BACKGROUND PAPER
WMR 2010

The Future of Migration
Policies in the Asia-Pacific Region

IOM International Organization for Migration

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The Future of
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GRAEME HUGO
NATIONAL CENTRE FOR SOCIAL APPLICATIONS OF GIS, UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE
GRAEME.HUGO@ADELAIDE.EDU.AU

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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.

Frank Laczko
Head of the Research and Publications Division
IOM Headquarters
Geneva, Switzerland
Email: flazcko@iom.int

INTRODUCTION

In any discussion of the future of global migration, the Asia-Pacific region is important for the following reasons:

- It has 57.6 per cent of the global population.
- Economically, it is the world's fastest-growing region and there is a widening of the demographic and economic differentials between nations, which the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM, 2005: 6) identifies as the main drivers of international migration.
- The World Bank (UNESCAP, 2008) estimates that 23.9 per cent of the population of Asia and the Pacific live in poverty (954 million persons), which represents some 59.8 per cent of the global total.
- The World Bank (2008) has shown that the Asia-Pacific region has 26.7 per cent of the countries with the world's largest immigrant communities but 40 per cent of the nations with the largest emigrant communities, in terms of numbers; in terms of proportion of the total population of immigrants and emigrants in each country, the region has 23 per cent and 17 per cent, respectively. Of the 30 largest "corridors" of international migration globally, 13 involve at least one Asia-Pacific nation.

Although international migration has a long history in Asia, it has reached unprecedented levels, diversity and significance in recent years. At the Second Asian Population Conference held in Tokyo, Japan in 1972, international migration was not even mentioned in the review of demographic trends in the region over the previous decade (UNDESA, 1972). Today, however, it exerts a significant influence on the economic, social and demographic development of all Asia-Pacific nations. International migration is now an established structural feature of the region but some in the region argue that international population mobility between Asia-Pacific nations remains constrained in contrast to a freeing-up of regulations that have facilitated flows of capital and goods between countries (Hugo and Young, 2008). International migration policy in the region remains underdeveloped and this is a barrier to the delivery of the development dividends that international migration can facilitate (UNDESA, 2006).

This paper discusses the future of international migration policy in the Asia-Pacific region. It begins with a brief examination of emerging trends in international migration in the region and of the forces driving them. It then assesses the contemporary development of international migration policy in the region and, finally, considers some of the major issues relating to migration policy in the future.

TRENDS IN MIGRATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

The last decade has seen an increase not only in the numbers of Asian and Pacific people moving between nations but also in the types of mobility, which have become more complex, and in the movement, which has become less selective. The forces responsible for this increase in movement are associated with rapid economic development in the region, globalization, increased levels of education, proliferation of international media, improved transport systems and the internationalization of business and labour markets. Two elements have been especially influential in facilitating migration within, into and out of the region. The first is the proliferation of social networks. Most migrants move to a place where they have social capital in the form of relatives or friends already living there. These networks not only encourage and facilitate mobility but also assist the migrant in adjusting to the new location. The growing numbers of Asians living outside their country of birth serve as anchors in a rapidly spreading network of connections facilitating migration. The second facilitator is the vast migration industry comprising migration agents, recruiters, travel providers, immigration officials, etc. who form chains linking Asian communities with overseas destinations and are crucial elements in the migration system.

The United Nations (UNDESA, 2009) estimates that 30 million of the 191 million people worldwide who live outside their country of origin are from Asia. While this is equivalent to only 0.8 per cent of the total Asian population, it is a significant understatement of the impact of international migration. This is partly because it severely underestimates the movement, since it excludes much temporary and undocumented migration and many countries in the region do not collect information on the stocks or flows of migrants influencing them. Moreover, migrants are drawn from, and concentrate in, particular countries and particular areas within those countries so their impact is disproportionately large in those particular Asian countries and areas.

It is clear that, over the last two decades, international mobility of one kind or another has become the choice of a much larger proportion of the population when consider their options and opportunities in life. Less obvious, though, is the fact that international movement has become much more diverse, both in terms of the forms that it takes and in terms of the people who move. There has been a significant increase in the movement between Asia-Pacific nations but also out of and into the region. Movement is both forced and unforced, documented and undocumented, permanent and temporary, work-related and non-work-related.

While the data in Figure 1 refer to all international movement and not just migration out of China, they are indicative of the exponential increase in international mobility in the region. Some of the major elements in the increased international migration include the following (Hugo and Young, 2008; Jones and Douglass, 2008):

- increased south–north movement to OECD (Association for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries, involving both settlement and temporary migration, the bulk of it made up of skilled workers;
- substantial labour migration (involving largely low-skilled workers) between the countries of the region, especially from low-income economies with labour surpluses to high-income countries with labour shortages;

- substantial migration of students, particularly to OECD nations in Europe, North America and Oceania, but increasingly within the Asia-Pacific region;
- refugee migration within the region but also to destinations in OECD countries;
- marriage migration, as a result of young people moving between countries much more than in the past, and also due to a commodified international marriage industry facilitating migration, predominantly of women from poorer countries to nations experiencing a shortage of women due to male-preference selective abortion;
- increasing involvement of women in all flows so that they are dominant in several flows and, overall, are as mobile as men;
- increasing undocumented migration, with some of the largest undocumented migration flows in the world—for example, migration from Bangladesh to India, which may be the largest single contemporary international migration flow, involving up to 17 million people.

Each of these elements is increasing, not only in terms of the numbers involved but also in terms of economic and social impact.

Figure 1: Number of Chinese travelling abroad for business and tourism in 1981–2003 and total number of outbound trips from China (in millions), 1997–2008
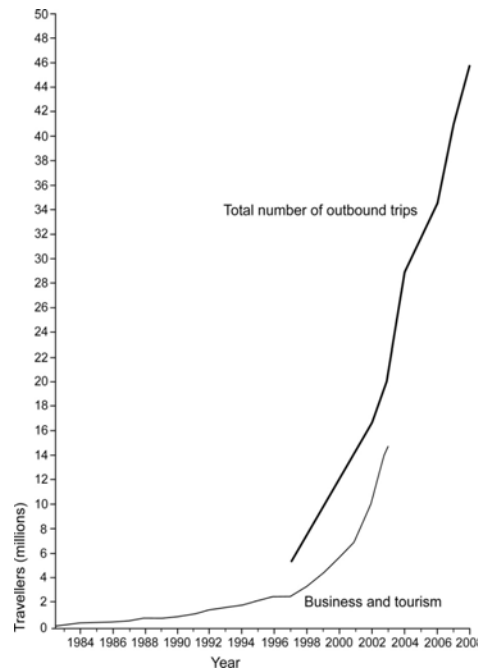
Sources: *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 24 June 2004: 30; *Asia Times Online*, 9 February 2006; Knowledge @W.P. Carey, 21 June 2006, Special Section, China's New Consumers, http://knowledge.wpcarey.asu.edu/index.cfm?fa=SpecialSection@specialId=46; *Public Diplomacy Watch*, 16 November 2006; Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Australia, http://au.China-embassy.org/eng/xw/t354774.htm; Yao Xu, 2008, Chinese Outbound Tourism Soars, *US–China Today*.

CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION POLICY IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Writing a decade ago, Castles (2003:6) identified a number of characteristics that he believed typified the dominant policy model for dealing with migration and ethnic diversity in Asian migrant destination countries, which can be summed up in the following principles:

- immigrants should not be allowed to settle;
- foreign residents should not be offered citizenship except in exceptional circumstances;
- national culture and identity should not be modified in response to external influences.

While it is difficult to generalize in such a vast and complex region, a number of other elements that have characterized the "traditional" approach to dealing with migration in the region should be listed.

- There was little regional cooperation or even discussion about migration issues. Indeed, in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), despite the fact that all nations**1** have been strongly influenced by migration since its formation, the sensitivity of the issue in the State of Singapore prevented it from even being discussed, until recently.
- Governments and communities in both origin and destination countries considered migration to be an unwelcome but necessary "fix" for short-term problems of labour excess and labour shortage. Few have seen it as a structural, necessary and long-term element in national and regional economies.
- In sending countries, permanent and temporary movement was viewed overwhelmingly as having a negative impact on national development. In the Philippines, for example, in the 1980s and early 1990s, the growing outflow of labour migrants was viewed as a "national shame" (Aguilar, 1996).
- Despite the historical immigrant origins of many of the countries of the region, there was a widespread fear that migration would disturb national, cultural and ethnic homogeneity, which resulted in largely negative political, media and press discourse on migration and stigmatization and negative stereotyping of migrants.

Accordingly, migration policy in the Asian region remained underdeveloped and, again, while generalization is difficult, a number of generalizations can be made about past migration policy and governance in the region.

- The issue of migration was marginalized by governments, even in countries suffering significant labour shortages due to low fertility, ageing and rapid economic growth. Migration was not on the "radar screen" of many administrations.
- A policing model of stopping or severely controlling migration tended to dominate, rather than a management approach that recognized the significance and inevitability of migration and sought to regulate and channel movement.
- Migrants' rights were neglected and even abused.

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[1] Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

- A "migration industry" thrived in the private sector, some of it operating outside the legal system and involved in excessive rent-taking and exploitation of migrants.
- There was a lack of capacity within government to develop and operationalize effective migration policies and practice. Indeed, corruption and involvement of government officers in the exploitation of migrants was significant, in some countries.
- There was a lack of coherence in migration policy.
- Migration policy was not linked with development, thereby diluting the potential for migrants to deliver development dividends to their country of origin, to destination countries and to migrants themselves.
- The bulk of Asian and Middle Eastern nations that are destinations for migrants adopted policies that attempt to ensure that the stay of migrant workers was temporary. Where migrants were able to enter under temporary immigration criteria, their rights were generally severely curtailed in comparison to citizens'. The destination country put in place a range of measures designed to ensure the return of the unskilled migrant worker, such as:
    - disallowing family to accompany or visit the worker
    - limiting the travel of the worker within the country
    - tying them to a single employer
    - disallowing them to marry citizens
    - enforcing other restrictions on rights and movement

However, in recent years, one of the defining characteristics of international migration in Asia has been the increasing involvement of governments in seeking to influence the pattern of immigration or emigration affecting their countries. The United Nations regularly conducts surveys of national governments to assess their population policies and Table 1 indicates the responses regarding immigration. It is interesting to note that only 5 of the 40 Asia-Pacific countries responding to the UN survey indicated that current immigration was too high in 2007, compared with 8 in 1996. Moreover, the number of nations with policies aimed at lowering existing levels of immigration fell from 13 in 1996 to 10 in 2007, and the number seeking to raise migration increased from 2 to 6 over the period. This is perhaps indicative of a post-9/11 realization of the significance of migration in several Asian destinations and of the fact that it is needed for national prosperity[2]. The survey also recorded Asian and Pacific government attitudes toward out-movement and these are presented in Table 2.

Table 1: Views and policies of Asia-Pacific governments regarding immigration, 1976–2007

	Views on Level of Immigration				Goal of Policies on Immigration			
	Too Low	Satisfactory	Too High	Total Number of Countries	Raise	Maintain or No Intervention	Lower	Total Number of Countries
1976	2	26	2	30	2	25	2	29
1986	0	30	5	35	0	30	4	34
1996	1	31	8	40	2	24	13	39
2007	5	30	5	40	6	24	10	40

Source: UNDESA, 2008a

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[2] It is argued elsewhere (Hugo 2008) that the events of 9/11 led to a significant change in the Asia-Pacific, resulting in countries in the region coming together to discuss the security dimensions of international migration. This has opened the door to wider discussions between countries on migration-related issues other than security.

Table 2: Views and policies of Asia-Pacific governments regarding emigration, 1976–2007

	Views on Level of Emigration				Goal of Policies on Emigration			
	Too Low	Satisfactory	Too High	Total Number of Countries	Raise	Maintain or No Intervention	Lower	Total Number of Countries
1976	2	28	0	30	2	28	0	30
1986	2	29	4	35	4	26	5	35
1996	2	30	7	39	2	31	7	40
2007	6	24	10	40	8	25	7	40

Source: UNDESA, 2008a

This indicates there has been an increase in the number of countries who consider emigration to be too high, although the number with policies that attempt to lower out-migration has remained stable. This is partly a function of "brain drain" concerns, which are mainly related to the more permanent migration to Europe, North America and Australia. There are also some concerns about the negative effects of labour migration. However, it is also interesting that the number of countries considering the level of emigration to be low trebled and the number seeking to raise the level of emigration through policy increased from 2 to 8.

While these numbers indicate a significant shift in migration policy thinking in Asia and the Pacific over the last decade, they represent the tip of the iceberg in terms of the increased involvement of governments in migration in the region and a growing awareness of the role that migration can play in enhancing economic development at national, regional and local levels. Among the changes observed over the last decade, the following are most evident:

1) Several destination nations accepted that migration is an important continuing structural feature of their economies and began to put in place comprehensive immigration policies and programs. As was indicated earlier, the new immigration economies of Asia have traditionally adopted migration policies that are focussed on temporary migration, restricting the rights of migrant workers and the length of time they can spend in the destination. This attitude remains in place for unskilled workers but some Asian economies are now encouraging the permanent settlement of skilled foreigners. There is a clear difference in the immigration avenues open to highly skilled and low-skilled workers. This is most apparent in Singapore, where low-skilled workers gain entry on a strictly temporary basis and have limited rights whereas highly skilled workers have the same flexibility as Singaporeans and can apply for permanent residency. South Korea, like Japan, has traditionally had a very cautious approach to international migration based on an emphasis on ethnic homogeneity. Accordingly, when demographic and economic factors forced Korea into launching a foreign workers programme in 1990, there were very strict conditions to ensure that workers left the country at the end of their contracts. In recent years, however, there have been major changes. The forming of the Korean Immigration Service (KIS), the introduction of permanent settlement visas for skilled and semi-skilled workers (in January 2008), the development of bilateral agreements with more than 10 countries in Asia to supply low-skilled workers (making some government jobs open to foreigners), the modification of citizenship requirements and the introduction of a more flexible immigration system for ethnic Koreans in China, the former Soviet Union and elsewhere are just some of the ways in which the South Korean Government's attitude towards migration has been transformed. There are

over a million foreigners in South Korea (*Asian Migration News*, 1–15 November 2007), excluding an estimated 200,000 irregular migrants or around 2 per cent of the total population. It is anticipated by the KIS that, by 2030, the number of foreigners is expected to increase to 3.6 million or 7.2 per cent of the population (*Asian Migration News*, 15–30 June 2007). Moreover, as Park (2007:1) points out: "Now 'multiculturalism' and 'multi-ethnicity' have become fashionable buzzwords within academies and government." Park (2007:5) goes on to explain that there has been a paradigm shift in Korea:

> *Until recently, Korean immigration policy has been mainly a tool to deal with labour market through foreign worker programs. So it viewed the immigration administration as a more or less temporary measure.*

The trend now is towards an immigration strategy that not only includes temporary workers but offers employment residence to a broader range of workers and includes patterns to facilitate the integration of migrants. It is clear that this marked shift in policy has been influenced by the marked increase in international marriage in Korea. The number of immigrants naturalized through marriage was 75,011 in 2005 but 109,564 in 2007 (*Asian Migration News*, January 2008). As Park (2007:5) has pointed out:

> *The change in paradigm has been brought about by the phenomenal increase of international marriages, the visual presence of phenotypically different residents in neighbourhood and schools, the economic dependence on foreign workers, the growing influence of the Korean transnational communities … and globalization in general.*

Even in Japan, where the dominant discourse has been of "mono ethnicity" that has opposed immigration, there is a change (Tai, 2009). Some have argued that, with 2.15 million legal foreign residents representing 1.7 per cent of the total population, Japan has de facto moved to becoming an "immigrant country" (Tsuda, 2006; Iguchi, 2008). Tai (2009) argues that Japanese immigration policy is at a turning point, with the interplay between proponents of multiculturalism and inclusion of foreigners, on the one hand, and exclusion and heightened control of foreigners, on the other.

One category of permanent migrants becoming increasingly important in Japan, Korea, Chinese Taipei and Singapore is foreign spouses (mostly female). Such migration is often commoditized with the increasing gender imbalance in younger ages, in some cases. In Chinese Taipei, for example, 383,204 foreign spouses immigrated between 1990 and 2006.

2) There have been changes in some migrant-sending countries as well. In the Philippines, the national dialogue on migration has been transformed. The high level of emigration of contract labour and permanent settlers was described in national discourse in the 1970s and 1980s as a "national shame" (Aguilar, 1996). Migration was seen as a temporary phenomenon that had to be endured while the Philippines made the transition to a more developed economy. The fact that millions of Filipinos were forced to seek their destiny in other nations was perceived as a "national failure". However, in the last decade, Filipinos overseas have been hailed as "national heroes" (Rosales, 1999) who are making a crucial and important contribution to national prosperity. This represents a major turnaround and the Philippines. With respect to international labour migration, the Philippines has implemented best practice through regulation of migrant worker recruitment and protection of migrant workers at home and abroad (Martin et al., 2004; Hugo, 2009a). The Philippines has also developed comprehensive policies and programmes targeting temporary labour

migrants, second and later generations, the marriage partners of Filipinos overseas and Filipino Youth overseas. They established the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) in 1980 with the following mandates:

- Provide advice and assistance to the President and the Congress of the Philippines in the formulation of policies concerning or affecting Filipinos overseas.
- Develop and implement programmes to promote the interests and well-being of Filipinos overseas.
- Serve as a forum for preserving and enhancing the social, economic and cultural ties of Filipinos overseas with the Philippines motherland.
- Provide liaison services to Filipinos overseas with appropriate government and provide agencies in the transaction of business and similar ventures in the Philippines (Commission on Filipinos Overseas, 2002).
- Attempt to build a "transnational community" with expatriate scientists and engineers deliberately brought back to attend meetings and conferences sponsored by the government.

3) Other origin nations have developed explicit patterns to engage with their diaspora. China has also become very active in using its skilled diaspora as a source of expertise to assist in its development efforts and, in effect, encouraging "virtual return migration" among its diaspora (Wescott, 2005; Biao, 2006). In the 1980s and 1990s, China's main policy towards its skilled expatriates who had remained overseas after graduation was that of exhorting them to return and serve the motherland (Zweig, 2006). This is the concept encapsulated in the commonly used analogy of "turtles eventually returning to their birthplace". At the turn of the century, however, there was an important change in policy direction (Biao, 2006:3; Wescott, 2005:272), which encouraged "flexible mobility" rather than permanent return. The direction of policy is depicted in the so-called "dumbbell" model shown in Figure 2. The Chinese Government and other agencies now do not necessarily advocate the return of skilled Chinese workers but encourage them to maintain and develop a range of affiliations, linkages and relationships with counterparts and relevant institutions in China from their base in a foreign country.

Figure 2: The "dumbbell" model of virtual return migration of Chinese skilled expatriates
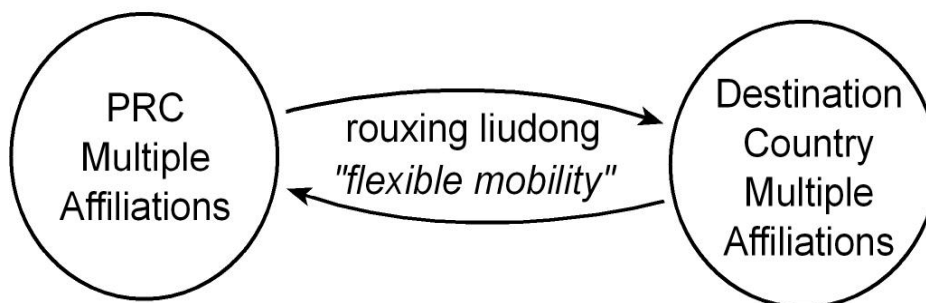
Source: After Wescott, 2005

Moreover, it involves regular moving back and forth between China and the destination country in a pattern of flexible mobility. There is a double benefit for China in that its expatriates maintain their affiliations in the destination country and, hence, are at the forefront of innovation and change that they can immediately transfer back to China. One study of Chinese researchers in Australia (Hugo, 2007) found that the researchers maintained strong linkages with China, as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Linkages of Chinese researchers in Australia with China, 2006

Type of linkages	%
Visit China at least once a year	64.4
Contact China at least once a week	56.5
Plan to stay permanently in Australia	47.7
Percentage with research projects in China	40.2

Source: 2005–06 Survey (N=239); Hugo, 2007

One of the most comprehensive efforts by an emigration nation to develop a coherent migration policy has been made by India. In 2004, the Indian Government established the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA), which is headed by a Cabinet Minister and has a larger mission of "development through coalitions across borders" (MOIA, 2008:5) and to engage India's vast diaspora. The Ministry seeks to bring together in a coherent way all of the policy dimensions influencing migration. It is divided into four divisions. The first, entitled Diaspora Services, deals with all matters relating to Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) and Non-Resident Indians (NRI), the difference being that the latter retain their Indian citizenship. In 2005, the Ministry introduced the concept of Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI), whereby local laws permit dual citizenship (except for Pakistan and Bangladesh). It has a range of activities (e.g. scholarship programmes, information programmes, promotion of cultural ties, and an annual convention to engage Indians living abroad with their "emotional homeland India" (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, 2008:18). The second division is involved in migration management of both immigration and emigration, since India, like several Asian countries, is both a significant origin and destination of migrants. An Emigration Policy Division deals with all elements of policy relating to migrant workers leaving India – currently estimated at 5 million. It is proactive in dealing with formulation of policies for improving emigration management, proposing logistical changes in planning reforms aimed at inducing institutional changes and improving governance, formulation of welfare schemes for emigrants (with special measures on women emigrants), and promoting bilateral and multilateral cooperation in international migration. The third division of the MOIA is Financial Services, the role of which is to make overseas Indians participants in development in India. It has sought to set up an institutional framework to facilitate promotion of investment and transfer of knowledge, enterprise and skills in diverse sectors. It has established the Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC) and set up schemes for training emigrant workers. The fourth division – Social Services – focuses mainly on international marriages of Indians. While the MOIA is still in its infancy, it represents one of the most comprehensive efforts by an emigration country to develop a coherent set of institutions and policies. It begins from the premise that emigration can be beneficial for India and it has been proactive in seeking not only to encourage

such flows but to protect the migrants and maximize the development dividend to India. An independent audit of the success of the Ministry in its first few years of operation would be of value.

4) There are very few examples in the Asia-Pacific region of development considerations in origin countries being factored into migration policy in destination countries. Australia has been successful in developing coherent and effective migration policies over a long period but the first indication of a change in Australian migration policy that includes migration and development considerations was the introduction in 2009 of a pilot scheme to bring in small numbers of Pacific Islanders as seasonal agricultural workers. While there have been a number of proposals for Australia to open up to temporary migrant low-skilled workers from the Pacific (Millbank, 2006), they were resisted until September 2008. The new Australian Labor Government introduced regulations expanding an existing visa category (416) to enable Pacific Islanders to come to Australia as seasonal guest workers. This represented a significant shift in policy, although it was only to be a pilot programme involving up to 2,500 seasonal workers from Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Vanuatu to work in the horticultural industry in regional Australia for up to seven months each year (Evans, 2008). This decision undoubtedly was influenced by the fact that, in 2006, New Zealand introduced a similar scheme that has been closely monitored, assessed and found to be successful (Ramasamy et al., 2008). While the New Zealand and the planned Australian programmes are expressly designed to meet perceived labour shortages in the destination economies, they also have a dimension of seeking to facilitate development in origin countries. To this end, the design of New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme has expressly attempted to maximize the benefits to origin communities and has built in evaluation procedures to measure the impact on development and poverty in the Pacific origin countries. The early findings from the evaluation (Ramasamy et al., 2008) of 5,079 RSE workers, while indicating some problems, have been cautiously optimistic (Hammond and Connell, 2008; MacLellan, 2008). In the New Zealand case, every aspect of the RSE programme has involved cooperation between the Department of Labour (which has responsibility for international migration) and Development Assistance, Agricultural, Labour and Foreign Affairs Ministries (Bedford and Hugo, 2008). In Australia, too, a dialogue is opening up between migration and development assistance government agencies.

5) In the Asia-Pacific region, there has been little dialogue on migration between pairs of origin/destination countries or at a regional or subregional level. Regional governance of migration remains weak and is in its early stages. In fact, a decade ago, there were virtually no regional forums for discussion of migration issues, let alone development of coherent regional migration policies or institutions within the Asia-Pacific region. In Asia and the Pacific, the global trend towards regional organization development and regional cooperation is in evidence in the development of organizations such as APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation), ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF). However, little has been achieved with respect to regional agreement on international migration issues. Indeed, in ASEAN, despite the fact that all members have been strongly influenced by migration since its formation, the sensitivity to the issue prevented the issue even being discussed until relatively recently. It would appear, however, that there is an increased readiness in ASEAN to discuss migration issues. The 1995 ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services (AFAS) provides, inter alia, for regulatory convergence and regulatory harmonization, including Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs). ASEAN members may recognize the education or experience obtained, requirements met and licensing or certification granted by

other members. However, progress in GATS Mode 4[3] on movement of natural persons and progress on MRAs has been slow. The Bali Concord II in 2003 called for completion of MRAs for qualifications in major professional services by 2008 to facilitate free movement of professionals and skilled labour within ASEAN. Cooperation is still very limited on core migration and development issues such as orderly recruitment of migrant workers; protection of the rights of migrant workers; facilitating circular migration; facilitating remittance flows; harmonization of migration information collection; and policies that facilitate development in origin communities. The ASEAN Economic Community to be realized by 2015 only includes some provisions about facilitating the flow of skilled workers and students and does not recognize the potential for migration to promote development in origin areas. A major step forward in ASEAN recognizing the significance of migration was the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers. This contains commitments to share data, promote "decent humane, productive, dignified and remunerative employment for migrant workers", control smuggling and people trafficking and extend assistance to migrant workers caught in conflict situations, among others. APEC, too, has introduced a number of measures, aimed particularly at facilitating the mobility of professionals and business people (Hugo, 2008:53–54).

As in other regions, there have also been a number of Regional Consultative Processes on Migration (RCPs) developed in the Asia-Pacific (Klein-Solomon, 2005, 2008). The first was the Bali Process, in 2002, which brought together most nations in the Asia-Pacific region to discuss issues related to international migration, terrorism and human trafficking (Hugo, 2002). Another initiative was the Colombo Initiative involving main labour migrant-sending countries.

There is growing bilateral discussion between countries in the region of the issue of migration. Many of the existing Bilateral Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) in Asia contain provision for the "movement of natural persons". The liberalization of services trade has resulted in the need for guaranteed free mobility of professional workers and service suppliers. However, the extent to which FTAs have been used in the region to facilitate international labour migration and development in origin countries has been limited. Most FTAs include little or no consideration of migration. Where migration is included in FTAs, it tends to involve professional and highly skilled migrants or corporate and other transfers *within* companies operating across countries.

EMERGING INFLUENCES ON MIGRATION POLICY IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Writing a decade ago, Castles (2003:2) argued that there was a need for the nations of the Asia-Pacific region to make a "conceptual leap" and recognize the reality of migration in the region and its importance to their future development. While it would be an exaggeration to suggest that a parametric shift has occurred with respect to migration policy in Asia and the Pacific, a significant change has taken place (as discussed in the previous section). In this section, we consider some of the region's developments that will impinge on future migration policy.

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[3] http://www.migrationdrc.org/publications/briefing_papers/BP4.pdf

The steepening of demographic and economic gradients

The Global Commission on International Migration (2005:12) concluded that:

In the contemporary world, the principal forces that are driving international migration are due to the "3Ds": differences in development, demography and democracy … because the differentials are widening, the number of people seeking to migrate will continue to increase in the future.

The widening of these differences will exacerbate labour shortages in high-income nations, as the World Bank (2006:29) has pointed out:

A key driver in the demand for international migration over the next 20 years will be the slowing down, and then the decline, of the labour force in high income countries. The age group that supplies the bulk of the labour force (15–65 years old) is expected to peak near 500 million in 2010 and then fall to around 474 million by 2025.

On the one hand, high-income economies are experiencing low (and, in a few cases, negative) natural increases in population because of an extended period of low fertility. This is resulting in slow natural growth and projected declines of their workforce-age population as aging becomes more pronounced. On the other hand, in low-income economies of the region, fertility decline has been more recent although, in most countries, it has also been dramatic. Indeed, in the Asia Pacific region, the Total Fertility Rate fell from 5.4 children per woman in 1970 to 2.3 in 2007. The average life expectancy has increased by around 15 years. These shifts have wrought significant changes in age structure. Table 4 depicts the changes that have occurred or are anticipated to occur among 15–34-year-olds in the region between 1960 and 2040.

This depicts the passage of what has been called the "Asian youth bulge" (Fuller and Hoch, 1998; Westley and Choe, 2002). As Westley and Choe (2002: 57) point out, this bulge "is the result of a transition from high to low fertility about 15 years earlier. The youth bulge consists of large numbers of adolescents and young adults who were born when fertility was high, followed by declining numbers of children born after fertility declined." Table 4 indicates that, in 1960, the Asia-Pacific youth and young adult population numbered 521 million and comprised 32 per cent of the total population. However, over the next two decades, they grew very rapidly and, by 1990, they had almost doubled in number and reached a peak of 21 per cent of the total population. Subsequently, the growth of the age group has been lower as the effects of the decline in fertility have been felt. Hence, in 2000, the Asia-Pacific youth and young adult population had reached 1,230 million but their proportion of the population had dropped to 18 per cent. The outlook for the future is for the youth and young adult population to increase slowly to 1,313 million in 2040, when they would make up 27 per cent of the total population. This, of course, has implications for migration, since young people are the most mobile.

Table 4: Asia-Pacific population aged 15–34 (thousands), 1960–2000 and projections for 2020 and 2040

Year	Population Aged 15-34 Number ('000)	Percent	% Growth Per Annum
1960	520,599	31.69	
1980	862,327	34.10	2.56
1985	995,148	35.79	2.91
1990	1,093,404	35.81	1.90
2000	1,230,447	34.77	2.39
2020	1,379,512	31.62	0.57
2040	1,318,338	27.30	-0.23

Source: UNDESA, 2008 Projections
Note: Excludes Western Asia

The Asian "youth bulge" can produce a "demographic dividend" (Wang and Mason, 2007; Mason and Lee, 2006; Mason, 2007) of economic growth when the workforce grows faster than the overall population – especially when it grows faster than the dependent segments of the population (children and the elderly). In Asia, the rapid and sustained declines in fertility that followed the boom generation have created a special demographic situation: the ratio of the working-age population to the non-working-age population is the highest it has ever been. While this does not automatically confer a dividend of enhanced economic growth if there is an unfavourable policy environment, the existence of such a dividend has been confirmed by several empirical studies of Asian countries.

Table 5: Annual growth of the population aged 15–34 in Asia and the Pacific, projections for 2005–10, 2010–20 and 2020–30

	2005–2010		2010–2020		2020–2030	
Declining	Japan	-4.17	Republic of Korea	-1.56	Macau, China	-3.11
	Republic of Korea	-1.18	Iran	-1.29	Singapore	-2.27
	China	-0.94	Macau, China	-1.20	Mongolia	-2.23
	Thailand	-0.82	Sri Lanka	-1.04	Republic of Korea	-2.12
	Dem. People's Rep. of Korea	-0.23	Kazakhstan	-0.96	Bhutan	-1.39
	Hong Kong SAR	-0.19	Thailand	-0.74	China	-1.27
			Hong Kong SAR	-0.73	Dem. People's Rep. of Korea	-1.26
			Japan	-0.69	Sri Lanka	-1.11
			Mongolia	-0.62	Japan	-1.02
			China	-0.46	Iran	-0.86
			Myanmar	-0.40	Hong Kong SAR	-0.84
			Viet Nam	-0.07	Myanmar	-0.81
			Bhutan	-0.04	Viet Nam	-0.73
					Turkmenistan	-0.66
					Thailand	-0.52
					Kyrgyzstan	-0.47
					Uzbekistan	-0.42
					Maldives	-0.37
					Samoa	-0.27
					Kazakhstan	-0.25
					French Polynesia	-0.21
					Fiji	-0.20
					New Zealand	-0.17
					Indonesia	-0.16
Growth 0–0.99% per year	Myanmar	0.25	Indonesia	0.01	Micronesia	0.00
	Indonesia	0.33	Kyrgyzstan	0.09	New Caledonia	0.00
	Sri Lanka	0.34	Fiji	0.13	Tonga	0.00
	Kazakhstan	0.42	Turkmenistan	0.21	Australia	0.08
	French Polynesia	0.45	Maldives	0.29	Laos	0.10
	Macau, China	0.54	Dem. People's Rep. of Korea	0.32	Tajikistan	0.15
	Tonga	0.55	Australia	0.36	Brunei	0.19
	New Zealand	0.59	Singapore	0.41	Cambodia	0.19
	Australia	0.61	New Zealand	0.43	India	0.24
	Mongolia	0.82	Uzbekistan	0.54	Malaysia	0.27
			French Polynesia	0.64	Guam	0.31
			Tonga	0.78	Pakistan	0.40
			New Caledonia	0.83	Bangladesh	0.54
			Malaysia	0.93	Nepal	0.99
Growth 1–1.99% per year	Micronesia	1.01	India	1.01	Papua New Guinea	1.15
	New Caledonia	1.02	Philippines	1.17	Philippines	1.15
	Samoa	1.03	Bangladesh	1.19	Vanuatu	1.22
	Fiji	1.10	Brunei	1.24	Solomon Islands	1.35
	Singapore	1.33	Cambodia	1.24		
	Viet Nam	1.35	Pakistan	1.36		
	Kyrgyzstan	1.44	Micronesia	1.38		
	Guam	1.55	Laos	1.55		
	Malaysia	1.66	Guam	1.55		
	India	1.71	Tajikistan	1.85		
	Bangladesh	1.81	Nepal	1.91		
	Iran	1.84				
	Philippines	1.88				
Growth 2–2.99% per year	Turkmenistan	2.02	Solomon Islands	2.08	Afghanistan	2.83
	Uzbekistan	2.09	Samoa	2.26		
	Papua New Guinea	2.16	Vanuatu	2.28		
	Solomon Islands	2.22	Papua New Guinea	2.46		
	Maldives	2.40				
	Tajikistan	2.62				
	Nepal	2.80				
	Bhutan	2.83				
	Pakistan	2.91				
	Laos	2.98				
Growth 3% per year and up	Vanuatu	3.01	Afghanistan	3.31	East Timor	3.33
	Brunei	3.37	East Timor	3.44		
	Cambodia	3.37				
	East Timor	3.86				
	Afghanistan	4.34				

Source: Hugo, 2009b

Note: Polynesia includes American Samoa, Cook Islands, French Polynesia, Futuna Islands, Niue, Pitcairn, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Wallis.

One of the most universal findings of migration research in all contexts has been its age selectivity. Moreover, the current Asian young adult generation is the first to have experienced universal education and exposure to global mass media, which has enhanced their ability and desire to move (Hugo, 2005).

In the Asia-Pacific region as a whole, the fact that this age group continues to increase, albeit at a slower rate, will ensure that the region continues to be a major source of migrants to North America, Europe and Oceania. However, the wide differentials between countries in the Asia-Pacific region are of particular significance with respect to the future growth of their young adult and youth population, as shown in Table 5 (Hugo, 2009b). These widening differences are crucial drivers of international migration and national governments in both high- and low-income countries are increasingly aware of them. There can be no doubt that this realization has been crucial in changing attitudes towards migration in countries such as Japan, Singapore and South Korea (Tai, 2009). Their salience will increase over the next two decades, prompting governments of several countries to turn to migration.

The global security dialogue

The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and the bombing in Bali raised consciousness in the Asia-Pacific region of the importance of migration for national security, resulting in a series of regional meetings to consider migration issues, beginning with the Bali Process (Bali Ministerial Conference on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, February 2002). The involvement of migrants in terrorism made policymakers aware of the following issues:

- Migrants can present a threat to national security and effective management of migration is an essential component of maintaining national security.
- Effective management of migration cannot be achieved by a single nation State without the cooperation of other nations.
- People-smuggling, trafficking and illegal migration pose a threat to national security.

Hence, while there was virtually no international dialogue within Asia and the Pacific on migration issues in the 1990s, there has been a flurry of activity in the post-9/11 environment. Some of the earliest, most inclusive and significant initiatives have been the meetings convened by the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia and Australia in Bali on 26–28 February 2002 and 28–30 April 2003, and the Ministerial Conferences on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (MCPSTPRTC). This has come to be referred to as the Bali Process, which is intended to complement and strengthen bilateral and regional cooperation in this area.[4] The initial meeting involved almost all countries of the region, as well as a number of observer countries and organizations,[5] reflecting

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[4] This process has involved the following countries and organizations, in addition to Indonesia and Australia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Democratic Republic of Korea, Fiji, France, India, Iran, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, UNTAET Timor-Leste, Turkey, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, IOM and UNHCR.

[5] Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, ASEAN Secretariat, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, European Union (EU), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Intergovernmental

the increasing significance of this issue in the region as well as globally. Agreement was reached about the nature and importance of the problem, the principles for combating it and the necessity of bilateral and multilateral cooperation to combat it. The Ministers agreed that they would work towards:

- developing more effective information- and intelligence-sharing arrangements within the region;
- improving cooperation between law-enforcement agencies;
- enhancing cooperation on border and visa systems;
- increasing public awareness of issues relating to smuggling and trafficking operations;
- enhancing the effectiveness of return as a strategy to deter illegal migration through the conclusion of appropriate arrangements;
- cooperating in verifying and identifying the nationality of illegal migrants in a timely way;
- improving technical capacity in the region to respond to the challenges posed by people-smuggling and trafficking in persons, including that of women and children, and other forms of illegal migration.

The Ministers established a follow-up mechanism to implement the recommendations of the Regional Conference and coordinate action that the region could undertake to combat the problems. In particular, the conference set up two ad hoc groups of experts:

- Group I, coordinated by New Zealand, had a mandate to promote regional and international cooperation
- Group II, coordinated by Thailand, had a mandate to assist States in strengthening policymaking, legislative arrangements and law-enforcement practices.

Other international regional initiatives have followed the Bali process, and migration has, for the first time, begun to be discussed in regional economic organizations such as APEC, ASEAN and the PIF The 1995 ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services (AFAS) provided for regulatory convergence and regulatory harmonization, including Mutual Recognition Agreements. The ASEAN Economic Community, to be realized by 2015, will:

- allow for the managed mobility or facilitated entry for movement of natural persons engaged in trade in goods, services and investment through facilitating the issuance of visas and employment passes for ASEAN professionals and skilled labour engaged in cross-border trade and investment-related activities;
- facilitate the free flow of services within the ASEAN community, through harmonization and standardization (which will involve completing MRAs in various service occupations; enhanced cooperation among ASEAN University Network members to increase mobility of students and staff; the development of core competencies and qualifications for job/occupational and trainers' skills required in the service sectors; strengthening of the research capabilities of ASEAN countries in terms of promoting skills, job placements; and developing labour market information networks among ASEAN countries).

Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC), INTERPOL, International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), International Labour Organization (ILO), UN Office of Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UNODC).

The Bali Concord II in 2003 called for completion of MRAs for qualifications in major professional services by 2008, to facilitate free movement of professionals and skilled labour within ASEAN. Cooperation is still limited on core migration issues, such as orderly recruitment of migrant workers; protection of the rights of migrant workers; facilitating circular migration; facilitating remittance flows; and harmonizing the collection of migration data.

Security concerns were crucial in initiating dialogue between Asia-Pacific nations on migration issues; such concerns remain important but it is apparent that discussions on migration have extended beyond the initial security focus. While these dialogues have not yet gone much beyond the discussion stage, they have created an environment for constructive engagement on migration issues (Martin and Lowell, 2008). The provision of a basis for intercountry discussion on migration issues is an important by-product of the engagement in the Asia-Pacific region created by security concerns (Hugo, 2004). Bringing key immigration officials together in a non-threatening atmosphere to discuss issues of common interest can build up mutual trust and confidence that can form the basis for more complex and detailed negotiations in the future. It also is effective in building trust between individuals and institutions, which can set the stage for future cooperation on migration issues.

Capacity-building issues

One of the major constraints on governments in the Asia-Pacific region, in terms of creating efficient and equitable migration systems that benefit development in countries of origin and destination as well as the migrants, is a *lack of capacity* – both in institutions and human resources. Institutional capacity in migration policymaking and management is dissipated by being spread across a range of government ministries, agencies and instrumentalities. In Indonesia, for example, the Department of Labour has, until recently, been responsible for managing labour migration, which is the main form of international migration influencing development. (This responsibility was recently transferred to the President's ministry because of dissatisfaction over the way it was being administered.) However, other major migration responsibilities are held by the Immigration Directorate, Customs, Police, Foreign Affairs and security organizations. Moreover, there is no articulation between any of these agencies and the Ministry of Development and Planning. In such a context, there is not only a lack of coherence in policy, but also a lack of skilled, experienced public officials to develop and administer migration policy and practice because officials are often transferred into and out of immigration-related positions. Effective development and management of migration and development policy require considerable capacity and infrastructure, including the following:

- A well-trained cadre of migration officials who are not general public servants but have a specific background and experience across the full range of migration activities. Establishing such a group is fundamentally important to the setting-up and running of an effective migration management system as well as the development of migration and development policies.
- Integration and harmonization of all of the government activities concerned with migration – customs, police, labour, border officials.

- Appropriate migration management systems: appropriate hardware and software have been developed at a rapid rate, especially since 11 September 2001, and it is important that they be adopted and used.
- Setting up an appropriate information system: effective migration management is impossible without timely and relevant measurement of the scale and composition of migration into, and out of, the country.
- A body of policy-relevant research, which is essential not only for the continuing surveillance of the impact of migration and to make evidence-based recommendations for migration policy and practice, but also for the development of policies to maximize the beneficial impacts of migration on development.
- Capacity for competent national research to inform policy development on migration as well as migration and development issues.

The countries of the Asia-Pacific region vary considerably across each of these criteria but most have shortcomings in each. Countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States have many decades of experience in these areas and their accumulated expertise and experience could be fast-tracked to Asia-Pacific countries, for the following reasons:

- They have developed considerable capacity and experience within their national governments regarding the development of migration policies that maximize the positive development outcomes for the country and they efficiently and equitably manage a diverse range of migration programmes. Migration is integrated into their national economies and is an accepted structural element, economically and socially.
- The countries have long traditions of evidence-based migration policy development and have developed within their government and research sectors a great deal of capacity to undertake and apply policy-based research.
- They have developed and adopted global best practices with respect to the development and maintenance of migration management systems.
- They have longstanding and strong migration connections with each of the Asia-Pacific countries and substantial communities of expatriates of each of these nations living within them.
- There have well-established training infrastructures within their public service and in their universities to effectively deliver the appropriate assistance in capacity-building to Asia-Pacific nations.

If migration policy and governance are to develop in the Asia-Pacific region, it is crucial that the transfer of experience regarding institutional mechanisms, management systems, bureaucratic processes, cross-ministry articulation and cooperation etc. be transferred quickly. Training of personnel would be an important part of that transfer.

Marriage migration

One of the factors in contemporary international migration in the Asia-Pacific region that is exerting an influence on the development of policy on immigration to, and integration in, destination countries is the exponential increase in cross-national marriage in the region. This element is often

ignored in migration assessments in the region but it is not only occurring on an increasingly large scale but also having an influence in changing entrenched perceptions of mono-ethnicity and ethnic homogeneity in some countries. Cross-national marriage is increasing for the following reasons:

- With the expansion of international visiting, student migration and international labour migration, more young people from the Asia-Pacific are spending time in a foreign country at the stage in life when they actively socialize and form partnerships.
- There is a burgeoning commodified marriage migration industry in Asia and the Pacific, whereby people (usually men) from higher-income countries are introduced to potential partners (usually women) in lower-income countries. This has been assisted by perceptions among some men in traditional patriarchal societies, such as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan Province of China, that local women do not conform to traditional gender roles and also because, in some societies, son preference and selective abortion have combined to increase the ratio of male-to-female births.

The evidence is that the increasing presence of foreign spouses and the increasing number of children in schools of mixed background is shifting attitudes and, indeed, policy towards migration and multiculturalism in countries such as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan Province of China. These trends will undoubtedly become stronger in the future.

An increasing role for civil society

While there are important differences between countries, it is apparent that civil society is playing an increasingly significant role in international migration in the region, especially with respect to protection of workers' rights. Most non-governmental (NGO) activity in this area is nationally based but some emerging regional NGOs cover several nations. It is particularly important to have NGOs that are active in pairs of origin and destination countries. There are several examples of effective NGO activity in improving the protection of migrants, providing support for migrants and also advocating for the rights of migrants and lobbying to change policy in both origin and destination countries. In terms of origin countries, the Philippines has the best developed and most comprehensive NGO presence, which has undoubtedly improved the lot of overseas contract workers from that country. In particular, the way in which the migration of refugees is organized and influenced by NGOs can demonstrate best practice. With respect to destination countries, NGO activities have been especially important in Taiwan Province of China in improving protection for both migrant workers and the foreign brides of Taiwanese men. NGOs have the potential to play an important role in the protection of migrants, especially migrant workers and brides of commodified arranged international marriages; while governments are constrained in their ability to help nationals in foreign countries by diplomatic convention, NGOs are much more flexible in the types of support they can provide.

International agencies have become much more active in migration in the Asia-Pacific region. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has played an important role with mandated refugees since the exodus of Indo-Chinese refugees, beginning in the mid-1970s. It is, however, restricted in its mandate to deal only with mandated refugees and not other migrants – international or internal. It is limited, for example, in its ability to provide assistance for Internally

Displaced Persons (IDPs), although their activity in this area has recently increased. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has become more active in the region over the last decade, widening the number of countries in which it has offices and the breadth of activities it has undertaken in relation to migration – from improving protection of migrants, to facilitating regional and bilateral dialogue on migration issues and capacity-building in government.

The Catholic Church and, to a lesser extent, other religious organizations have been especially active in supporting and protecting international migrants in the region. This has, unsurprisingly, been most apparent in, but not confined to, predominantly Christian countries and regions. For example, the Church in Japan has done much to protect migrants – workers, brides and entertainers. The Church has also been active in South Korea and the Taiwan Province of China, and it has been extremely active and shown leadership in the Philippines –the country most influenced by international migration in the region.

Labour unions represent one of the few internationally linked groups that make workers' best interests paramount. In destination countries, unions are frequently concerned that overseas migrant workers will underbid local workers for jobs by accepting lower wages and poorer conditions. However, in the traditional migration countries, unions have also played an important role in ensuring that migrant workers are not exploited. Unions, in their many forms, must engage more in informal discussion about migration and its effects. Anti-migrant-worker stances among some unions need to be addressed and migrant workers incorporated into union activity.

Civil society is playing an increasing role in international migration in the Asia-Pacific region and this will be more important in future migration policy and practice in the region. As Hugo (2009a) has argued, governments lack jurisdiction in destination countries but NGOs can often effectively bridge the administrative and procedural gaps between origin and destination countries by working with different but related NGOs established in the destination country.

The migration and development dialogue

Over the last decade, there has been an unprecedented increase in policy and academic discourse on the complex relationship between migration and development. It has been especially encouraged by some national and multilateral development assistance agencies, especially the World Bank (2006), Asian Development Bank (2004), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) (2006) and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) (House of Commons, 2004; DFID, 2007). The focus of new interest in the migration and development relationship has been a shift in global discourse – from concentrating almost entirely on "brain drain" losses of human capital caused by emigration of skilled people from low-income economies, to considering the positive effects that migration can and does have on origin economies. As the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, put it:

> *The potential for migrants to help transform their native countries has captured the imaginations of national and local authorities, international institutions and the private sector. There is an emerging consensus that countries can co-operate to create triple wins, for migrants, for their countries of origin and for the societies that receive them (UNDESA, 2006:5).*

This shift has seen renewed activity, both within the Asia-Pacific region and outside of it, on the potential positive benefits to be gained from migration for poverty reduction and betterment of the lives of people in poor countries. The arguments are well summarized in the World Bank's 2006 *Global Economic Prospects*, and in DFID's 2007 report entitled *Moving Out of Poverty – Making Migration Work Better for Poor People*.

While there is considerable variation between nations, there has been heightened interest both in origin and destination countries in the potential for migration to deliver development dividends in poor, destination countries. In origin countries, this global discourse has increasingly focused on the development of policies to facilitate the positive impacts that migration can have on development and ameliorate those that impinge negatively. Despite this increase in activity, the achievements thus far have been limited and the development and operation of effective policy and practice in the areas of migration and development is urgently needed. In origin countries, these policies will need to revolve around Reducing and compensating for brain drain effects. A net loss of skilled persons from less developed nations in Asia and a net gain in the more developed countries of the OECD was recognized as long ago as the 1960s (Adams, 1968). More recent analyses (e.g. Carrington and Detragiache, 1998; Dumont and Lemaitre, 2005) have confirmed that emigration rates in less developed countries in Asia and the Pacific are higher for skilled groups and that many Asia-Pacific countries experience a significant brain drain. Moreover, in recent times, OECD nations have placed greater emphasis on skill in their selection of immigrants and this, together with the increasing global competition for talented, skilled workers (Abella, 2005), has exacerbated these tendencies. A recent comprehensive analysis by the OECD (Dumont and Lemaitre, 2005) yielded data from 227 sending nations and 29 OECD receiving nations and calculated the emigration rates of all highly qualified workers (those with a university education) for non-OECD nations. The rates are low for large nations such as Indonesia (1.9%), Thailand (1.9%) Bangladesh (2%), India (3.1%) and China (3.2%) but much higher for small nations. Hence, of the 10 non-OECD nations with the lowest percentage of their highly skilled population who were overseas, seven are Asian. On the other hand, among the 10 countries with the highest percentages, Fiji was the only country from the Asia-Pacific region.

Despite these numbers, it would be incorrect to assume that brain drain does not have negative impacts in Asia and that there are net losses of the human resources necessary to foster long-term development in Asia. Figure 3 shows that Asian countries are among those with the largest *numbers* of their doctors outside the country. The Philippines (with a population of 84.8 million in 2005) is one of the nations most influenced by emigration and it is estimated that, in 2000, 18 per cent of Filipinos with college degrees were in the United States alone (*Migration News,* July 2004), suggesting that at least one in three Filipino university graduates are lost to the nation.

Figure 3: Countries from which physicians have emigrated (in thousands), 2000
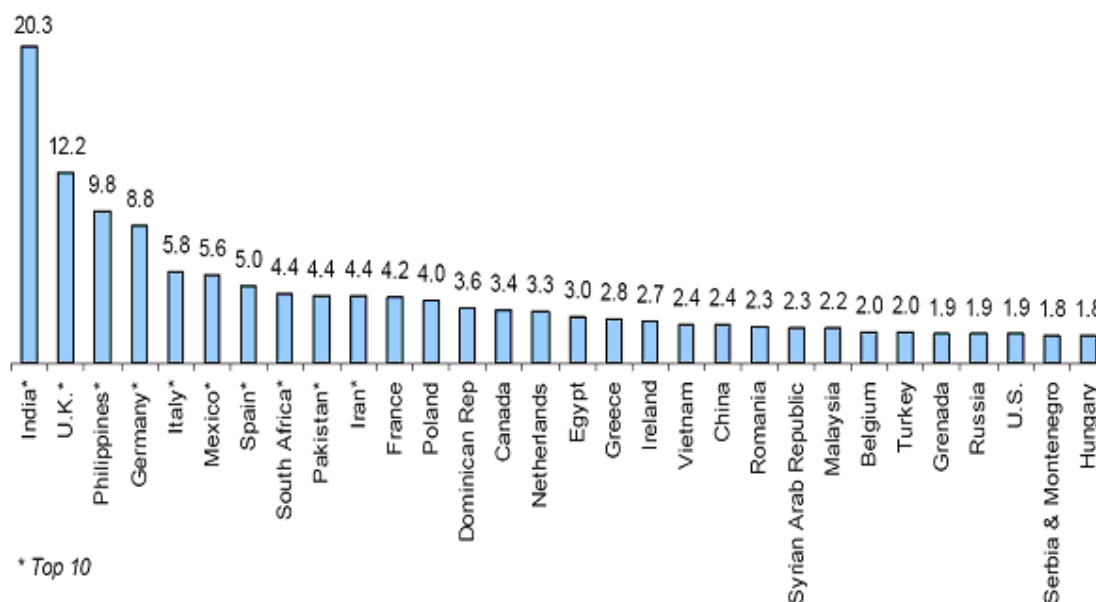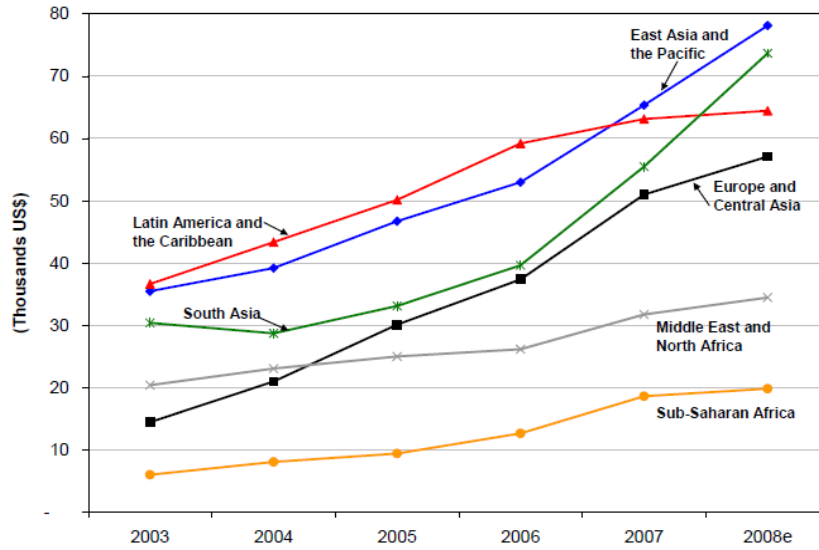

Source: World Bank, 2008

Moreover, there is evidence that it is the most skilled, most educated and most entrepreneurial who emigrate from poor Asian countries. As Carrington and Detragiache (1998:24) conclude: "These numbers suggest that in several countries the outflow of highly skilled individuals … is a phenomenon that cannot be ignored by policy makers." It cannot be disputed that the loss of skills in particular areas can negatively affect the well-being of origin populations and development potential. Particularly significant here is the net loss of doctors, nurses and other health-care personnel from southern countries. With population ageing in OECD nations, there have been shortages of medical workers and consequent recruitment of people with these skills from developing countries.

Enhancing inflows of remittances and channelling remittance flows to maximize their development impact. The World Bank (2009) estimated global remittances in 2008 to be USD 397 billion and developing countries accounted for 305 billion (76.9%) of this. Moreover, remittances to developing nations increased by 8.8 per cent in 2007–08 and by 164.2 per cent between 2002 and 2008 (ibid.). Some USD 339 billion were received in Asia and the Pacific – over 17 per cent of the global total (Figure 4). As Figure5 shows, official remittances to less developed countries are now more than twice as great as official development assistance and almost as large as foreign direct investment. In considering these figures, the following must be borne in mind:

> *This amount, however, reflects only transfers through official channels. Econometric analysis and available household surveys suggest that unrecorded flows through informal channels may add 50 percent or more to recorded flows. (World Bank, 2007:1)*
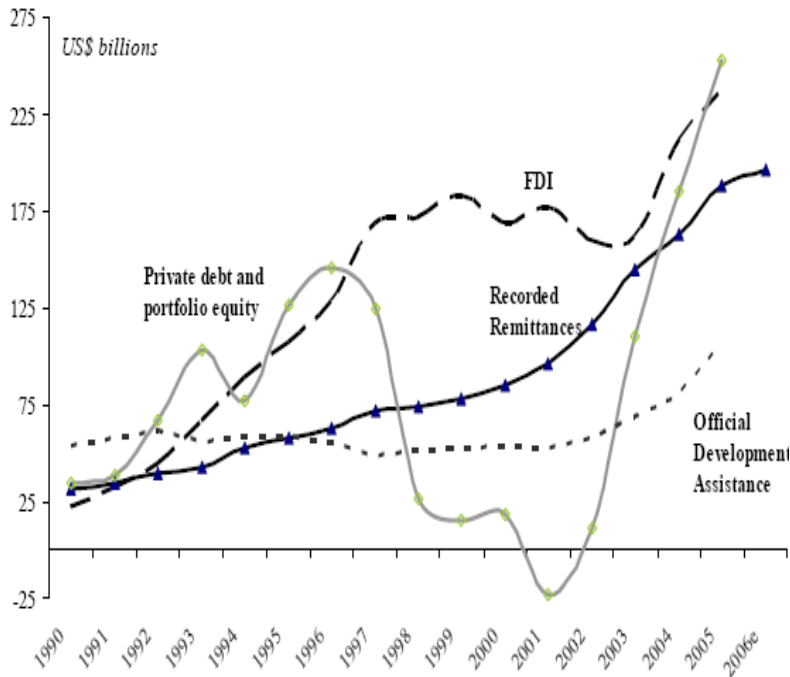
Hence remittances are the largest source of external funding in several Asian and Pacific countries.

Figure 4: Remittance flows by region, 2002-2008: The Rise of Asia

Source: Fix, 2009

Figure 5: Remittances and capital flows to developing countries (USD billions)

Source: World Bank, 2007
Note: Data for 2006 are estimates

However, the transfer costs associated with remittances are higher in the Asia-Pacific region than elsewhere and need to be reduced. Moreover, integrating remittances into national and regional development planning is needed if their development potential is to be realized.

Enhancing engagement of the diaspora in development activity at home

Table 6 shows that Asia-Pacific countries have some of the world's largest diaspora, and the development of policies that harness their abilities and resources to the benefit of origin countries could, therefore, have potentially significant positive impacts in origin areas. In particular, there is a need to consider the following:

- encouragement of foreign direct investment through the diaspora;
- assessment of how the diaspora can be used as a bridgehead for export penetration of markets in high-income countries;
- promotion of appropriate knowledge transfer and import training to people in origin countries.

Table 6: National diaspora in relation to resident national populations (% of national population)

Australia:	900,000 – 4.3%
New Zealand:	850,000 – 21.9%
Philippines:	7.5 million – 9.0%
India:	20 million – 1.9%
Pakistan:	4 million – 2.8%
China:	30 to 40 million – 2.9%
Japan:	873,641 – 0.7%
South Korea:	6.4 million – 13.2%
Viet Nam:	2.6 million – 3.2%
Singapore:	100–150,000 – 3.5%
Cook Islands:	52,600 – 34%
Niue:	5,884 – 294.2%
Tokelau:	2,019 – 138.5%
Samoa:	78,253 – 44.5%
Fiji:	128,284 – 15.8%

Sources: Southern Cross, 2002; Bedford, 2001; Ministry of External Affairs, India, http://indiandiaspora.nic.in; Naseem, 1998; Sahoo, 2002; Iguchi, 2004; Philippines Overseas Employment Service; Asian Migration News, 15–31 January 2006; OECD database on immigrants and expatriates; Nguyen Anh, 2005; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/korean_diaspora
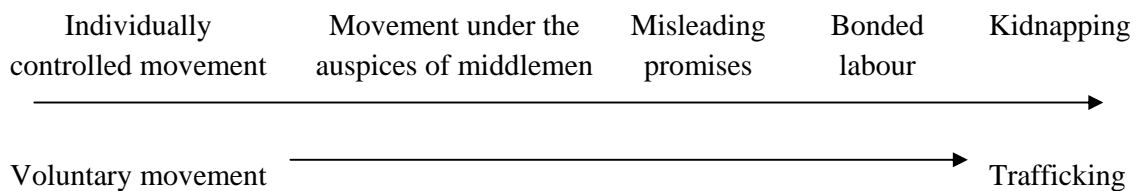
The main way in which net emigration countries have attempted to recoup the human capital of skilled emigrants is through return migration programmes. Some of the major attempts to encourage expatriates to return have been made by Asian countries. Korea and the Taiwan Province of China (Englesberg, 1995), for example, initiated programmes to encourage a "reverse brain drain" (Chang, 1992; Hugo, 1996), with some success (Yoon, 1992), although it is not clear how much of this

was due to the programmes and how much was a result of rapid economic development (Lucas, 2001, 41). Saxenian (1999: 59) points out that some of the advantages flowing from these activities was an increase in interaction between Taiwanese and Korean scientists and engineers, with expatriate colleagues in the United States facilitating knowledge transfer, investment and business cooperation (Lucas, 2001: 42). The Taiwan Province of China has had one of the most comprehensive reverse brain drain programmes among Asian countries. In recent times, it has been realized that origin countries encourage non-permanent returns by their diaspora – for example, China has become very active in using its skilled diaspora as a source of expertise to assist in its development efforts.

How should undocumented migration be tackled?

Battistella and Asis (2003:5) estimate that, in the South-East Asian region alone, there are around 2 million irregular migrants. Undocumented and documented systems are not totally separate, although they are often portrayed as such. Usually, undocumented flows duplicate documented flows, some middlemen and officials are involved in both types of movement, and the networks established by documented migrants are often utilized by subsequent undocumented migrants. Undocumented labour migration in Asia and the Pacific can be differentiated along a wide spectrum, ranging from totally voluntary movement, whereby the mover controls the migration process, through to kidnapping and trafficking. While there is a great deal of concern in the region about trafficking of workers, there is an array of other undocumented migration types and a more meaningful differentiation of undocumented labour migration is depicted in Figure 6.

Figure 6: A continuum of undocumented international labour migration in Asia

Individually controlled movement	Movement under the auspices of middlemen	Misleading promises	Bonded labour	Kidnapping

Voluntary movement   →   Trafficking

The workers arrange all of their own travel and move along familiar, well-established routes. However, in many undocumented moves, middlemen of various types are involved and their control over the migrant workers varies considerably. In some situations, the chain of middlemen involved reaches back to the home village and they have strong accountability to the home community. In others, they control the information that potential workers receive about the migration process and destination, determining when they move, how much it costs, where they go and what job they obtain. These movements grade into trafficking, whereby workers are forced to move and find themselves in indentured situations in the country of destination. In some cases, potential migrant workers are purposely misled about the type of work at the destination, the conditions, remuneration etc., and are "trapped" at the destination. In others, workers (often women and children) are sold into bonded situations, often by relatives, or they are kidnapped and trafficked across borders against their will. In all cases, their unauthorized status exposes them to the

possibility of exploitation and prevents them from seeking the protection of authorities at the destination. This can add to the marginalization experienced by many migrant groups.

There is some evidence that there is increasing activity in destination countries to crack down on undocumented migrants. More emphasis than ever before is being placed on compliance with immigration regulations, including massive investments in policing and compliance measures. Sanctions on employers of undocumented migrant workers, incarceration of detected undocumented migrant workers, physical abuse etc., are becoming more prevalent. Such activities have not necessarily reduced flows and, in some cases, have forced them into different, often more dangerous, avenues.

Where countries have attempted to legalize migrations of workers, illegal operators have become so entrenched that it is difficult to persuade undocumented workers to replace their illegal strategies with legal ones. Indeed, in some countries, the undocumented approaches are trusted more than the government avenues for migration, which are more expensive and more time-consuming. There is a tendency to associate all undocumented migration with the insidious practice of trafficking, which is doubly unfortunate because:

- much undocumented migration is not criminal;
- the bulk of policy and research effort is put into trafficking, when there are also highly exploitative, corrupt and venal practices occurring in legal migration that need to be the target of policy.

There are clearly no simple solutions to the undocumented migration and its most insidious subcomponent, trafficking. What does seem clear in Asia and the Pacific is that undocumented migration will continue to occur for as long as there is a manifest demand for migrant labour. Policing alone is not the solution. It is also clear that these issues can rarely be effectively tackled unilaterally. The process occurs across countries and cooperation between origin, destination and transit countries will be necessary.

Climate change

No region of the world is expected to be more affected by climate change than Asia and the Pacific (Preston et al., 2006; Hugo et al., 2009). A recent report (Hugo et al., 2009) examined the available modelling of climate change in Asia and the Pacific in order to establish which areas in the region are anticipated to experience substantial impacts from:

- higher sea levels and storm surges
- increased intensity and frequency of cyclone activity
- increased riparian flooding, especially due to glacier melt
- reduced intensity, frequency and reliability of rainfall in many areas of low and moderate rainfall.

While there are some regions and countries in Asia and the Pacific where the anticipated climate change impacts will have favourable impacts (e.g. New Zealand), the areas where the effects are expected to be negative are more extensive and have much larger populations. Areas where climate

change impacts are likely to be greatest in scope and intensity can be considered "hot spots", where the relationship between climate change and migration is likely to be most apparent. The study that delimited these hot spots (Hugo et al., 2009) identified four types of ecological locations in the Asia-Pacific region that are especially strongly represented and are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. These include:

- densely settled delta regions
- low-lying coastal areas
- low-lying atolls and coral islands
- some river valleys
- semi-arid, low-humidity areas.

The degree of vulnerability of the people living in these areas will be determined not only by the severity of climate change impact but also by their socio-economic situation and the resources they have to adapt to the impacts of environmental deterioration, the socio-cultural context and the quality of governance and security of the region.

Asia has some of the most densely settled delta regions of the world. It not only has some of the most intensive agricultural areas but also some of the world's major megacities.[6] Moreover, these areas, especially the megacities, are experiencing rapid population growth as a result of in-migration, much of it from rural areas (Jones, 2004). These intensively settled areas include the Mekong delta in southern Viet Nam and eastern Cambodia, the Yangtze River delta based around the Shanghai area, the Menam delta around Bangkok, and the Ganges delta in South Asia. These areas are especially vulnerable to the impacts of rising sea levels, increased storm surges and riparian flooding; they also contain some of the poorest populations in Asia, with the lowest levels of resources for combating the effects of environmental degradation.

Low-lying islands and island States will be extremely vulnerable to sea-level rise, high-intensity cyclones and storm surges. In atolls, the salinization of fragile freshwater lenses by seawater intrusion threatens the livelihood of the local populations. In some island States, such as Kiribati and Tuvalu, virtually the entire country is vulnerable to flooding.

There is still considerable debate in the migration literature regarding environment and migration. Lonergan and Swain (1999:2) argue that:

> *... although the estimates and projections of environmental refugees are based almost entirely on anecdotal evidence and intuitive judgment, it is important not to trivialise the role environmental change and resource depletion may play in population movements.*

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[6] Cities with 10 million or more inhabitants (UNDESA, 2008b)

This differs from the view of Black (2001:1) who, in also recognizing the weaknesses of the concept of "environmental refugees", maintains that:

> *... although environmental degradation and catastrophe may be important factors in the decision to migrate, and issues of concern in their own right, their conceptualisation as a primary cause of forced displacement is unhelpful and unsound intellectually and unnecessary in practical terms.*

Whichever side of the argument holds true in light of climate change remains uncertain, but the environment will, almost certainly, have a greater influence on migration patterns in the future.
The impact of climate change on population movement in Asia and the Pacific is difficult to anticipate but a number of points can be made (Hugo et al., 2009).

- Most responses to the impact of climate change will involve in situ adjustment rather than mobility.
- Mobility responses will involve both adaptation responses and, as a last resort, forced resettlement.
- The bulk of environmentally induced mobility will occur within nations.
- Climate change impacts will become an increasingly significant factor in international migration, albeit usually in combination with other push factors. International migration is especially significant where climate change impacts threaten entire national spaces, as they do in some Pacific countries.

The impacts of climate change will become increasingly evident over the next three or four decades, which means that there is time to develop appropriate policies to adapt to them. However, these policies are likely to require substantial lead time to formulate and operationalize since they involve dealing with entrenched sensitivities and will require significant international transfers of funding to low-income countries, as well as strong cooperation between countries. Hence, there is an urgency to begin considering the migration policy implications of climate change impacts as soon as possible.

The global financial crisis

The onset of the global financial crisis in 2008 has had a significant impact in Asia and the Pacific. The Chief of the Asian Development Bank has argued that the region has been especially hard hit due to inadequate safety nets, with 60 million people being kept below the poverty line of USD 1.25 per day (*Asian Migration News*, 1–30 September 2009). The impacts of the crisis on mobility in the region are not entirely clear and have varied considerably from one country to another, but a few generalizations can be made (Hugo, 2009c).

- The flow of migrants seems to have been more affected than the migrant stock, with little evidence of return movement of migrants established at destinations.
- The impact has varied greatly between different types of migrants. Those involved in construction, manufacturing, financial services and travel-related services have suffered because of job losses, while others, such as domestic workers, care workers and health-care workers, have not been affected.

- While previous research has shown that remittance flows tend to be countercyclical and represent a way of adjusting to a crisis, remittances seem to have been less affected by the crisis in Asia and the Pacific than they have been in Latin America (World Bank, 2009). They have not decreased but they are not increasing at pre-crisis rates (World Bank, 2009).

With the continuation of the global financial crisis, countries in the Asia-Pacific region may need to consider developing policies to cope with the impact of the crisis on migration (Fix et al., 2009). Such policies might include the following:

In origin countries:
- seeking alternative destinations
- safety net programmes
- assistance with repatriation and resettlement
- programmes for absorbing of return migrants.

In destination countries:
- reducing inflows of migrants
- assisting unemployed migrants
- repatriation programmes.

A key policy issue related to the continuing impact of the global financial crisis, however, relates to the dampening effects that the crisis may have on the "green shoots" of more liberal and realistic migration policies being developed in the Asia-Pacific region. As discussed earlier in this paper, there have been some small but significant developments in the region in the last decade:

- An increased recognition by destination countries that migration is a continuing and important structural element in their economies.
- Introduction of programmes of migrant settlement in destination countries, albeit on a very selective basis.
- Recognition in origin countries that migration can have a positive influence on development.
- Enhanced regional dialogue and bilateral cooperation on migration issues
- Enhanced institutional development within countries with respect to migration.

There is a real danger that the crisis could derail those developments and prompt a return to the highly protectionist, anti-migrant policies of the twentieth century in the Asia-Pacific region.

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IOM International Organization for Migration

17 route des Morillons CH-1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 717 9111 • Fax: +41 22 798 6150
E-mail: hq@iom.int • Internet: http://www.iom.int