agreement with Spain in which Spain promised to finance a new Senegalese agricultural development project. This project, ‘Retour Vers l’Agriculture’ or ‘Return to Agriculture’ (REVA), was created to promote modern agriculture as a mean to reduce migration aspirations and irregular migration. In later years, the project has been concerned with the provision of agricultural land to the diaspora and returning migrants. This project was initially financed by Spain as part of bilateral negotiated concerning migration control. Due to the secretive nature of the negotiations and the lack of clarity in regards to the links between development aid and readmission of irregular migrants, REVA has been criticised by many.¹¹⁵

The REVA project exemplifies the type of policy focused on addressing low levels of development as a key driver of migration.¹¹⁶ It is based on the assumptions that rural youth make up the majority of irregular migrants, and that the provision of employment opportunities would decrease their aspirations to migrate. Spain continued to finance the project for several years, and France has later included it in its bilateral migration agreements with Senegal, though it has yielded limited results.¹¹⁷ From its inception, the project built on a thrust by the government to promote agriculture as a development pillar in Senegal. However, the resources available in the project were insufficient to finance agricultural diversification or the highly needed industrial transformation. Moreover, as the Senegalese agricultural sector is confronted by challenges relating to persistent drought and flooding, the project has not become an attractive alternative to the young and unemployed. The project is still running, despite limited results concerning the initial aim of attracting and integrating prospective and returning migrants to the agricultural sector.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ Pian (2010), Reid-Henry (2013), Talleraas (2014).

¹¹⁶ Global Forum on Migration and Development (2013).

¹¹⁷ Panizzon (2008).

¹¹⁸ Diedhiou (2014).

The Emergency Trust Fund for Africa is a welcome initiative fraught with challenges



The migration and refugee crisis has strengthened European commitments to development cooperation with Africa. This is a positive consequence. But the outcomes for development and migration are uncertain.

At the Valetta Summit on migration in 2015, European and African leaders adopted a new action plan which, among others, listed three main focus areas to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement: (1) investing in development and poverty eradication, (2) promoting the development benefits of migration, and (3) addressing instability and crises.¹¹⁹

As a result of the Summit, the European Commission launched the ‘Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa’ (ETFA). This initiative represents an effort to reinvigorate the EU’s role in addressing refugee crises—an aim that has evolved during the past year, largely stemming from the current refugee crisis.¹²⁰ The size of the fund corresponds to slightly less than 10 per cent of Europe’s overall development actions in Africa.¹²¹

The very broad scope of aims of the trust fund includes ‘help foster stability in the regions and to contribute to better migration management [...], address the root causes of destabilization, forced displacement and irregular migration, by promoting economic and equal opportunities, security and development.’ The list of aims further includes the prevention of ‘further loss of lives at sea’ and ‘the effective sustainable return, readmission and reintegration of irregular migrants’.¹²²

By pooling together financial resources from existing and new EU sources, ETFA seeks to be innovative and to complement existing development aid to Africa from the EU. The fund represents partially fresh money in the sense that it includes money from non-aid budgets. However this also allows for spending that does not comply with DAC rules.¹²³

As with other large migration and development initiatives, the fund has been criticized for its lack of clearly defined goals. The wide-

¹¹⁹ Valletta Summit (2015).

¹²⁰ Collett (2016).

¹²¹ Tempest (2016).

¹²² European Commission (2016).

¹²³ The criteria set by the OECD Development Assistance Committee for legitimately classifying public spending as official development assistance.

ranging goals in ETFA moreover overlap with objectives that are included in other EU led African development programmes and funds.¹²⁴

Other concerns that have been pointed out regarding the ETFA agenda include the likelihood that origin countries and local actors are left out in decision making processes. Although it is part of an Africa-EU partnership, little guidance is given on how to involve partners from countries of origin. There are also concerns that some EU states will use push for increased conditionality on cooperation on readmission and irregular migration through trust fund initiatives. It is feared that this might have negative consequences for long-term development priorities.¹²⁵ As a representative of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) expressed it, ‘the creation of the Africa Trust Fund responds to the EU’s political appetite to use development funding for migration objectives’.¹²⁶

An interesting observation can be made regarding the choice of regions that are covered by the ETFA. The Horn of Africa, the Sahel and Lake Chad, and North Africa all represent regions with major African migration routes. While a criterion for allocating EU aid is to concentrate on least developed countries, the African trust fund seems to follow a different logic. Rather than targeting aid to where needs are greatest, its priorities are influenced by the EU migration agenda.

Due to the rush in which the ETFA was created, there is a need to manage the great expectations to this novel project. In order to ensure that it provides opportunities for more comprehensive action in regards to conflict prevention and irregular migration, appropriate implementation and management structures need to be in place. A particular crucial priority is to find useful ways to ensure ownership among and inclusion of origin countries in a non-conditional manner.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Collett (2016).

¹²⁵ Hauck *et al.* (2015a).

¹²⁶ Hauck *et al.* (2015b).

¹²⁷ Hauck *et al.* (2015a).

A focus on migration could harm the effectiveness of humanitarian and development policy

15

Humanitarian efforts and development cooperation should relate to migration because it affects the lives of target populations. Redirecting policy to meet migration-related objectives could nevertheless have negative consequences.

International development and humanitarian policy is partly driven by shifting fashions. There is a dynamism through which new themes and buzzwords emerge, gather momentum, and eventually fade.¹²⁸ ‘Migration’ has had such a role over the past decade. Reflecting the swings of the ‘migration and development pendulum’, migration has entered the development policy field in two ways: there was initially a focus on enhancing the development benefits of migration. More recently, attention has shifted to preventing migration by addressing the root causes. These two objectives coexist in current European policy. While they are given substantial attention, they are overshadowed by conventional migration policy objectives, often represented with the term ‘orderly migration’. These are objectives such as combatting migrant smuggling, illegal residence and illegal employment.

The three sets of migration-related policy objectives intersect with substantive policy areas, including peace and reconciliation, humanitarian efforts, and development cooperation. Table 2 presents examples of policy measures that are located in the various intersections.

As an example, the policy area of humanitarian efforts aims to save lives, alleviate suffering and protect civilians affected by war and conflict.¹²⁹ The introduction of additional migration-related objectives implies that certain measure can simultaneously promote both sets of objectives. ‘Addressing the root causes of migration’ could be achieved by protecting civilians in conflict situations. For instance, when conflict disrupts livelihoods, humanitarian aid can make it more feasible to remain in communities of origin. ‘Enhancing the development benefits of migration’ could be achieved through cooperation with diaspora-driven humanitarian initiatives. Many regions affected by humanitarian crises have a history of out-migration that has produced a diaspora, which has often become an important source of humanitarian support.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Cornwall (2007).

¹²⁹ This formulation reflects the priorities of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

¹³⁰ Horst (2008).

Table 2. Examples of policy measures to meet migration-related objectives, by policy area

Policy area	Core objective ¹³¹	Migration-related objectives		
		Addressing the root causes of migration	Enhancing the development benefits of migration	Promoting and ensuring orderly migration
Peace and reconciliation	Facilitating peace and reconciliation processes	Conflict prevention and peacebuilding,	Inclusion of diaspora in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction	Facilitation of safe return and reintegration
Humanitarian efforts	Saving lives, alleviating suffering and protecting civilians affected by war and conflict	Protection of civilians in conflict situations	Cooperation with diaspora-driven humanitarian initiatives	Assistance to refugees in camps
Development cooperation	Promoting economic development, democratisation, implementation of human rights, good governance and sustained poverty reduction	<i>Medium-term:</i> Promotion of good governance, democratisation; anti-corruption measures <i>Long-term:</i> Promotion of economic development, sustained poverty reduction	Anti-corruption measures; stimulation of entrepreneurship, including investments in infrastructure.	Conditionality of development aid (readmission, joint border control); support for migration management capacity; implementation of human rights; anti-corruption measures
Migration management	Affecting the volume, origin, direction, and internal composition of migration flows	—	Regularization of undocumented migrants	Opportunities for legal migration; strengthening of competence and capacity in the asylum system
Other policy areas	—	Trade liberalization, Climate change mitigation	Liberalization of remittance markets	Promotion of labour rights and social protection; support for independent monitoring

See text for details. The examples are not intended as recommendations.

‘Promoting and ensuring orderly migration’ could be achieved by using humanitarian efforts to support refugees in camps and reduce the need for unauthorized onward journeys. For instance it is widely believed that the surge in Syrian asylum migration to Europe in 2015 was caused, in part, by insufficient humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees in the region.

¹³¹ The objectives of humanitarian efforts and development cooperation are based on the publicly communicated policy priorities of the Norwegian government in each of the two fields (www.regjeringen.no). Similarly clear objectives do not exist for migration management. The generic formulation is based on Czaika and De Haas (2013).

The various policy measures listed in Table 2 represent *potential* for combining migration-related concerns with the core objectives of each policy area. But the prospect of doing two things at once should be addressed with caution. For analytical purposes, we can distinguish between two aspects of policy effectiveness. *Primary effectiveness* concerns outcomes with respect to the core objectives of each policy area. *Secondary effectiveness* concerns outcomes with respect to the migration-related policy objectives. Initiatives to reorient development cooperation and humanitarian efforts towards migration-related objectives should be met with four questions:

(1) *What are the probable consequences for primary effectiveness?*

Development cooperation and peace-building are particularly challenging policy areas where, even in the best of circumstances, it is difficult to achieve sustained results. There are consequently strong arguments for concentrating spending where the value-added is greatest. That might not be in the areas that reduce migration pressures.

(2) *What are the probable consequences for secondary effectiveness?*

A reorientation of policy towards migration-related objectives needs to be justified by likely impacts on migration outcomes. Such effects are difficult to verify. This does not make efforts irrelevant, but it is prudent to ensure that they are motivated by the likely results, rather than by other political concerns. In the context of public pressure on political leaders to 'do something' about migration, this is a relevant concern.

(3) *What are the implications of distributional effects?*

It can be possible to direct development cooperation and humanitarian efforts in ways that successfully contribute towards migration-related objectives. But such reorientation is likely to involve redistribution of aid across potential beneficiaries. Most evidently, there might need to be a shift towards regions where migration-related concerns are greatest. These might not be the regions where aid is most needed, nor where aid has the greatest effectiveness.

(4) *What are the ethical and political implications?*

The introduction of migration-related objectives to development cooperation and humanitarian efforts involves ethical and political pitfalls. There is a risk of using humanitarian concerns to justify measures that serve other purposes, and of making policy more paternalistic and self-interested.

These four questions represent a call for caution, but not for abandoning the interest in migration. First, migration is an increasingly important aspect of life in societies where development cooperation and humanitarian efforts are implemented. It can therefore be necessary to incorporate migration consideration into programming, even when the policy objectives are unrelated to migration.

Second, there will be measures of the kind displayed in Table 2 that stand up to the four critical questions and allow for successfully

Box 11 Migration and corruption

Anti-corruption measures are an established component of development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. In several ways, migration-related concerns strengthen the case for fighting corruption.¹³² For prospective migrants, corruption can severely reduce the *prospects* for securing a livelihood through either education or entrepreneurship (cf Figure 1). Statistical analyses have shown corruption to be a significant push-factor for migration.¹³³ Moreover, corruption can reduce the development benefits of migration, for instance by discouraging diaspora investments and making the reintegration of returnees more difficult.¹³⁴ Corrupt practices also stand in the way of orderly migration. This is not entirely negative, however, since migration-related corruption also enables people in need of protection to seek asylum in relatively safe ways (cf Box 10).

combining migration-related objectives with the core policy objectives in each area. Efforts to fight corruption are a case in point (Box 11). Similar arguments can be made with respect to promoting good governance, which indirectly increases faith in local futures, stimulates diaspora investment and, in the long-term contributes to economic development. However, the reduction of corruption is an aspect of good government that has particularly direct consequences on people's everyday lives and hopes for the future.

The connection between migration, humanitarian efforts, and development cooperation is primarily associated with countries of origin. For instance, the focus on root causes implies improving conditions in countries of out-migration in order to make it more attractive to stay. But given the importance of South–South migration, the countries where policy is implemented should also be regarded as countries of destination and transit. This perspective is well-established in terms of refugee camps in neighbouring countries, but it is also relevant to other migrant populations, including labour migrants and refugees outside of camps.

¹³² Carling *et al.* (2015).

¹³³ Dimant *et al.* (2013).

¹³⁴ Paasche (2016).

The way forward

The fifteen sections that make up the body of this report have addressed the processes that drive migration and examined the often-limited scope for affecting those processes through development cooperation and humanitarian policy.

Large-scale unauthorized migration is a consequence of global inequalities in welfare and security. Migration should serve as an impetus to address those inequalities, but not with a primary focus on reducing migration.

A reorientation of humanitarian efforts and development cooperation to meet migration objectives comes with three risks: possible reductions in effectiveness, unjustified redistribution among beneficiaries, and a larger role for donors' self-interest.

Migration alleviates humanitarian crises, but also creates new needs for assistance, or assistance in new places. Humanitarian efforts should respond to these circumstances. But migration also makes some humanitarian needs more pressing from donors' perspective. Prioritizing those needs is not necessarily justifiable.

The desire for migration to high-income countries is evidently much higher than the willingness in those countries to receive new migrants. This discrepancy is costly. Actual migration can play a positive role for communities of origin, but failed migration attempts and involuntary immobility can undermine development processes.

Migration attempts are driven not only by current conditions, but by a lack of hope in local futures. Some forms of development cooperation—such as measure to reduce corruption—address those hopes more directly than others.



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Root causes and drivers of migration

Implications for humanitarian efforts and development cooperation

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