

<b>Institution:</b> University of Oxford
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 24B Development Studies
<b>Title of case study:</b> Changing policy-makers' visions of migration and development
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>Research at Oxford's International Migration Institute (IMI) on the driving forces of global migration processes, conducted in conversation with international stakeholder groups, has significantly affected the ways in which migration is conceptualised and viewed by experts, international organisations and governments involved in formulating migration and development policies. The new perspective arising from IMI's research fundamentally challenges the common assumption that migration is driven by poverty and distress, and holds that migration is in fact an integral part of the process of human and economic development. This view was adopted by the United Nations in the UNDP <i>Human Development Report 2009</i> and has significantly influenced the UK government's Foresight report on <i>Migration and Global Environmental Change</i>.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>The IMI (<a href="http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk">www.imi.ox.ac.uk</a>), established by Stephen Castles in 2006, led by Robin Cohen 2009–11 and now led by Oliver Bakewell and Hein de Haas, has implemented a research programme that has systematically explored relationships between migration and broader processes of globalisation and human and economic development in origin and destination countries [see <b>Section 3: R1, R2, R5</b>]. Empirical and conceptual research conducted as part of IMI's <i>African Migration</i> programme, as well as the <i>Determinants of International Migration (DEMIG)</i> (2010–14), <i>Theorizing the Evolution of European Migration Systems</i> (2010–13), <i>Imagining Europe from the Outside</i> (2010–13) and <i>Global Migration Futures (GMF)</i> (2009–13) projects, has contributed to a shift in the way migration is conceptualised to being positively related to broader processes of development and social transformation rather than a 'problem to be solved' [R2]. Governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in the GMF project have helped to guide the Oxford research into how future processes of socioeconomic, political, cultural, technological, and environmental transformation will affect migration.</p> <p>In particular, IMI research has challenged common assumptions that international (particularly 'South-North') migration is primarily driven by underdevelopment, poverty, and other forms of distress. IMI researchers have found that a minimum level of capability (ie resources, skills, networks etc) and aspiration is necessary for migration to occur. Consequently, the poorest often migrate less and, paradoxically, processes of human and economic development typically lead to increased migration [R4]. These assumptions also underlie the common notion that climate change and environmental stress will lead to mass migration. IMI research has highlighted that environmental disruption and poverty are actually more likely to undermine people's ability to migrate [R6] and, again paradoxically, that migration can actually help people to cope successfully with external stresses by providing alternative income sources [R2, R3].</p> <p>IMI's GMF project has introduced these important theoretical insights to the policy world by applying them within a new Migration Scenario Methodology that has been adapted from the business sector and transformed into both an exploratory and participatory research methodology. It engages a wide range of migration experts and stakeholders (from government, international organisations, NGOs and the private sector) to reflect critically on the drivers of past change, on factors that are reasonably certain to change in the future, and on factors that are uncertain for the future but which may have a profound influence on international migration [R7]. IMI's Migration Scenario Methodology has been highly successful, being adopted by governments, academic institutions and NGOs in Europe, North Africa, the Horn of Africa and the Pacific to study how future development processes will affect migration in often rather non-intuitive ways. The innovation of this approach lies in the direct application of new theoretical insights on the drivers of migration generated by other IMI research projects during the scenario-building process. Sharing these insights facilitates stakeholder learning and network-building, and the identification of new research and policy insights about future international migration takes place during the scenario-building process.</p> <p>Most migration futures work has been based on linear extrapolations of recent and more certain trends. However, future changes are highly unlikely to follow such linear patterns due to the uncertainty of external economic, political and social factors. The identification of key future migration drivers in a highly uncertain context informs the development of GMF's migration</p>

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scenarios, which push experts and stakeholders to think longer-term and to change their visions of future economic, social, political and demographic trends affecting migration. By making governments aware that migration changes may occur in unexpected and counterintuitive ways, the process equips them to design migration policies that can increase the benefits and reduce the costs of migration. IMI has facilitated four workshops with policy-makers using this methodology in order to ensure a dynamic interaction between researchers and users. The first two were initiated by IMI using project funds; the last two were held in response to demand for IMI's methodology (see Section 4).

The following staff contributed to this programme of research:

- Professor Stephen Castles, Director (2006–09), Honorary Associate (2009–present)
- Professor Robin Cohen, Director (2009–11)
- Dr Hein de Haas, Research Officer (2006–11), Co-director (2011–present)
- Dr Oliver Bakewell, Research Officer (2006–11), Co-director (2011–present)
- Dr Emanuela Paoletti, Research Assistant (2010), Research Officer (2010–12)
- Dr Carlos Vargas-Silva, Research Officer (2009–10)
- Ms Simona Vezzoli, Research Assistant (2008–10), Research Officer (2010–present)
- Ms Ayla Bonfiglio, Research Assistant (2010–11), Research Officer (2012–13)
- Ms Gunvor Jónsson, Research Assistant (2008–11)

### 3. References to the research

- [R1]** Castles, S (1998) 'Globalization and Migration: Some Pressing Contradictions'. *International Social Science Journal* 156: 179–86. (Impact factor: 0.358; citations in Google Scholar: 63)
- [R2]** Bakewell, O (2008) 'Keeping Them in Their Place: The Ambivalent Relationship between Development and Migration in Africa'. *Third World Quarterly* 29 (7): 1341–58. (Impact factor 0.705; citations: 70.)
- [R3]** de Haas, H (2010) 'Migration and Development: A Theoretical Perspective'. *International Migration Review* 44 (1): 227–64. (Impact factor 1.149; citations: 273.)
- [R4]** de Haas, H (2005) 'International Migration, Remittances and Development: Myths and Facts'. *Third World Quarterly* 26 (8): 1269–84. (Impact factor 0.705; citations: 297.)
- [R5]** de Haas, H (2007) 'Turning the Tide? Why Development Will not Stop Migration'. *Development and Change* 38 (5): 819–41. (Impact factor 1.411; citations: 77.)
- [R6]** de Haas, H (2011) 'Mediterranean Migration Futures: Patterns, Drivers and Scenarios'. *Global Environmental Change* 21S: S59–S69. (Impact factor 6.868).
- [R7]** de Haas, H, C Vargas-Silva and S Vezzoli (2010) 'Global Migration Futures: A Conceptual and Methodological Framework for Research and Analysis'. Oxford: IMI. Available at: <http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/pdfs/research-projects-pdfs/gmf-pdfs/global-migration-futures-conceptual-paper>.
- [R8]** de Haas, H (2009) 'Mobility and Human Development'. *Human Development Research Paper* No 1. New York: UNDP. Available at: [http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP\\_2009\\_01\\_rev.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP_2009_01_rev.pdf).
- [R9]** Bakewell, O (2009) 'South-South Migration and Human Development: Reflections on African Experiences'. *Human Development Research Paper* No 7. New York: UNDP. Available at: [http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP\\_2009\\_07.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/papers/HDRP_2009_07.pdf).

### 4. Details of the impact

#### *Human mobility and development*

IMI research on the reciprocal links between migration and development has significantly affected the ways in which migration is conceptualised and viewed by academics, international organisations, and governments involved in developing migration and development policies. As a result of this work, IMI researchers were asked to join the advisory board and provide two crucial background papers **[R8, R9]** for the UNDP's *Human Development Report 2009. Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development*. IMI's research played a major role in influencing the conceptualisation of human mobility in the report (see acknowledgement p. vii), which called for extensive policy reforms to maximise the potential development benefits of migration. Its critique of the concept of South-South migration was important in UNDP's decision to revise the categories it used for the Human Development Index **[see Section 5: C1, p 204]**. IMI's input contributed to the

view in the report [C2] that migration should be conceptualised as a human freedom or capability (Section 1.3 in particular reflects the views expressed in [R8]), that migration is an intrinsic part of broader processes of human development, and that such development processes generally lead to higher levels of migration and mobility, rather than the conventional wisdom that development will lead to less migration (for instance p 24, including footnotes 9 and 10).

On the basis of this research on migration and development [R2, R9], Oliver Bakewell was invited to attend and prepare a background paper for the European Commission roundtable on 'The Role of Migration in Development Strategies' held in Brussels on 30 January 2013, as part of the EU's preparations for the UN High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development. He emphasised two particular issues that need to be addressed: (i) improving the understanding of the relationship between urbanisation and migration; and, (ii) reworking the conception of development to take account of mobility. These points were both picked up in the subsequent European Commission Communication [C3, pp 3, 9, and 14] that set out the common position of the EU and member states at the High-level Dialogue and proposed future directions for the EU's work on migration and development [C4].

#### *Migration and global environmental change*

In 2012, IMI's new research insights, put forward during a project workshop and through a commissioned background paper [C6], had a significant influence on the UK government's Foresight report on *Migration and Environmental Change* [C5]. The Foresight report is widely recognised as an agenda-setting publication in its field that has changed the terms of the debate. This Foresight report was ground-breaking in challenging conventional views on its topic, and mitigating ideas that global warming will lead to massive international migration. The IMI background study on the environmental and non-environmental drivers of migration had a major influence on the main report that led to new assessments of the effects of climate change and environmental migration.

IMI research contributed to the development of this vision with its new conceptualisation of migration and insight into how capabilities (as defined above) impact climate-induced migration [C5, p 32, 62]. IMI countered the common view that environmental degradation will lead to large-scale migration [C5, pp 9, 102] and stressed that the key factors explaining the relationship between environmental stress and migration are the vulnerability of people and their capability to adapt to environmental change [C5, pp 2, 13]. A representative of the UK government's Office for Science [C6] wrote in an email to Hein de Haas: 'Your views on climate change and migration have, as I hope you know, already deeply influenced the Foresight report – for example, your points on how those most affected by environmental change are often likely to be those least likely to be able to cross international borders, and so on.'

#### *Global Migration Futures: Drivers, processes and scenarios of migration futures*

The new insights generated by IMI research into the links between migration and broader development processes [R1, R8, R9] were channelled towards larger audiences of practitioners and migration policy-makers through the GMF project. The project's scenario-building workshops in The Hague and Cairo involved more than 40 migration experts and stakeholders from businesses, governments, and civil society across 17 countries in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Oceania and America. Representatives were present from prominent international organisations such as the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), UNHCR, WHO, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Global Climate Adaptation Partnership as well as government officials. Participants stated that the workshops and IMI's research insights helped them to develop a more realistic and longer-term vision on migration futures. This resulted in demand from governments and NGOs to apply the IMI Migration Scenarios Methodology in other regions.

In 2012, the Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS), a Nairobi-based independent agency committed to promoting forward thinking and policy development within the migration sector in the Horn of Africa and Yemen, contracted IMI to apply the scenario approach to the Horn of Africa. It recognised that future migration within the region was likely to be affected by many factors that remained very uncertain and felt that a scenarios workshop could introduce valuable new insights to those designing policy [C7]. Also in 2012, a report on Pacific migration prepared for New Zealand's Department of Labour and Australia's Department of Immigration and Citizenship

recommended working with IMI in its conclusions: 'Our understanding of the changing Pacific migration trends can be enhanced through further research especially the use of futures scenario based modelling developed by the Oxford University-based International Migration Institute' [C8 p ix; see also pp 5, 84–6]. As a result, the Australian and New Zealand governments, with support from UNESCO, sponsored a scenarios exercise run by IMI.

Both workshops included a broad range of experts and stakeholders, including senior government officials, business people and representatives from international organisations and civil society from across the regions. This commitment of funds and time from senior staff is evidence of the value placed on IMI's scenario approach. One participant at the Pacific workshop held in Auckland in October 2012 commented, 'I learnt so much from the Scenarios planning, and have certainly applied some of the techniques ... in some of my practical problem-solving with Pacific counterparts and New Zealand employers over the last few months here in the RSE [Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme]'. [C9]

The project has also generated many requests for the researchers to talk to civil servants and policy-makers about the innovative scenario methodology (particularly because of its unconventional methodological focus on the systematic exploration of uncertain factors affecting current and future migration) and its use in examining and planning for future migration. Simona Vezzoli has been invited for the past three years to teach scenario-building at an annual International Labour Organisation (ILO) workshop in Turin, attended by civil servants; she has also been asked by IOM to review their Migration and Development teaching modules for practitioners, which will be reported back to the High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development, General Assembly 2013. In May 2013, the EU presidency invited Hein de Haas to present insights from the GMF project at the European Migration Network (EMN) Annual Conference 2013.

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

### *Human mobility and development*

[C1] UNDP (2009) *Human Development Report 2009. Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development*. New York: UNDP.

[C2] Former Director, UNDP Human Development Report Office: will corroborate the influence of IMI research on the *Human Development Report 2009*.

[C3] European Commission (2013) 'Maximising the Development Impact of Migration'. *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions*. Available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/immigration/general/docs/maximising\\_the\\_development\\_impact\\_of\\_migration.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/immigration/general/docs/maximising_the_development_impact_of_migration.pdf)

[C4] International Cooperation Officer, Migration and Asylum Sector, European Commission, Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation: will corroborate the contribution of IMI to the European Commission communication.

### *Migration and global environmental change*

[C5] Foresight (2011) *Migration and Global Environmental Change: Future Challenges and Opportunities*. London: The Government Office for Science.

[C6] Former Project Leader, Migration and Global Environmental Change Foresight, UK Government Office for Science: will corroborate the impact of the IMI research that fed into the Foresight report.

### *Global Migration Futures: Drivers, processes and scenarios of migration futures*

[C7] IMI and RMMS (2012) *Global Migration Futures: Using Scenarios to Explore Future Migration in the Horn of Africa & Yemen Project report*. Nairobi: RMMS. Available at:

[http://www.regionalmms.org/fileadmin/content/gallery/Global\\_Migration\\_Futures\\_-\\_HoA\\_Yemen\\_final..pdf](http://www.regionalmms.org/fileadmin/content/gallery/Global_Migration_Futures_-_HoA_Yemen_final..pdf)

[C8] Bedford, R, and G Hugo (2012) *Population Movement in the Pacific: A Perspective on Future Prospects*. New Zealand: Department of Labour. Available at:

<http://www.dol.govt.nz/publications/research/population-movement-pacific-perspective-future-prospects/index.asp>

[C9] Executive Director, Recognised Seasonal Employer, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Government of New Zealand (held on file).