



HDR website: <http://hdr.undp.org>

## Human Development Report 2009

Our world is very unequal. For many people around the world moving away from their home town or village can be the best—sometimes the only—option open to improve their life chances. Migration can be hugely effective in improving the income, education and participation of individuals and families, and enhancing their children's future prospects. But its value is more than that: being able to decide where to live is a key element of human freedom.

There is no typical profile of migrants around the world. Fruit pickers, nurses, political refugees, construction workers, academics and computer programmers are all part of the nearly 1 billion people on the move both within their own countries and overseas. When people move they embark on a journey of hope and uncertainty, whether within or across international borders. Most people move in search of better opportunities, hoping to combine their own talents with resources in the destination country so as to benefit themselves and their immediate family, who often accompany or follow them. Local communities and societies as a whole have also benefited, both in places of origin and at destinations. The diversity of these individuals and the rules that govern their movement make human mobility one of the most complex issues facing the world today, especially in the midst of the global recession.

*Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development* explores how better policies towards mobility can enhance human development. It first traces the contours of human movement—who moves where, when and why—before analysing the wide-ranging impacts of movement on migrants and their families and on places of origin and destination. It lays out the case for governments to reduce restrictions on movement within and across their borders, so as to expand human choices and freedoms. It argues for practical measures that can improve prospects on arrival, which in turn will have large benefits both for destination communities and for places of origin. The reforms speak not only to destination governments but also to governments of origin, to other key actors—in particular the private sector, unions and non-governmental organizations—and to individual migrants themselves.

The *2009 Human Development Report* fixes human development firmly on the agenda of policy makers who seek the best outcomes from increasingly complex patterns of human movement worldwide.

## SUMMARY

# Human Development Report 2009

## Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development



Copyright © 2009  
by the United Nations Development Programme  
1 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission.

Printed in the USA by Colorcraft of Virginia. Cover is printed on 80# Chorus Silk Cover that is 25% post-consumer waste. Text pages are printed on Cascades Mills' 70# Rolland Opaque Smooth text that is 30% de-inked post-consumer recycled fibre, Forest Stewardship Council certified chlorine-free paper with vegetable-based inks and produced by means of environmentally-compatible technology. Please recycle the shrinkwrapping.



Editing and layout: Green Ink  
Design: ZAGO

For a list of any errors or omissions found subsequent to printing, please visit our website at <http://hdr.undp.org>

#### Disclaimer:

The analysis and policy recommendations of this Report do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Development Programme, its Executive Board or its Member States. The Report is an independent publication commissioned by UNDP. It is the fruit of a collaborative effort by a team of eminent advisers and the Human Development Report team. Jeni Klugman, Director of the Human Development Report Office, led the effort.

### **Global *Human Development Report 2009***

Resources related to this report are available at: <http://hdr.undp.org> including full copies and summaries of the report; summaries of the consultations, seminars, and network discussions; the Human Development Research Paper Series; and press materials. All the statistical indicators and data tools, interactive maps, country factsheets and more are accessible free of charge at the website.

### **National, Sub-national and Regional Human Development Reports.**

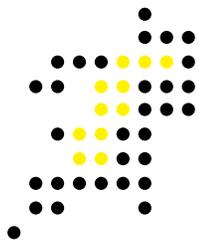
The first national HDR was launched in 1992 and since then more than 630 national and sub-national HDRs have been produced by country teams with UNDP support in over 130 countries, as well as 35 regional reports. As policy advocacy documents, these reports bring the human development concept to national dialogues through country-led and country-owned processes of consultation, research and writing. The data is often disaggregated by gender, ethnic group, or along rural/urban lines to help identify inequality, measure progress and flag early warning signs of possible conflict. Because these reports are grounded in local perspectives, they can influence national strategies, including policies for the Millennium Development Goals and other human development priorities. *For more information, including copies of all the reports, a primer on measurement, training materials and more, see <http://hdr.undp.org/en/nhdr/>*

### ***Journal of Human Development and Capabilities***

A Multi-Disciplinary Journal for People-Centered Development. This journal is a publication of the Human Development Report Office of UNDP and of the Human Development and Capability Association. It provides a forum for the open exchange of ideas among a broad spectrum of policy makers, economists and academics. The *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* is a peer-reviewed journal, published three times a year (March, July and November) by Routledge Journals, an imprint of Taylor and Francis Group Ltd. *To subscribe, please go to <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals>.*

### ***Themes of the global Human Development Report***

- 2007/2008** Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World
- 2006** Beyond Scarcity: Power, Poverty and the Global Water Crisis
- 2005** International Cooperation at a Crossroads: Aid, Trade and Security in an Unequal World
- 2004** Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World
- 2003** Millennium Development Goals: A Compact Among Nations to End Human Poverty
- 2002** Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World
- 2001** Making New Technologies Work for Human Development
- 2000** Human Rights and Human Development
- 1999** Globalization with a Human Face
- 1998** Consumption for Human Development
- 1997** Human Development to Eradicate Poverty
- 1996** Economic Growth and Human Development
- 1995** Gender and Human Development
- 1994** New Dimensions of Human Security
- 1993** People's Participation
- 1992** Global Dimensions of Human Development
- 1991** Financing Human Development
- 1990** Concept and Measurement of Human Development



## **SUMMARY**

# Human Development Report **2009**

### **Overcoming barriers:**

Human mobility and development



Published for the  
United Nations  
Development  
Programme  
(UNDP)

# Team for the preparation of the Human Development Report 2009

---

## **Director**

Jeni Klugman

## **Research**

Led by Francisco R. Rodríguez, comprising Ginette Azcona, Matthew Cummins, Ricardo Fuentes Nieva, Mamaye Gebretsadik, Wei Ha, Marieke Kleemans, Emmanuel Letouzé, Roshni Menon, Daniel Ortega, Isabel Medalho Pereira, Mark Purser and Cecilia Ugaz (Deputy Director until October 2008).

## **Statistics**

Led by Alison Kennedy, comprising Liliana Carvajal, Amie Gaye, Shreyasi Jha, Papa Seck and Andrew Thornton.

## **National HDR and network**

Eva Jespersen (Deputy Director HDRO), Mary Ann Mwangi, Paola Pagliani and Timothy Scott.

## **Outreach and communications**

Led by Marisol Sanjines, comprising Wynne Boelt, Jean-Yves Hamel, Melissa Hernandez, Pedro Manuel Moreno and Yolanda Polo.

## **Production, translation, budget and operations, administration**

Carlotta Aiello (production coordinator), Sarantuya Mend (operations manager), Fe Juarez-Shanahan and Oscar Bernal.

# Human Development Report 2009

## Contents of the full report

---

Foreword  
Acknowledgements  
Acronyms

### OVERVIEW

---

### CHAPTER 1

---

#### Freedom and movement: how mobility can foster human development

- 1.1 Mobility matters
- 1.2 Choice and context: understanding why people move
- 1.3 Development, freedom and human mobility
- 1.4 What we bring to the table

### CHAPTER 2

---

#### People in motion: who moves where, when and why

- 2.1 Human movement today
- 2.2 Looking back
  - 2.2.1 The long-term view
  - 2.2.2 The 20th century
- 2.3 Policies and movement
- 2.4 Looking ahead: the crisis and beyond
  - 2.4.1 The economic crisis and the prospects for recovery
  - 2.4.2 Demographic trends
  - 2.4.3 Environmental factors
- 2.5 Conclusions

### CHAPTER 3

---

#### How movers fare

- 3.1 Incomes and livelihoods
  - 3.1.1 Impacts on gross income
  - 3.1.2 Financial costs of moving
- 3.2 Health
- 3.3 Education
- 3.4 Empowerment, civic rights and participation
- 3.5 Understanding outcomes from negative drivers
  - 3.5.1 When insecurity drives movement
  - 3.5.2 Development-induced displacement
  - 3.5.3 Human trafficking
- 3.6 Overall impacts
- 3.7 Conclusions

### CHAPTER 4

---

#### Impacts at origin and destination

- 4.1 Impacts at places of origin
  - 4.1.1 Household level effects
  - 4.1.2 Community and national level economic effects
  - 4.1.3 Social and cultural effects
  - 4.1.4 Mobility and national development strategies
- 4.2 Destination place effects
  - 4.2.1 Aggregate economic impacts
  - 4.2.2 Labour market impacts
  - 4.2.3 Rapid urbanization
  - 4.2.4 Fiscal impacts
  - 4.2.5 Perceptions and concerns about migration
- 4.3 Conclusions

### CHAPTER 5

---

#### Policies to enhance human development outcomes

- 5.1 The core package
  - 5.1.1 Liberalizing and simplifying regular channels
  - 5.1.2 Ensuring basic rights for migrants
  - 5.1.3 Reducing transaction costs associated with movement
  - 5.1.4 Improving outcomes for migrants and destination communities
  - 5.1.5 Enabling benefits from internal mobility
  - 5.1.6 Making mobility an integral part of national development strategies
- 5.2 The political feasibility of reform
- 5.3 Conclusions

#### Notes

#### Bibliography

### STATISTICAL ANNEX

---

#### Tables

#### Reader's guide

#### Technical note

#### Definition of statistical terms and indicators

#### Country classification

# Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development

Consider Juan. Born into a poor family in rural Mexico, his family struggled to pay for his health care and education. At the age of 12, he dropped out of school to help support his family. Six years later, Juan followed his uncle to Canada in pursuit of higher wages and better opportunities. Life expectancy in Canada is five years higher than in Mexico and incomes are three times greater. Juan was selected to work temporarily in Canada, earned the right to stay and eventually became an entrepreneur whose business now employs native-born Canadians. This is just one case out of millions of people every year who find new opportunities and freedoms by migrating, benefiting themselves as well as their areas of origin and destination.

**Now consider Bhagyawati.** She is a member of a lower caste and lives in rural Andhra Pradesh, India. She travels to Bangalore city with her children to work on construction sites for six months each year, earning Rs 60 (US\$1.20) per day. While away from home, her children do not attend school because it is too far from the construction site and they do not know the local language. Bhagyawati is not entitled to subsidized food or health care, nor does she vote, because she is living outside her registered district. Like millions of other internal migrants, she has few options for improving her life other than to move to a different city in search of better opportunities.

Our world is very unequal. The huge differences in human development across and within countries have been a recurring theme of the Human Development Report (HDR) since it was first published in 1990. In this year's report, we explore for the first time the topic of migration. For many people in developing countries, moving away from their home town or village can be the best—sometimes the only—option open to improve their life chances. Human mobility can be hugely effective in raising a person's income, health and education prospects. But

its value is more than that: being able to decide where to live is a key element of human freedom.

When people move, they embark on a journey of hope and uncertainty, whether within or across international borders. Most people move in search of better opportunities, hoping to combine their own talents with resources in the destination country so as to benefit themselves and their immediate family, who often accompany or follow them. If they succeed, their initiative and efforts can also benefit those left behind and the society in which they make their new home. But not all do succeed. Migrants who leave friends and family may face loneliness, may feel unwelcome among people who fear or resent newcomers, may lose their jobs or fall ill and thus be unable to access the support services they need in order to prosper.

The 2009 HDR explores how better policies towards human mobility can enhance human development. It lays out the case for governments to reduce restrictions on movement within and across their borders, so as to expand human choices and freedoms. It argues for practical measures that can improve prospects on arrival, which in turn will have large benefits both for destination communities and for places of origin.

### How and why people move

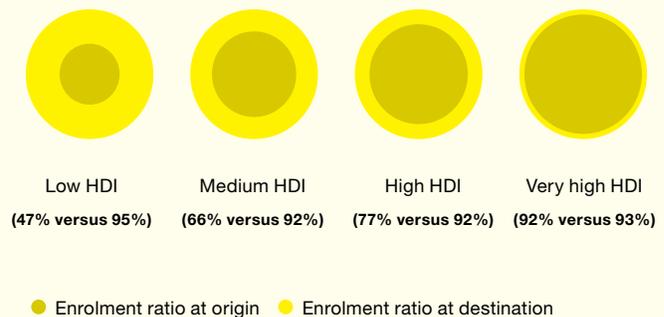
Discussions about migration typically start from the perspective of flows from developing countries into the rich countries of Europe, North America and Australasia. Yet most movement in the world does not take place between developing and developed countries; it does not even take place between countries. The overwhelming majority of people who move do so inside their own country. Using a conservative definition, we estimate that approximately 740 million people are internal migrants—almost four times as many as those who have moved internationally. Among people who have moved across national borders, just over a third moved from a developing to a developed country—fewer than 70 million people. Most of the world’s 200 million international migrants moved from one developing country to another or between developed countries (map 1).

Most migrants, internal and international, reap gains in the form of higher incomes, better access to education and health, and improved

prospects for their children (figure 1). Surveys of migrants report that most are happy in their

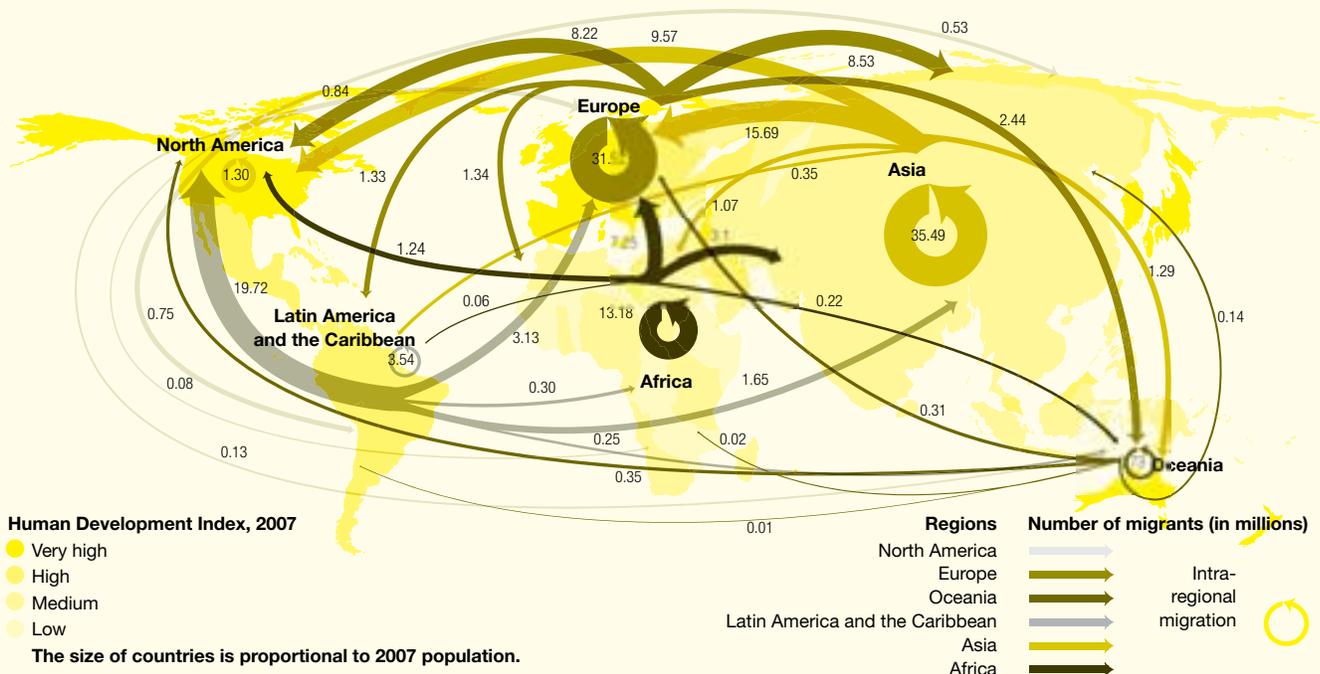
**Figure 1** Gains in schooling are greatest for migrants from low-HDI countries

Gross total enrolment ratio at origin versus destination by origin country HDI category, 2000 census or latest round



Source: Ortega (2009).  
Note: Gross total enrolment includes primary, secondary and tertiary education.

**Map 1** Most movement occurs within regions  
Origin and destination of international migrants, circa 2000



Source: HDR team estimates based on Migration DRC (2007) database.

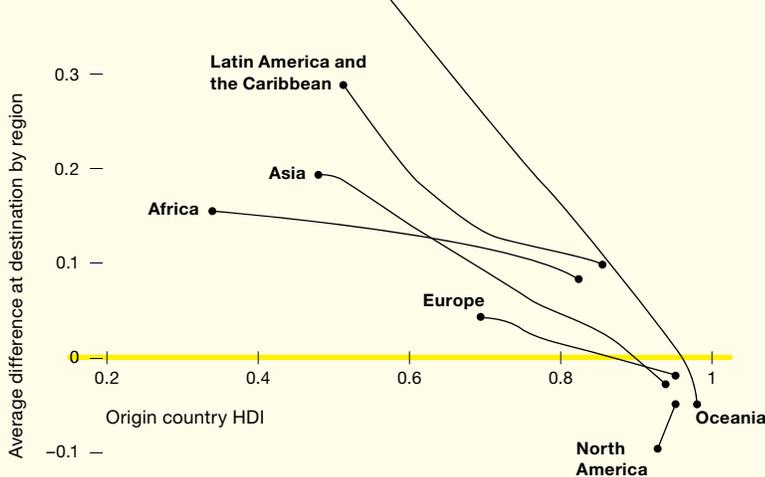
destination, despite the range of adjustments and obstacles typically involved in moving. Once established, migrants are often more likely than local residents to join unions or religious and other groups. Yet there are trade-offs and the gains from mobility are unequally distributed.

People displaced by insecurity and conflict face special challenges. There are an estimated 14 million refugees living outside their country of citizenship, representing about 7 percent of the world's migrants. Most remain near the country they fled, typically living in camps

until conditions at home allow their return, but around half a million per year travel to developed countries and seek asylum there. A much larger number, some 26 million, have been internally displaced. They have crossed no frontiers, but may face special difficulties away from home in a country riven by conflict or racked by natural disasters. Another vulnerable group consists of people—mainly young women—who have been trafficked. Often duped with promises of a better life, their movement is not one of free will but of duress, sometimes accompanied by violence and sexual abuse.

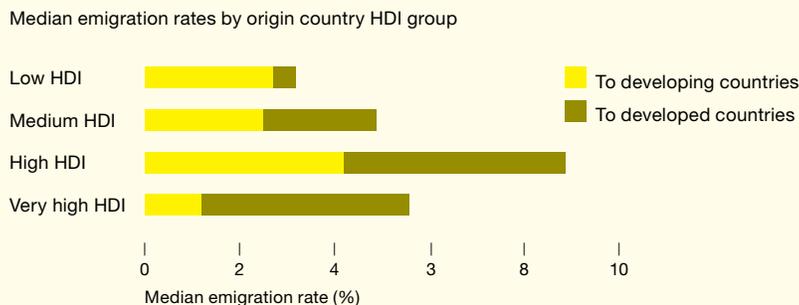
In general, however, people move of their own volition, to better-off places. More than three quarters of international migrants go to a country with a higher level of human development than their country of origin (figure 2). Yet, they are significantly constrained, both by policies that impose barriers to entry and by the resources they have available to enable their move. People in poor countries are the least mobile: for example, fewer than 1 percent of Africans have moved to Europe. Indeed, history and contemporary evidence suggest that development and migration go hand in hand: the median emigration rate in a country with low human development is below 4 percent, compared to more than 8 percent from countries with high levels of human development (figure 3).

**Figure 2** The poorest have the most to gain from moving...  
Differences between destination and origin country HDI, 2000–2002



Source: HDR team estimates based on Migration DRC (2007) database.  
Note: Averages estimated using Kernel density regressions.

**Figure 3** ... but they also move less  
Emigration rates by HDI and income



Source: HDR team estimates based on Migration DRC (2007) and UN (2009e).

### Barriers to movement

The share of international migrants in the world's population has remained remarkably stable at around 3 percent over the past 50 years, despite factors that could have been expected to increase flows. Demographic trends—an aging population in developed countries and young, still-rising populations in developing countries—and growing employment opportunities, combined with cheaper communications and transport, have increased the 'demand' for migration. However, those wishing to migrate have increasingly come up against government-imposed barriers to movement. Over the past century, the number of nation states has quadrupled to almost 200, creating more borders to cross, while policy changes have further limited the scale of migration even as barriers to trade fell.

Barriers to mobility are especially high for people with low skills, despite the demand for

Large gains to human development can be achieved by lowering the barriers to movement and improving the treatment of movers

their labour in many rich countries. Policies generally favour the admission of the better educated, for instance by allowing students to stay after graduation and inviting professionals to settle with their families. But governments tend to be far more ambivalent with respect to low-skilled workers, whose status and treatment often leave much to be desired. In many countries, agriculture, construction, manufacturing and service sectors have jobs that are filled by such migrants. Yet governments often try to rotate less educated people in and out of the country, sometimes treating temporary and irregular workers like water from a tap that can be turned on and off at will. An estimated 50 million people today are living and working abroad with irregular status. Some countries, such as Thailand and the United States, tolerate large numbers of unauthorized workers. This may allow those individuals to access better paying jobs than at home, but although they often do the same work and pay the same taxes as local residents, they may lack access to basic services and face the risk of being deported. Some governments, such as those of Italy and Spain, have recognized that unskilled migrants contribute to their societies and have regularized the status of those in work, while other countries, such as Canada and New Zealand, have well designed seasonal migrant programmes for sectors such as agriculture.

While there is broad consensus about the value of skilled migration to destination countries, low-skilled migrant workers generate much controversy. It is widely believed that while these migrants fill vacant jobs they also displace local workers and reduce wages. Other concerns posed by migrant inflows include heightened risk of crime, added burdens on local services and the fear of losing social and cultural cohesion. But these concerns are often exaggerated. While research has found that migration can, in certain circumstances, have negative effects on locally born workers with comparable skills, the body of evidence suggests that these effects are generally small and may, in some contexts, be entirely absent.

### **The case for mobility**

This report argues that migrants boost economic output, at little or no cost to locals. Indeed, there may be broader positive effects, for instance when

the availability of migrants for childcare allows resident mothers to work outside the home. As migrants acquire the language and other skills needed to move up the income ladder, many integrate quite naturally, making fears about inassimilable foreigners—similar to those expressed early in the 20th century in America about the Irish, for example—seem equally unwarranted with respect to newcomers today. Yet it is also true that many migrants face systemic disadvantages, making it difficult or impossible for them to access local services on equal terms with local people. And these problems are especially severe for temporary and irregular workers.

In migrants' countries of origin, the impacts of movement are felt in higher incomes and consumption, better education and improved health, as well as at a broader cultural and social level. Moving generally brings benefits, most directly in the form of remittances sent to immediate family members. However, the benefits are also spread more broadly as remittances are spent—thereby generating jobs for local workers—and as behaviour changes in response to ideas from abroad. Women, in particular, may be liberated from traditional roles.

The nature and extent of these impacts depend on who moves, how they fare abroad and whether they stay connected to their roots through flows of money, knowledge and ideas. Because migrants tend to come in large numbers from specific places—for example, Kerala in India or Fujian Province in China—community-level effects can typically be larger than national ones. However, over the longer term, the flow of ideas from human movement can have far-reaching effects on social norms and class structures across a whole country. The outflow of skills is sometimes seen as negative, particularly for the delivery of services such as education or health. Yet, even when this is the case, the best response is policies that address underlying structural problems, such as low pay, inadequate financing and weak institutions. Blaming the loss of skilled workers on the workers themselves largely misses the point, and restraints on their mobility are likely to be counter-productive—not to mention the fact that they deny the basic human right to leave one's own country.

However, international migration, even if well managed, does not amount to a national

human development strategy. With few exceptions (mainly small island states where more than 40 percent of inhabitants move abroad), emigration is unlikely to shape the development prospects of an entire nation. Migration is at best an avenue that complements broader local and national efforts to reduce poverty and improve human development. These efforts remain as critical as ever.

At the time of writing, the world is undergoing the most severe economic crisis in over half a century. Shrinking economies and layoffs are affecting millions of workers, including migrants. We believe that the current downturn should be seized as an opportunity to institute a new deal for migrants—one that will benefit workers at home and abroad while guarding against a protectionist backlash. With recovery, many of the same underlying trends that have been driving movement during the past half-century will resurface, attracting more people to move. It is vital that governments put in place the necessary measures to prepare for this.

### **Our proposal**

Large gains to human development can be achieved by lowering the barriers to movement and improving the treatment of movers. A bold vision is needed to realize these gains. This report sets out a case for a comprehensive set of reforms that can provide major benefits to migrants, communities and countries.

Our proposal addresses the two most important dimensions of the mobility agenda that offer scope for better policies: admissions and

treatment. The reforms laid out in our proposed core package have medium- to long-term pay-offs (box 1). They speak not only to destination governments but also to governments of origin, to other key actors—in particular the private sector, unions and non-governmental organizations—and to individual migrants themselves. While policy makers face common challenges, they will of course need to design and implement different migration policies in their respective countries, according to national and local circumstances. Certain good practices nevertheless stand out and can be more widely adopted.

We highlight six major directions for reform that can be adopted individually but that, if used together in an integrated approach, can magnify their positive effects on human development. Opening up existing entry channels so that more workers can emigrate, ensuring basic rights for migrants, lowering the transaction costs of migration, finding solutions that benefit both destination communities and the migrants they receive, making it easier for people to move within their own countries, and mainstreaming migration into national development strategies—all have important and complementary contributions to make to human development.

The core package highlights two avenues for opening up regular existing entry channels:

- We recommend expanding schemes for truly seasonal work in sectors such as agriculture and tourism. Such schemes have already proved successful in various countries. Good practice suggests that this intervention should involve unions and employers, together with the destination and source country governments, particularly in designing and implementing basic wage guarantees, health and safety standards and provisions for repeat visits, as in the case of New Zealand, for example.
- We also propose increasing the number of visas for low-skilled people, making this conditional on local demand. Experience suggests that good practices here include: ensuring immigrants have the right to change employers (known as *employer portability*), offering immigrants the right to apply to extend their stay and outlining pathways

#### **Box 1 The core package**

*Overcoming Barriers* lays out a core package of reforms, which comprises six 'pillars'. Each pillar is beneficial on its own, but together these offer the best chance of maximizing the human development impacts of migration:

1. Liberalizing and simplifying regular channels that allow people with low skills to seek work abroad;
2. Ensuring basic rights for migrants;
3. Reducing transaction costs associated with migration;
4. Improving outcomes for migrants and destination communities;
5. Enabling benefits from internal mobility; and
6. Making mobility an integral part of national development strategies.

to eventual permanent residence, making provisions that facilitate return trips during the visa period, and allowing the transfer of accumulated social security benefits, as adopted in Sweden's recent reform.

Destination countries should decide on the desired numbers of entrants through political processes that permit public discussion and the balancing of different interests. Transparent mechanisms to determine the number of entrants should be based on employer demand, with quotas according to economic conditions.

At destination, immigrants are often treated in ways that infringe on their basic human rights. Even if governments do not ratify the international conventions that protect migrant workers, they should ensure that migrants have full rights in the workplace—to equal pay for equal work, decent working conditions and collective organization, for example. They may need to act quickly to stamp out discrimination. Governments at origin and destination can collaborate to ease the recognition of credentials earned abroad.

The current recession has made migrants particularly vulnerable. Some destination country governments have stepped up the enforcement of migration laws in ways that can infringe on migrants' rights. Giving laid-off migrants the opportunity to search for another employer (or at least time to wrap up their affairs before departing), publicizing employment outlooks—including downturns in source countries—are all measures that can mitigate the disproportionate costs of the recession borne by both current and prospective migrants.

For international movement, the transaction costs of acquiring the necessary papers and meeting the administrative requirements to cross national borders are often high, tend to be regressive (proportionately higher for unskilled people and those on short-term contracts) and can also have the unintended effect of encouraging irregular movement and smuggling. One in ten countries have passport costs that exceed 10 percent of per capita income; not surprisingly, these costs are negatively correlated with emigration rates. Both origin and destination governments can simplify procedures and reduce document costs, while the two sides can also work together to improve and regulate intermediation services.

It is vital to ensure that individual migrants settle in well on arrival, but it is also vital that the communities they join should not feel unfairly burdened by the additional demands they place on key services. Where this poses challenges to local authorities, additional fiscal transfers may be needed. Ensuring that migrant children have equal access to education and, where needed, support to catch up and integrate, can improve their prospects and avoid a future underclass. Language training is key—for children at schools, but also for adults, both through the workplace and through special efforts to reach women who do not work outside the home. Some situations will need more active efforts than others to combat discrimination, address social tensions and, where relevant, prevent outbreaks of violence against immigrants. Civil society and governments have a wide range of positive experience in tackling discrimination through, for example, awareness-raising campaigns.

Despite the demise of most centrally planned systems around the world, a surprising number of governments—around a third—maintain *de facto* barriers to internal movement (table 1).

**Table 1** Over a third of countries significantly restrict the right to move  
Restrictions on internal movement and emigration by HDI category

HDI categories	Restrictions on mobility, 2008					Total
	Most restrictive	1	2	3	Least restrictive	
<b>VERY HIGH HDI</b>						
Countries	0	3	1	3	31	38
Percent (%)	0	8	3	8	81	100
<b>HIGH HDI</b>						
Countries	2	4	4	10	27	47
Percent (%)	4	9	9	21	57	100
<b>MEDIUM HDI</b>						
Countries	2	13	24	27	16	82
Percent (%)	2	16	29	33	20	100
<b>LOW HDI</b>						
Countries	2	5	13	5	0	25
Percent (%)	8	20	52	20	0	100
<b>TOTAL</b>						
Countries	6	25	42	45	74	192
Percent (%)	3	13	22	23	39	100

Source: Freedom House (2009).

While not a substitute for broader development efforts, migration can be a vital strategy for households and families seeking to diversify and improve their livelihoods

Restrictions typically take the form of reduced basic service provisions and entitlements for those not registered in the local area, thereby discriminating against internal migrants, as is still the case in China. Ensuring equity of basic service provision is a key recommendation of the report as regards internal migrants. Equal treatment is important for temporary and seasonal workers and their families, for the regions where they go to work, and also to ensure decent service provision back home so that they are not compelled to move in order to access schools and health care.

While not a substitute for broader development efforts, migration can be a vital strategy for households and families seeking to diversify and improve their livelihoods, especially in developing countries. Governments need to recognize this potential and to integrate migration with other aspects of national development policy. A critical point that emerges from experience is the importance of national economic conditions and strong public-sector institutions in enabling the broader benefits of mobility to be reaped.

### **The way forward**

Advancing this agenda will require strong, enlightened leadership coupled with a more determined effort to engage with the public and raise their awareness about the facts around migration.

For origin countries, more systematic consideration of the profile of migration and its benefits, costs and risks would provide a better basis for integrating movement into national

development strategies. Emigration is not an alternative to accelerated development efforts at home, but mobility can facilitate access to ideas, knowledge and resources that can complement and in some cases enhance progress.

For destination countries, the ‘how and when’ of reforms will depend on a realistic look at economic and social conditions, taking into account public opinion and political constraints at local and national levels.

International cooperation, especially through bilateral or regional agreements, can lead to better migration management, improved protection of migrants’ rights and enhanced contributions of migrants to both origin and destination countries. Some regions are creating free-movement zones to promote freer trade while enhancing the benefits of migration—such as West Africa and the Southern Cone of Latin America. The expanded labour markets created in these regions can deliver substantial benefits to migrants, their families and their communities.

There are calls to create a new global regime to improve the management of migration: over 150 countries now participate in the Global Forum on Migration and Development. Governments, faced with common challenges, develop common responses—a trend we saw emerge while preparing this report.

*Overcoming Barriers* fixes human development firmly on the agenda of policy makers who seek the best outcomes from increasingly complex patterns of human movement worldwide.

## HDI 2007 results and trends

The human development index (HDI) is a summary measure of a country's human development. It measures the average achievements in a country in three basic dimensions:

- a long and healthy life, as measured by life expectancy at birth;
- access to knowledge, as measured by the adult literacy rate and the combined gross enrolment ratio in education; and
- a decent standard of living, as measured by GDP per capita in purchasing power parity (PPP) US dollars.

These three dimensions are standardized to values between 0 and 1, and the simple average is taken to arrive at the overall HDI value in the range 0 to 1. Countries are then ranked on the basis of this value with a rank of 1 representing the highest HDI value.

This year's HDI—which uses data for 2007—has been calculated for 182 countries. Three new countries have been included: Andorra and Liechtenstein, both for the first time ever, and Afghanistan, for the first time since 1996. The results presented in the report take account of both new data and revisions to past series.

It is important to note that these HDI results, based on 2007 data, do *not* reflect the effects of the global economic crisis, which is expected to have massive impacts on human development achievements in many countries around the world.

The arrows in the table indicate changes in rankings between 2006 and 2007 based on

consistent time series data. Over this period, HDI *values* fell in four countries—in all cases as a result of falling GDP per capita—and rose in 174 cases. At the same time, there were many more changes in country *rankings*. In 2007 relative to 2006, 50 countries fell one or more places in rank between the two years, and a similar number moved up. This is because changes in rank are affected not just by the performance of individual countries but also by the progress made relative to other countries especially when the differences in value are small. China registered the largest gain in rank (seven places), followed by Colombia and Peru (five places). In each of these countries, this can be traced to relatively fast income growth.

Norway tops the list, followed by Australia in second position and Iceland in third—the same positions as last year according to the latest data. There are few changes in rank in the top ten and only one newcomer—France—which has displaced Luxembourg. At the other end of the index, Niger, Afghanistan and Sierra Leone are respectively in the last three places and have also not changed ranks between 2006 and 2007. There were no newcomers to the bottom ten between 2006 and 2007.

Most countries moved no more than two places in rank. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa, Ghana gained two positions (due to education gains) while Chad, Mauritius and Swaziland lost two places.

# HDI 2007

## 2007 HDI rank and value and 2006–2007 rank change

Notes:   
 ↑ Number of places by which HDI rank improved between 2006 and 2007.   
 ↓ Number of places by which HDI rank declined between 2006 and 2007.   
 Blank means no change in HDI rank between 2006 and 2007.

Very high human development (HDI ≥ 0.900)			Lithuania			China			Yemen		
Norway	0.971	1	0.870	46	0.772	92 ↑ 7	0.575	140 ↑ 1	Pakistan	0.572	141 ↑ 1
Australia	0.970	2	Antigua and Barbuda	0.868	47 ↑ 1	Belize	0.772	93 ↓ 3	Swaziland	0.572	142 ↓ 2
Iceland	0.969	3	Latvia	0.866	48 ↑ 2	Samoa	0.771	94 ↑ 2	Angola	0.564	143
Canada	0.966	4	Argentina	0.866	49 ↓ 2	Maldives	0.771	95 ↑ 2	Nepal	0.553	144
Ireland	0.965	5	Uruguay	0.865	50 ↓ 1	Jordan	0.770	96 ↓ 1	Madagascar	0.543	145
Netherlands	0.964	6 ↑ 1	Cuba	0.863	51	Suriname	0.769	97 ↑ 1	Bangladesh	0.543	146 ↑ 2
Sweden	0.963	7 ↓ 1	Bahamas	0.856	52	Tunisia	0.769	98 ↑ 2	Kenya	0.541	147
France	0.961	8 ↑ 3	Mexico	0.854	53 ↑ 1	Tonga	0.768	99 ↓ 5	Papua New Guinea	0.541	148 ↓ 2
Switzerland	0.960	9	Costa Rica	0.854	54 ↓ 1	Jamaica	0.766	100 ↓ 8	Haiti	0.532	149
Japan	0.960	10	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	0.847	55 ↑ 1	Paraguay	0.761	101	Sudan	0.531	150
Luxembourg	0.960	11 ↓ 3	Oman	0.846	56 ↓ 1	Sri Lanka	0.759	102	Tanzania (United Republic of)	0.530	151
Finland	0.959	12 ↑ 1	Seychelles	0.845	57	Gabon	0.755	103	Ghana	0.526	152 ↑ 2
United States	0.956	13 ↓ 1	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	0.844	58 ↑ 4	Algeria	0.754	104	Cameroon	0.523	153 ↓ 1
Austria	0.955	14 ↑ 2	Saudi Arabia	0.843	59 ↓ 1	Philippines	0.751	105	Mauritania	0.520	154 ↓ 1
Spain	0.955	15	Panama	0.840	60 ↑ 1	El Salvador	0.747	106	Djibouti	0.520	155
Denmark	0.955	16 ↓ 2	Bulgaria	0.840	61 ↓ 2	Syrian Arab Republic	0.742	107 ↑ 2	Lesotho	0.514	156
Belgium	0.953	17	Saint Kitts and Nevis	0.838	62 ↓ 2	Fiji	0.741	108 ↓ 1	Uganda	0.514	157 ↑ 1
Italy	0.951	18 ↑ 1	Romania	0.837	63 ↑ 1	Turkmenistan	0.739	109 ↓ 1	Nigeria	0.511	158 ↓ 1
Liechtenstein	0.951	19 ↓ 1	Trinidad and Tobago	0.837	64 ↓ 1	Occupied Palestinian Territories	0.737	110			
New Zealand	0.950	20	Montenegro	0.834	65	Indonesia	0.734	111	<b>Low human development (HDI &lt; 0.500)</b>		
United Kingdom	0.947	21	Malaysia	0.829	66	Honduras	0.732	112	Togo	0.499	159
Germany	0.947	22	Serbia	0.826	67	Bolivia	0.729	113	Malawi	0.493	160 ↑ 1
Singapore	0.944	23 ↑ 1	Belarus	0.826	68 ↑ 1	Guyana	0.729	114	Benin	0.492	161 ↓ 1
Hong Kong, China (SAR)	0.944	24 ↓ 1	Saint Lucia	0.821	69 ↓ 1	Mongolia	0.727	115 ↑ 1	Timor-Leste	0.489	162
Greece	0.942	25	Albania	0.818	70	Viet Nam	0.725	116 ↓ 1	Côte d'Ivoire	0.484	163
Korea (Republic of)	0.937	26	Russian Federation	0.817	71 ↑ 2	Moldova	0.720	117	Zambia	0.481	164
Israel	0.935	27 ↑ 1	Macedonia (the Former Yugoslav Rep. of)	0.817	72	Equatorial Guinea	0.719	118	Eritrea	0.472	165
Andorra	0.934	28 ↓ 1	Dominica	0.814	73 ↓ 2	Uzbekistan	0.710	119	Senegal	0.464	166
Slovenia	0.929	29	Grenada	0.813	74	Kyrgyzstan	0.710	120	Rwanda	0.460	167
Brunei Darussalam	0.920	30	Brazil	0.813	75	Cape Verde	0.708	121	Gambia	0.456	168
Kuwait	0.916	31	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.812	76	Guatemala	0.704	122 ↑ 1	Liberia	0.442	169
Cyprus	0.914	32	Colombia	0.807	77 ↑ 5	Egypt	0.703	123 ↓ 1	Guinea	0.435	170
Qatar	0.910	33 ↑ 1	Peru	0.806	78 ↑ 5	Nicaragua	0.699	124	Ethiopia	0.414	171
Portugal	0.909	34 ↓ 1	Turkey	0.806	79 ↓ 1	Botswana	0.694	125 ↑ 1	Mozambique	0.402	172
United Arab Emirates	0.903	35 ↑ 2	Ecuador	0.806	80 ↓ 3	Vanuatu	0.693	126 ↓ 1	Guinea-Bissau	0.396	173 ↑ 1
Czech Republic	0.903	36	Mauritius	0.804	81 ↓ 2	Tajikistan	0.688	127	Burundi	0.394	174 ↑ 1
Barbados	0.903	37 ↑ 2	Kazakhstan	0.804	82 ↓ 1	Namibia	0.686	128 ↑ 1	Chad	0.392	175 ↓ 2
Malta	0.902	38 ↓ 3	Lebanon	0.803	83 ↓ 3	South Africa	0.683	129 ↓ 1	Congo (Democratic Rep. of the)	0.389	176 ↑ 1
						Morocco	0.654	130	Burkina Faso	0.389	177 ↓ 1
			<b>Medium human development (0.800 &gt; HDI ≥ 0.500)</b>			Sao Tome and Principe	0.651	131	Mali	0.371	178 ↑ 1
<b>High human development (0.900 &gt; HDI ≥ 0.800)</b>			Armenia	0.798	84 ↑ 1	Bhutan	0.619	132 ↑ 1	Central African Republic	0.369	179 ↓ 1
Bahrain	0.895	39 ↓ 1	Ukraine	0.796	85 ↓ 1	Lao People's Democratic Republic	0.619	133 ↓ 1	Sierra Leone	0.365	180
Estonia	0.883	40	Azerbaijan	0.787	86 ↑ 2	India	0.612	134	Afghanistan	0.352	181
Poland	0.880	41 ↑ 1	Thailand	0.783	87 ↓ 1	Solomon Islands	0.610	135	Niger	0.340	182
Slovakia	0.880	42 ↑ 2	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	0.782	88 ↓ 1	Congo	0.601	136			
Hungary	0.879	43 ↓ 2	Georgia	0.778	89 ↑ 2	Cambodia	0.593	137			
Chile	0.878	44 ↓ 1	Dominican Republic	0.777	90 ↓ 1	Myanmar	0.586	138			
Croatia	0.871	45	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0.772	91 ↑ 2	Comoros	0.576	139			