Second Meeting of the Regional Steering Group on Population and Social Statistics in Asia and the Pacific 17-19 July 2019; Bangkok

Special Session A

International migration statistics: Overview of issues, data needs, data sources and on-going global initiatives

Sharita Serrao

Global call for better migration data

- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
  - Orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration; positive contribution of migrants; special population groups: “leave-no-one-behind”
  - SDGs 1, 3-8, 10-11, 16-17
  - Migration-related indicators
    - Recruitment costs
    - Remittances
    - Trafficking
    - Migration policies
    - Scholarships to study abroad
  - Indicators relevant for disaggregation by “migratory status” (explicit or as relevant)

- The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (Dec 2018)
  - Common approach to intl. migration in all its dimensions
  - 23 objectives
  - Objective 1: collection and utilization of accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based migration policies
Migration data and information needs: leaving no one behind...

A) Characteristics of migrants:
Age, sex, country of origin, status in employment, occupation, ethnicity, religion, language, education level, disability status...

B) Drivers of migration:
Poverty, unemployment, sex-segregation in labour market, gender pay gap, educational opportunities, disasters, social conflict/ discrimination...

C) Migrant welfare:
Working conditions (contract, paid leave, wages); Integration/civil participation, living standards, socio-economic characteristics of children of migrants
Access to services: health care, social security, education...

D) Socio-economic impact
Origin:
Remittance flows (by sex, country channel, recipient, use); Impact on family life (by age, location); Impact on economy (out-flow of skilled workers, brain-drain); (Re)integration.
Destination:
Impacts on labour market/force, GDP, housing...

Beyond stocks and flows!
Multi-dimensional disaggregation

Overview of data gaps by topic (global)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data more likely to be available*</th>
<th>Data less likely to be available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Migrants stocks</td>
<td>Migration flows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-flow data (immigration)</td>
<td>Out-flow data (emigration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human trafficking</td>
<td>Return migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remittances flows</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inflows and outflows data need harmonization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unrecorded channels</td>
<td>• Human rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Micro-data on remittance-sending behaviors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Disaggregation by gender</td>
<td>• Data especially lacking for migrants in irregular situation and children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Recruitment costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Under-reporting</td>
<td>• Refugees vs other migrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Short-term students</td>
<td>• No accurate global count of stateless persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Equal opportunities to inbound students?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant health</td>
<td>Women migrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Standardization and comparability of data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appropriate disaggregation to account for the diversity of migrant population</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant integration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of migration policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(various aspects)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Though not necessarily consistently produced or measured

Production-related challenges

- Lack of harmonized definitions
  - International migrant
  - Circular or temporary migration
  - “Migratory status” for data disaggregation

- Insufficient int'l standards/methodologies
  - Special sampling strategies to ensure representativeness
  - Data integration techniques
  - Non-traditional data

- Methodological challenges for data disaggregation
  - Capturing smaller population groups
  - Methods reflecting issues of specific subpopulation groups

- Lack of coordination/integration as well as compilation/dissemination of migration statistics from multiple national sources
  - NSOs, ministries, local government, private institutions, NGOs...

- Comparability/consistency (within and across borders)
- Systematic analyses and research (determinants; impacts; contribution...)

Are existing sources able to fulfil data needs for migration?

- Stock data: Universal coverage; Comparability
- Low frequency; Lack of details; Inadequate measure of flows

- Broad range/detailed info;
- Groups of interest
- Appropriate/large enough sample
- Surveys at border: volume of movement; appropriate sampling frame; migrants vs other travelers

- Diverse sources
- Re-use of existing data, updated regularly, no additional cost
- Quality for statistical purposes?

- Real-time/timely
- Unstructured
- Access/sustainable data sharing mechanisms
- Technical and analytical challenges (Privacy/ethical issues, representativeness, Criterion of “atleast 12 months?”)

Based on responses to "Toolkit to assess national migration data capacity" completed by 9 Asia-Pacific countries in Feb 2019. Not representative of the Asia-Pacific region. Numbers represent ranking of sources used.
An integrated system for migration data

- Built upon all relevant national data sources
- Legal agreements/stipulation:
  - Covering relevant agencies
  - Data sharing
  - Data source, format, level of details
  - Data cleaning/processing
  - Protection of confidentiality
- Unique identification for record matching
- Strong IT support

Addressing the gaps:
Some recent global initiatives and resources
United Nations Expert Group on Migration Statistics (EG-MS)

- Mandated by UN Statistical Commission
- First met June 2017
- Membership:
  - NSOs & relevant ministries (20 countries)
  - Development partners
  - Independent experts
- Asia-Pacific: Indonesia, Georgia, Sri Lanka, Thailand
- Advance methodologies:
  - Ind through revision of “1998 Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration”
- Develop global programme:
  - Resource needs; technical materials; needs assessments; capacity building activities

EG-MS task forces

1. Standard set of data and indicators to address key policy issues
2. Conceptual framework incl. key concepts and definitions
3. Data integration for disaggregated statistics
4. Best practices on data collection, analysis and dissemination
5. Global programme on migration statistics
Revision of 1998 Recommendations on Statistics for International Migration

- Consultative process through EG-MS & additional countries:
  - Concept and definition of "international migrant"
  - New migration patterns
  - New data sources
  - Linking data needs & policy-making
  - Data analysis/use
  - Incorporating relevant frameworks, such as:
    - International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics
    - New guidelines of the ILO concerning statistics on intl. labour migration
    - …...
  - Conceptual versus a practical publication

- Expected to be available in 2021 for global consultation

Technical report on measuring migration-relevant SDG indicators

- Data production for relevant SDG indicators needing disaggregation by migratory status:
  - Definitions and metadata
  - Currently available/potentially usable data for relevant indicators
  - Gender-responsive and child-sensitive indicators relevant for migration and migrants
**Standard set of questions on intl. migration**

- Quality and comparability of statistics collected through national PHC/sample surveys
- Comprehensive review of national census questionnaires 2010 round of PHC
- Applies to HH surveys
- Two sets of questions:
  - Distinguish migrants from non-migrants
    - (country of birth / citizenship / birth of parents...)
  - Key characteristics of migrants
    - (year of arrival/ acquisition of citizenship, reason for migration...)
- Tested by some Mediterranean countries; additional testing (MICS 2019)
- Once finalized, wider dissemination with support from IOM, UNFPA, UNICEF
- [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/migration-expert-group/methodology/Standard%20set%20of%20migration%20questions%20%202019.04.03.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/migration-expert-group/methodology/Standard%20set%20of%20migration%20questions%20%202019.04.03.pdf)

**On-going capacity-building activities**

- Four-year project is being led by the Statistics Division of UNDESA (2018-2021)
- In collaboration with UNPD, ECLAC, ESCAP, UNODC and IOM
- Key objective: enhance production of migration-relevant SDG indicators
- Modalities:
  - Regional workshops (Asia-Pacific (Feb 2019), Latin America (planned))
  - National assessment survey (20 countries of the EG-MS)
  - Indepth assessments:
    - In-country: Georgia, Jordan, Thailand (planned)
    - “Toolkit to assess national migration data capacity” (Bangladesh, China, Georgia, Indonesia, Jordan, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka & Thailand)
- Global programme on migration statistics to be rolled out