More than numbers: the value of migration data.

Migration data are gaining traction on the international development agenda, as both experts and states increasingly recognize the critical role that data play in improving migration governance. However, there is limited clarity on how to prioritize strategic investments in data. The corresponding value (e.g., economic, social, humanitarian, political) for migration outcomes is often unknown. Unless decision makers are presented with a clear value case, current efforts to improve migration data will not be translated into action.

The Data Bulletin: Informing a Global Compact for Migration series aims to summarize in an accurate and accessible fashion existing evidence on migration to support the discussions and any follow-up activities of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

As part of the project “Support to IOM for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration,” funded by the European Union, Data Bulletins outline the strengths and limitations of relevant migration data, and highlight innovative data practices which are pertinent to the global compact for migration. Data Bulletins reflect the collaborative nature of this process by including relevant contributions from different parts of IOM as well as other agencies and migration experts.

WHAT IS THE VALUE AT STAKE?
One selected example:

Matching +10% more highly educated, currently overqualified immigrants with adequate jobs yields ~EUR 6 billion in potential income increases for highly skilled immigrants in the EU alone.

ABOUT

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MAKING THE VALUE CASE IS ESSENTIAL FOR TARGETED INVESTMENT

While there is general consensus on the importance of migration data, the value at stake is often unknown.

Value
What is the value that investments in data can bring to improve migration outcomes?

Investment
How should investments be prioritized to achieve specific outcomes?

CAPTURING VALUE REQUIRES RELEVANT, HIGH-QUALITY DATA

Relevant, accurate, timely and complete data enable policymakers to achieve desired outcomes.

Reliable data provide policymakers with transparency about the status quo and potential future developments, thereby supporting prioritization and decision-making. They enable the development of policies and implementation of actions tailored to specific circumstances and needs. Measurement of results allows for adjustment of policies over time to achieve better outcomes.

THERE IS VALUE THROUGHOUT THE MIGRATION CYCLE

Data have the potential to unlock value for migrants and countries (of origin, transit and destination) along at least seven core dimensions of migration.

Country of origin | Country of transit | Country of destination

Regular migration
Emigration
Immigration
Journey
Arrival
Return and reintegration
Flow of resources

Inclusion and contribution

Development
INVESTING IN DATA PAYS OFF FOR MIGRANTS AND COUNTRIES ALIKE

There is a lot of value at stake (e.g., economic, social, humanitarian, political), along seven core dimensions of migration.

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1 Regular return included in “Development”
NEXT STEPS

Targeted initiatives on all levels can enable countries to take a value perspective on migration and to prioritize data needs and investments accordingly.

Global level: Establishing a global data-to-value hub could (1) consolidate and improve knowledge on sizing and capturing the value that data can contribute as well as (2) support countries in prioritizing the data that are most relevant to them. A user-friendly platform would allow countries to self-assess where the biggest value lies for them, to identify which data priorities are most critical and to draw on best practice examples from others.

Key benefits include:

- Acceleration of migration data agenda through effective global support to countries
- Better development and dissemination of the capabilities to develop and implement effective migration data strategies

Regional level: The establishment of more and better regional migration data hubs could facilitate data exchange and create transparency regarding potential value and developments (including annual reports).

Key benefits include:

- Improved intraregional cooperation and data sharing, enabling better understanding of value potential and mutual benefits originating from migration
- Stronger evidence-base and analysis to support policy decisions for achieving better migration outcomes at regional and national levels

Country level: Countries to develop value-driven migration data strategies that start from where the most potential lies. This enables effective decisions on which data to collect, analyse and use.

Key benefits include:

- Identification of high-priority data gaps (i.e., with significant potential to improve outcomes)
- Buy-in from government and donors through articulation of clear investment case for data
- Better capture and articulation of the economic, social, humanitarian and political potential of migration.

REPORT TO BE RELEASED IN JANUARY 2018

IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC) will release a report on the value of migration data in January 2018, outlining a vision for how data can enable value capture in migration (including illustrative tool).

IOM's GMDAC

In response to growing calls for better data on migration, and better use and presentation of migration data, IOM has created the Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC).

Located in Berlin, Germany, the Centre aims to provide authoritative and timely analysis of data on global migration issues as a global hub for data and statistics on migration. The Data Bulletin is prepared by GMDAC.

Analytic support for this issue of the Data Bulletin was provided by McKinsey & Company.

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