

Human Development Report Office  
A Guidance Note for Human Development Report Teams



# Mobility and Migration



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## Acronyms

AIDCO: EuropeAid Co-operation Office	OSCE: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
EC: European Commission	PRSP: Poverty reduction strategy paper
EDF: European Development Fund	RELEX: European Commission External Relations
EU: European Union	SADC: Southern Africa Development Community
GDP: Gross domestic product	UNCTAD: UN Conference on Trade and Development
HDI: Human development index	UNDESA: UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
HD: Human development	UNDP: UN Development Programme
HDR: Human development report	UNESCO: UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
HDRO: Human Development Report Office	UNFPA: UN Population Fund
IDP: Internally displaced people	UNHCR: UN High Commissioner for Refugees
ILO: International Labour Organization	UNICEF: UN Children's Fund
JMDI: Joint Migration and Development Initiative	UNIFEM: UN Development Fund for Women, part of UN Women
MDG: Millennium Development Goal	UNITAR: UN Institute for Training and Research
MIPEX: Migrant Integration Policy Index	UNODC: UN Office on Drugs and Crime
NGO: Non-governmental organization	USAID: US Agency for International Development
OHCHR: UN Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights	

# Introduction

Mobility is a fundamental element of human freedom, as argued in the global *Human Development Report 2009, Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development*. Mobility entails the freedom to seek opportunities to improve living standards, and health and education outcomes, and/or to live in safer, more responsive communities. The 2009 report presents a set of broad policy recommendations for all countries to strengthen human development outcomes associated with mobility and migration at origins and destinations; to better research the causes, trends, barriers and effects of migration; and to mainstream mobility and migration into national development strategies and policy responses.

This note offers guidance for national and regional human development report teams that seek to investigate and strengthen the human development gains associated with migration in their countries. The note offers suggestions on how a report on mobility can be refined and conceptualized based on a given national context, as well as on how mobility can be considered in reports on related themes.

Critical issues in applying the human development approach are discussed across the different report stages, including: initial preparations, theme selection and stakeholder engagement; data collection, research, analysis and validation, and review of findings; and the presentation and advocacy of recommendations to critical audiences.

The note highlights potential institutional partnerships and forms of collaboration. It presents sources of information on rapidly evolving international initiatives and research on migration, especially the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) country-level migration profiles, and national preparations for the annual Global Forum on Migration and Development.

The global *Human Development Report 2009* estimated the number of people on the move at nearly 1 billion. By far, the largest group of migrants comprises those who move within their own borders, approximately 740 million people. Most are labour migrants, but some are internally displaced persons (IDPs). An estimated 200 million people are international migrants. Most migrants cross borders into neighbouring countries or countries in the same region. Destination countries typically have the same or higher human development index (HDI) rankings, with a trend towards countries with very high human development rankings. Some 14 million refugees (approximately seven percent of all migrants)<sup>1</sup> are temporarily settled in a neighbouring or other receiving country.

The report showed that many countries are simultaneously source, transit and destination countries, facing domestic and cross-border migration of both short- and longer-term duration by men and women. Migration outcomes are posi-

tive overall for all groups, albeit with more or less calculated trade-offs and with serious exceptions. But benefits to the migrant, to people at the origin or native to the destination, and to society at large are less than they could be due to unwarranted barriers to mobility, including the lack of access to appropriate information. The report argued that migration policies should be informed by national debates based on facts and openness, rather than intolerance and prejudice.

At any given point in the life stories of those affected by migration, there can be a wide range of more or less positive outcomes depending on people's perceptions and opportunities, and the policies in place. Because the decision to move carries benefits as well as drawbacks, mobility and migration can be viewed as involving a continuum of related drivers and outcomes that demand a broad range of policy considerations and responses.

Even where initiatives related to migration may be underway, applying a human development perspective signals a longer-term, inclusive process of research, validation and formulation of policy recommendations. This takes the individual or household as the unit of analysis, and explores the barriers they face in realizing their rights and aspirations, and expanding their freedoms.

Readers should use this guidance note with other resources on mobility and migration, and more general materials that support human development reports. These include:

- The global [Human Development Report 2009, Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development](#)
- The [European Commission \(EC\)-UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative](#) (JMIDI)
- IOM's [Handbook on Mainstreaming Migration in Development Planning: A Guide for Policy Makers and Practitioners](#)
- [IOM migration profiles](#)
- [UNDESA's information on international migration and development](#)
- The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) [Guide on Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Policies](#)
- The [HDR Toolkit](#), [HD Measurement Primer](#) and [HDR Timeline](#)

Additional resources are provided in the annex of the guidance note.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Human Development Report 2009*, p. 26, Box 2.2.

# Stage 1: Preparations

The decision to produce a regional, multi-country or national human development report on mobility and migration and related themes involves substantial commitment and resources.

Mobility and migration tend to be highly sensitive—even emotive—subjects associated with deep-rooted prejudices, issues of ethnicity, national identity and sovereignty, and relations with neighbouring country governments, and partners from the private sector and civil society.

While a mobility- and migration-themed report can foster better understanding of how these phenomena may affect all aspects of society, a strategic focus can help catalyse needed debate. A report should under all circumstances build on, complement and add value to initiatives by other partners. Opportunities to access or collect relevant data, the availability of experts and the willingness of stakeholders to engage will to a substantive degree affect the choice of theme.

The ability to influence policies depends in large part on preparations made at the beginning of a report, including efforts to engage national and regional partners as part of a participatory, inclusive and consultative process.

## Key Steps

As a reference point for this first stage of report preparations, these include:

- Mapping stakeholders, and identifying and engaging partners;
- Selecting and conceptualizing mobility and migration as a main theme, or as a contributing perspective to another report;
- Mapping available data and research covering issues, outcomes and policies around those who move, as well as impacts

## Identifying and Engaging Partners

As a first step, UNDP country offices should map stakeholders to identify possible partnerships, and help ensure that the report and its eventual findings will be supported. It is important to engage national and regional migration and related experts and institutions, as well as international partners, including the IOM, International Labour Organization (ILO) and sister UN agencies. This facilitates common understanding of the objectives and added value of the report from the beginning. Given the often strong and varied perceptions of migration, and related political sensitivities, experts and opinion leaders with differing perspectives should be considered, including from the government at all levels, civil society and the private sector, as well as from diasporas, groups of returning migrants, and people from both origin and destination communities. Engagement is critical throughout, even as the nature of it may evolve during the process.

## Selecting the Report Theme

Country offices should consult with partners to agree on a report's overall theme and focus, keeping in mind that decisions on report themes will influence the structure, scope, partnerships, audience and advocacy goals of a report. Mobility and migration can serve as the central theme or as a contributing perspective to a differently themed report. National reports from [El Salvador in 2005](#), [Mexico in 2007](#) and [Armenia in 2009](#) offer examples of how a report on migration can address a wide range of related human development issues. Some themes especially suited to mobility and migration issues include equity, poverty, social inclusion, HIV and AIDS, gender, youth, urbanization, decentraliza-

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