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IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.
The Future of Migration Policies in the Caribbean

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FOREWORD

This paper is one of 19 background papers which have been prepared for the IOM, 2010 World Migration Report which is entitled the “Future of Migration: Building Capacities for Change”. The 2010 report focuses on likely future trends in migration and the capacities that will be required by States, regional and international organizations, civil society and the private sector to manage migration successfully over the coming decades.

Over the next few decades, international migration is likely to transform in scale, reach and complexity, due to growing demographic disparities, the effects of environmental change, new global political and economic dynamics, technological revolutions and social networks.

The 2010 World Migration Report focuses on capacity-building, first because it is good governance to plan for the future, especially during a period of economic downturn when the tendency is to focus on immediate impacts and the short-term period of recovery. Second, capacity-building is widely acknowledged to be an essential component of effective migration management, helping to ensure the orderly and humane management of migration.

Part A of the World Migration Report 2010 focuses on identifying core capacities in key areas of migration management. The aim is not to recommend “one size fits all” policies and practices, but to suggest objectives of migration management policies in each area, to stimulate thinking and provide examples of what States and other actors can do.

Part B of the World Migration Report 2010, provides an overview of the latest global and regional trends in migration. In recognition of the importance of the largest global economic recession since the 1930s, this section has a particular focus on the effects of this crisis on migrants, migration and remittances.

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INTRODUCTION

The objectives of migration policy are generally to regulate migration in such a way that it prevents migration “shocks” in the short term, and maximizes the positive impact of migration on national economic growth and security in the medium-to-long term. Yet there is an absence of clear goals with regard to migration policy in many Caribbean States and, in others, there are contradictions between policies and their implementation, indicating a need for capacity-building in the relevant areas.

These contradictions and gaps are based on a lack of capacity and coherence at the national institutional levels, as well as on the prevailing mindset, whereby migration at the Caribbean regional level continues to be problematized and perceptions of migration management are based on continuing models of exclusion rather than inclusion. This causes administrations to focus more on strengthening borders than on facilitating integration.

This paper provides an overview of current migration policies in the Caribbean and the implications of future migration trends. Likely future flows are indicated and the capacities of Caribbean countries to respond to changing migration patterns assessed. In addition, the critical needs for capacity-building are assessed, followed by recommendations in the areas of concern that need to be addressed.

The paper refers to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Associated States\(^1\) as well as the Dominican Republic, the Netherlands Antilles and Curaco. This inevitably means that there are considerable variations in terms of policy, implementation procedures and capacities, thus a number of generalizations have been made.

CARIBBEAN MIGRATION POLICIES AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE MIGRATION TRENDS

Migration policies of the CSME with regard to intra-Caribbean movement

The Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (5 July 2001)\(^2\) establishing the Caribbean Community, including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME),\(^3\) provided for the exercise of the right of nationals of the Caribbean Community to provide services according to the approved modes of supply of a service in any jurisdiction within the CSME (CARICOM, 2001). This included all persons in any non-wage-earning capacity of a commercial, industrial, agricultural, professional or artisanal nature, as well as those who wished to create and manage economic enterprises.

\(^{1}\) CARICOM States include Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago. The Associated States are Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands.

\(^{2}\) See [http://www.caricom.org/jsp/community/revised_treaty.jsp?menu=community](http://www.caricom.org/jsp/community/revised_treaty.jsp?menu=community)

\(^{3}\) The CSME Member States are Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.
As a first stage towards the free movement of persons, Article 46 of the Revised Treaty stated that eligible persons would be university graduates, media workers, sports persons, artists and musicians, and it empowered the Community to increase the classes of persons entitled to move to, and work freely in, any Member State. Subsequently, nurses and teachers and artisans with a Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ), and holders of associate degrees (and comparable qualifications) were added, thus providing for a total of nine categories of persons permitted to move freely within the CSME. Freedom of movement was also extended to those persons in managerial, technical and supervisory positions who were attached to persons who had established a commercial presence in another Member State, or were supplying a service on a temporary basis.

For eligible persons wishing to move freely, the procedure that had been implemented was the obtaining of a Skills Certificate. Persons wanting to move within the CSME to temporarily engage in the supply of a service must register as a service provider in the Member State of his/her residence in order to be issued with a certificate that would facilitate entry to another Member State. This permits the individual to work in any Member State without the need to obtain a work permit. The Certificate is valid indefinitely.

**Future migration policies of the CSME**

The determination of the Contingent Rights Policy\(^4\) is still in process. Therefore, following on from the eligible categories of persons that the Treaty indicates may establish themselves in another Member State, future policy must confirm the situation of any other rights to which the principal beneficiaries should be entitled. It must also include the rights and benefits to which their spouses and dependents are entitled, other than the right to travel, to enter and leave the jurisdiction to which the principal migrant has moved (see Thomas-Hope, 2006b).

With respect to immigrants to CSME Member States from non-CSME States (whether within or outside of the Caribbean), work permits are required for long-stay purposes. From two weeks to six months’ stay is permitted for short-term visits without permits.

**Policies relating to non-CSME countries/territories**

In the case of non-CSME Member States in the Caribbean, immigration of Caribbean nationals is subject to the issuance of work permits (applied for by the employer) for the purposes of long-term migration and, in some cases, visas. Stringent regulations are imposed for short-stay visits, chiefly based on the financial standing of the individual and the purpose of the visit. Where visas are not required, permission to enter as a visitor is largely subject to the discretion of immigration officers at the points of entry.

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Forecast of future trends in migration

The future of Caribbean migration in the short and medium term will depend on several factors, including the following:

- the global financial trends that impact the extra-regional host countries’ employment capacities and, associated with this factor, their social tolerance levels with respect to immigrant labour, and their immigration policies and regulations;
- the specific policies of the CSME with regard to intra-Caribbean movement;
- environmental threats, including those associated with climate change and natural disasters.

Implications of the global financial situation

Based on the direct and indirect impacts of the global financial situation on employment patterns in the countries of North America and Europe, the future of Caribbean migration could be expected to show the following trends:

- Reduced emigration to traditional destinations of North America and Europe, due to a narrowing of the range of occupational groups included in the selective immigration policies of the destination countries; this could reduce the migration of service workers and other medium-skilled workers, as well as migrants’ dependents and seasonal labour migrants, from the Caribbean.
- Reduced flows of remittances from migrant communities abroad to Caribbean source countries.
- An increased volume of deportations of Caribbean nationals from North American and European destinations.

Policies of the CSME with regard to intra-Caribbean movement

Based on the policies articulated in the Treaty of Chaguaramas, the following trends can be forecast:

- sustained levels of migration of highly skilled persons within the Caribbean region;
- increased migration of low-skilled workers to countries of the region that currently have high levels of immigration;
- sustained levels of undocumented entry or undocumented extension of stay on visitors’ visas;
- increased trafficking in persons.

Other migration flows

Environment-stimulated movement

Environmentally-induced migration is possible, given the likely future impacts of climate change (sea-level rise, hurricanes, floods or prolonged intense drought), as well as tectonic hazards (earthquakes and volcanoes), to which Caribbean countries are vulnerable. The earthquake in Haiti on 12 January 2010,
for example, has already led to the re-location of significant numbers of persons to Canada and the United States.

This reinforces the fact that Caribbean governments need to build their capacity to respond quickly to sudden population movements and to be able to manage sustained inflows of persons. A manual has been developed with particular reference to Trinidad and Tobago, for planning and responding in the event of sudden population flows resulting from environmental or other threats (see Jones, 2008), and it could be adapted for other country situations.

**CAPACITIES TO RESPOND TO CURRENT AND FUTURE TRENDS IN MIGRATION**

*Management of immigrants in the CSME Member States under the terms of the Treaty of Chaguaramas*

Caribbean Heads of Governments had agreed to fully implement migration policies by the end of 2009 but, in July 2008, the Conference of Heads of Government indicated that the implementation of the free movement regime had to be further evaluated. The fact that countries had been holding national consultations on this issue for over a year without coming to an agreement indicates the high level of caution and the lack of a sense of readiness to implement the migration policy relating to immigration and contingent rights.

Many Caribbean countries also lack the capacity to implement policies with respect to:

- the administrative and logistical mechanisms for appropriate handling of the demands of increased immigration under the new policies of the CSME regarding movement;
- the lack of coherence across all relevant government agencies in carrying out the requirements of the policies in a consistent manner;
- concerns about the capacity to provide services that would be included in the contingent rights of migrants and their dependents (housing, education and health), especially in the urban localities where they are expected to be in greatest demand;
- the lack of clearly formulated regulations and law that reflect the policies on free movement.

*Management of undocumented migrants*

All Caribbean countries (CSME and others) are challenged by the intermittent entry of undocumented migrants and/or by the undocumented extended stay of those who enter with visitors’ permits. Administrations currently respond to this situation by either granting periodic amnesties for those without residence status (allowing then time to provide the documentation needed for them to regularize their status) or by deporting them.
Both approaches raise additional issues: at the country level, there is a high cost to governments in carrying out deportations and, at the regional and international levels, there may be concerns about the treatment of migrants and denial of their rights. How governments respond to migrants can influence the public mood, which can lead to an atmosphere of crisis and thus contribute to the rise or reinforcement of xenophobia in society.

The control of undocumented entry of persons is a persistent issue in countries with highly permeable land and/or sea borders. Creative multilateral strategies are required to resolve this situation. It is also important that States have the administrative coherence and capacity to respond in ways that respect migrants’ rights.

**Capacity to respond to trafficking in persons**

In the Caribbean, as in many other parts of the world, there has been an increase recently in the organized movement of people by third parties, in ways that constitute trafficking. Trafficking within the Caribbean context includes the movement of persons, mostly young women: a) within the region; b) from the region to North America and Europe; and c) into the region from countries outside – for example, from China. The activity chiefly involves the recruitment and/or assisted migration of young women for whom agents find jobs abroad. These jobs are invariably outside of the formal system and usually involve financial obligations to the agent and few, if any, options for work other than engaging in the commercial sex industry. Trafficking in persons includes a variety of situations in terms of both the purpose and extent of exploitation associated with it. Some trafficked persons are the unsuspecting victims of deceitful recruiters, while others are the willing participants in the work in which they engage, viewing it as an economic opportunity to be grasped (Garrett and Mahoney, 2006; Kempadoo, 2006; Thomas-Hope, 2006b).

Data on trafficking in persons are difficult to gather because of the illegal nature of the activity and the victims’ fear of reporting cases. More data are required but, in the meantime, the implementation of anti-trafficking strategies, including increasing intelligence and public education programmes to increase awareness among potential recruits, could proceed on the basis of existing information.

**Capacity to manage migration agents or brokers**

The activities of agents in trafficking of persons and also in the legitimate migration of skilled persons to North America and Europe occur in many cases with the assistance of private agents who are not formally registered in either the source or destination country. The migrants themselves need to be protected against the inordinately high charges that are sometimes imposed for services. Additionally, inadequate or incorrect information is invariably provided by agents to prospective migrants concerning the employment and other conditions at the destinations. There is a need for increased capacity to document and regulate the activities of migration agents.
Capacity to identify and analyse migration trends and forecast emerging trends

The ability to gather data and analyse them quickly is a critical factor with respect to countries’ capacity to respond to all types of migration and to any changes that occur in migration trends.

The 2001 round of population censuses for the CARICOM and Associated States included questions pertaining to both immigration (country of birth) and emigration (provided by households from which persons had left within a specific period). However, these questions were not included in all Caribbean countries outside of the CARICOM group.

**Consistency of data for the region**

In the 2001 censuses, there was a lack of consistency across the region in the specific ways in which the census questions were constructed and asked. This resulted in an inability to decipher trends for the region as a whole. The existence of only partial data for the region skews the overall picture, since Caribbean countries are both the source and the destination for much of the movement being evaluated.

**Timeframe for processing of census data**

There is a gap of several years between the year of the census and the availability of the data for analysis. There is a need for increased technical and/or human resource capacity in most Caribbean countries to process the census data in a timely manner.

**Data on return migration**

There are insufficient data on voluntary return migration, as well as on the socio-economic backgrounds and health needs of involuntary returnees (deported migrants). This information is needed in order to protect migrants’ rights and to attempt to reintegrate them into the source country in ways that maximize their contribution to the labour force and society, while minimizing the risks of exclusion, upon their return.

**Other sources of data**

In the case of extra-regional migration, data are obtained from the destination countries, which means that the estimation of emigration from the Caribbean is based on figures for immigration at the destination. These data are of limited use to policymakers in source countries, since the formal granting of “immigrant status” in the destination country often occurs several years after the actual move took place. Migrants often obtain a temporary visa and then apply for permanent resident status. Furthermore, the immigration data do not capture temporary or short-stay movements. Seasonal labour migration data are available at source since these movements are arranged by source country governments.
The fact that questions on both immigration and emigration were included in the 2001 Censuses of Population for the CARICOM Member and Associated States is an indication of the current awareness of the importance of migration data in the relevant departments of the CARICOM Secretariat, and their determination to close the data gaps. In those countries that are under-resourced, the regional inconsistencies and delays in data compilation could be reduced through increased capacity. If the census data could be speedily processed, it would facilitate the timely analysis of regional migration trends.

Additionally, in each country, there is need for the ongoing collection of data on population movements. This could be done when issuing work permits and skill certificates, at which time there should be careful documentation of the demographic, educational and occupational profiles of both the principal migrant and the accompanying dependents. This information is not currently documented and is essential in order to assess the full extent of migration and to forecast its impact on labour markets, and service requirements, especially in the areas of education and health.

CRITICAL NEEDS IN CAPACITY-BUILDING REGARDING MIGRATION

Despite the emerging policies aimed at facilitating skill-based selective migration between CSME Member States, the prevailing approach to migration is that of focusing on the management of borders, with little attention being paid to strategies for the inclusion and integration of migrants. There is a general tendency for administrations and various sectors of the public to view immigrants with suspicion. The suspicion is mainly focused on migrants with low-level occupational skills or those with different ethnicities from that of the mainstream populations of the host countries. This is especially the case with respect to migrants from countries with consistently high emigration levels, such as Haiti, Guyana, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic. This negative mindset increases the risk of migrants being excluded from policies and from society in general. Small island States are also aware of their limited space and resources, and may fear that their capacities would be exceeded by immigration.

Such fears highlight the need for governments to build the capacity to set clear goals regarding the ways in which migration can support wider national socio-economic policies. Country administrations also require the resources to manage the logistical challenges involved in migration. These capacity-building needs are further elaborated below.

Increasing the capacity to set clear goals for migration

Greater cooperation between those formulating national strategies for development and for migration would reinforce both types of strategy and facilitate greater coherence. Efforts to bring about this kind of coherence could be advanced by building capacity in the following ways:
• **Building partnerships.** Developing partnerships between public sector, private sector and civil society, in both high-emigration and high-immigration countries, could help improve the human resource capacity required for development.

• **Increasing the environments of opportunity.** There is a particular need to increase the gross domestic product (GDP) levels of the poorest States and reduce the levels of crime in the most affected States so as to increase opportunities for investment and entrepreneurial activity. This is required so that discrepancies between high-emigration and high-immigration countries within the Caribbean can be reduced. One major benefit of this would be that all States would be able to offer high standards of services to both their national populations and immigrants entering under the terms of the CSME policy of free movement of persons. Otherwise, the poorest Caribbean States will remain severely disadvantaged by competitiveness resulting from discrepancies.

• **Building educational and occupational capacities in the population.** Capacity-building in these areas would help reduce the number of victims of migration – particularly migrant children or children whose parents have emigrated and who suffer negative social and psychological impacts, and trafficked persons who have suffered trauma and/or abuse.

**Building the capacity to implement migration policy**

To change the paradigm whereby migration is problematized in policy or practice, to one a more positive holistic one, there is a need to build capacity among the government actors most involved in the migration process. As suggested by Hugo (2009) for Asia, this could be achieved by creating a team of migration experts who would increase the regional capacity to:

• examine and forecast trends in the relationship between migration and development,
• draft migration regulations and law;
• guide the migration management process so that migrants’ rights are protected;
• make recommendations to facilitate the integration of immigrants under the provisions of the CSME policy on free movement of persons;
• develop public education programmes on aspects of emigration and immigration that target those groups most at risk in migration (e.g. children and youth) and address the anxieties that lead to xenophobia in migration responses.

Such a team would draft discussion papers, convene workshops and prepare papers for governments, relating to all aspects of migration – including issues of concern for which no policy yet exists.

**Increasing institutional integration of migration policy and practice**

In all countries of the region, decision-making and practice pertaining to migration are dispersed through a number of government ministries and agencies, resulting in a lack of coherence in
policymaking and implementation. Countries would benefit from increased capacity to systematically disseminate information between all departments and personnel involved in the execution of migration-related regulations, and to integrate processes relating to decision-making and practice.

Building the capacity of civil society to respond appropriately to migration and migrants

Distorted perceptions and attitudes relating to migration and migrants could be addressed by raising awareness and increasing knowledge among government personnel involved in managing migration, as well as all other major stakeholders (public sector, private sector and civil society, including trade unions and the media), of the costs and benefits in the relationship between migration and development. There is a need for empirical evidence to demonstrate that the construction or fostering of an enabling and attractive environment is essential to reducing high rates of emigration and to attracting investment and other inputs from all sectors, including the migrant communities. A better understanding of the migration dynamic is needed in civil society and prospective migrants must be made aware of the socio-economic conditions at likely destinations and the risks involved in migrating.

Data

Building the capacity to efficiently gather and analyse data is essential for regional governments to plan for migration in such a way that the benefits are optimized.

The lack of consistent and regular emigration records reflects the laissez-faire attitude that has prevailed towards outward movement, except when there is concern about brain drain from specific sectors such as health and education. Yet data on migration trends are essential in order to accurately assess the labour force and forecast future human resource needs.

Emphasis has been placed on immigration but, even then, good-quality data are not available for all countries of the region. In particular, there is a lack of the kind of data that could be used to plan for migrant integration and for the distribution of services required for their settlement.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is becoming increasingly accepted among international organizations that migration should not be problematized and that the benefits of migration invariably exceed the costs. This refers to the benefits and costs to the individual migrant (and/or family) as well as to the country in general. In this vein, migration has been identified as an indicator of human freedom and treated as an essential component of human development in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report 2009 (UNDP, 2009). Despite this, migration policies – and, more especially, practices – generally continue to focus upon controlling national borders in relation to movements inwards (immigration), and ignoring borders with regard to movements outwards (emigration). These approaches are conditioned by perceptions that immigrants make demands of the State, whereas emigrants reduce the pressures on limited national capacities. In the poorest Caribbean countries, hopes for development have become focused on investments and remittances from the diaspora.

The following recommendations refer to some of the key areas in need of capacity-building:

1. Training of a team with knowledge and experience in:
   a) migration and development
   b) the rights of migrants
   c) the modernization of immigration practices
   d) public education with respect to migration
   e) formulation of draft regulations and law.

2. Development of greater institutional coherence in the formulation and implementation of migration policies, based on the harmonization of government ministries and their various portfolios relating to migration.

3. Improvement in procedures for data gathering and analysis on migration for all Caribbean countries so that assessments of current trends and forecasting of future trends can take place in a timely manner.

4. Establishment of closer links between research and policy through a formal institutional arrangement.

5. Integration of immigrant populations through the establishment of partnerships between the public, private sectors and civil society (especially the Trade Unions, the media, schools, religious bodies, service clubs and associations).

6. Training of relevant personnel in preparing for any mass migration flows than occur due to environmental or other disasters.
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